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OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)

Tuesday, June 8, 1999

Speaker: The Honourable Gilbert Parent

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, June 8, 1999

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1005)

[*Translation*]

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

Mr. Peter Adams (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to 10 petitions.

* * *

[*English*]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

INDUSTRY

Ms. Susan Whelan (Essex, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 19th report of the Standing Committee on Industry entitled "Research Funding—Strengthening the Sources of Innovation".

For two years the committee has monitored the funding of federal research and research across Canada. We believe that Canada's investment needs to be strengthened and we present this report today.

* * *

CIVIL INTERNATIONAL SPACE STATION AGREEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACT

Hon. John Manley (Minister of Industry, Lib.) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-85, an act to implement the Agreement among the Government of Canada, Governments of Member States of the European Space Agency, the Government of Japan, the Government of the Russian Federation, and the Government of the United States of America concerning Cooperation on the Civil

International Space Station and to make related amendments to other Acts.

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

* * *

PETITIONS

CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

Mr. Werner Schmidt (Kelowna, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, it is indeed an honour and a privilege to present some 3,000-plus petitioners who have come to the House with a petition. They would request that parliament take all measures necessary to ensure that possession of child pornography remains a serious criminal offence, and that federal police forces be directed to give priority to enforcing this law for the protection of our children.

This is a wonderful petition and I endorse it 100%.

THE CONSTITUTION

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am presenting two petitions this morning. The first petition has been signed by residents of my constituency of Burnaby—Douglas as well as communities across Canada.

The petitioners, members of the Humanist Association of Canada and others, seek changes to the preamble to Canada's constitution and to the charter of rights. They wish to remove the reference to the supremacy of God in the preamble and to change the wording of the charter of rights to reflect the fact that Canada is a secular country which respects the deeply held views of people of many different religious faiths as well as those who have no religious beliefs.

YUGOSLAVIA

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the second petition notes that the NATO attack on Yugoslavia is illegal under the charters of the United Nations and NATO, and that the best hope for world peace rests on the rule of international law administered by the United Nations. It notes that the present war, intended to reduce the persecution, killing and displacement of Kosovars, has drastically increased all three.

Therefore, the petitioners call on the House of Commons to withdraw immediately all Canadian Armed Forces from the war and use all our influence to convince the United Nations to arrange a ceasefire followed by further negotiations on the future of

Routine Proceedings

Kosovo. They petition Milosevic to put an end to the ethnic cleansing that is taking place in Yugoslavia, including in the province of Kosovo.

• (1010)

[Translation]

KOSOVO

Mr. Raymond Lavigne (Verdun—Saint-Henri, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to table a petition signed by my constituents which calls upon the government to withdraw our military support in Yugoslavia and to stop the bombing.

[English]

CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

Mr. Randy White (Langley—Abbotsford, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I have a petition signed by literally thousands of people from across the country asking parliament to take all measures necessary to ensure that possession of child pornography remains a serious criminal offence, and that federal police forces be directed to give priority to enforcing this law for the protection of children.

CHEMICAL PESTICIDES

Mr. Clifford Lincoln (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions.

The first petition states that residents of Canada call on parliament to enact an immediate moratorium on the cosmetic use of chemical pesticides until such time as their use has been scientifically proven to be safe and the long term consequences of the application are known.

MMT

Mr. Clifford Lincoln (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the second petition states that the use of the additive MMT in Canadian gasoline presents an environmental problem affecting every man, woman and child in Canada.

Therefore, the petitioners call on parliament to set, by the end of this calendar year, national clean fuel standards for gasoline with zero MMT and low-sulphur content.

MARRIAGE

Mr. Deepak Obhrai (Calgary East, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise today on behalf of Canadians who have signed this petition on the concept of marriage.

Recent court rulings have created a sense of public confusion on the definition of marriage and spouse. It is the intent of this petition to set the record straight and to ask parliament to accept the concept of marriage as the voluntary union of a single, unmarried male and a single, unmarried female.

Further, it asks parliamentarians to ensure that marriage, as it has always been known and understood in Canada, be preserved and protected.

I thank those who have signed this petition for representing their views to parliament. Today we have an opportunity to debate this issue—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): The hon. member for Peterborough.

NATIONAL CHILD TAX BENEFIT

Mr. Peter Adams (Peterborough, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise to present a petition on behalf of the people in Peterborough who are concerned about children living in poverty.

They point out that thousands of children in Canada are not receiving the national child tax benefit. They believe that in Ontario, which has the highest child poverty rate in Canada, that all families should receive the national child tax benefit to help alleviate child poverty, and that it is time to amend the national child tax benefit so that no province in Canada will be allowed to claw it back.

Therefore, they urge the Parliament of Canada to amend the agreement with all provinces to allow all children living in poverty to receive the national child tax benefit to improve their quality of life.

CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

Mr. Grant Hill (Macleod, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I have another petition here that reflects on child pornography, adding to the 140,000 that have already been brought to the House.

There are more than 3,000 signatures here from western Canada asking for parliament to ensure that the possession of child pornography be maintained as a severe crime.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present a petition on the subject of human rights signed by a number of Canadians, including from my own riding of Mississauga South.

The petitioners would like to draw to the attention of the House that human rights abuses continue to be rampant around the world in countries such as Indonesia and Kosovo. They also acknowledge that Canada continues to be internationally recognized as a champion of human rights.

The petitioners therefore call on the Government of Canada to continue to speak out against such abuses, and also to seek to bring to justice those responsible for such abuses.

CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

Mr. Keith Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I, too, have thousands upon thousands of names of Canadians who are disgusted by child pornography and want parliament to take all the measures necessary to ensure that child pornography remains a serious criminal offence. They want to

prompt the government to get its act in gear and start enacting laws that will cut out this nonsense.

Mr. Grant McNally (Dewdney—Alouette, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions on a similar theme. Hundreds of constituents from Dewdney—Alouette are horrified by child pornography and are astounded by the legal determinations that the possession of child pornography is not criminal.

They ask parliament to protect the most vulnerable members of society, our children, from sexual abuse and to take all necessary steps to ensure possession of child pornography remains a serious criminal offence.

The second petition asks that parliament amend the charter to prevent the development, purchase and ownership of child pornography.

• (1015)

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I have a large number of petitions to present. Over 30,000 petitioners are adding their names to the over 100,000 already presented.

The petitioners are petitioning parliament because they are horrified by the pornography that depicts children and are astounded by the legal determinations that possession of such pornography is not criminal. They say that it is the duty of parliament through the enactment and enforcement of the Criminal Code to protect the most vulnerable members of society from sexual abuse.

Therefore, they ask parliament to take all measures necessary to ensure that the possession of child pornography remains a serious criminal offence and that federal police officers be directed to give priority to enforcing this law for the protection of children.

Mr. Jack Ramsay (Crowfoot, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present to the House a petition containing the names of over 4,200 signators who claim that they are horrified by pornography that depicts children and are astounded by the legal determinations that possession of such pornography is not criminal.

Therefore, the petitioners pray that parliament will take all necessary measures to ensure that the possession of child pornography remains a serious criminal offence and that federal police forces be directed to give priority to enforcing this law for the protection of our children.

GRANDPARENTS RIGHTS

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to present a petition that is signed by residents from across Canada. It states that grandparents, as a consequence of death, separation or divorce of their children, are often denied access to their grandchildren by their guardians, that the relationship that exists between grandparents and grandchildren is a natural

Routine Proceedings

and fundamental one, and that the denial of access can constitute elder abuse and can have a serious detrimental emotional impact on both grandparents and grandchildren.

Therefore, they petition parliament to amend the Divorce Act to include a provision, as supported in Bill C-340, regarding the right of spouses, parents and grandparents to have access to or custody of their children and grandchildren.

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

Ms. Bev Desjarlais (Churchill, NDP): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I rise to present a petition to add hundreds of signatures to those already presented from urban aboriginals in Ontario who are concerned about the federal government's down-loading of housing to the provinces. They are concerned that the federal government is shirking its fiduciary obligation to aboriginal peoples.

* * *

[Translation]

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. Peter Adams (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the following question will be answered today: No. 240.

[Text]

Question No. 240—**Mr. John Cummins:**

Has the Veterans Review and Appeal Board ever been given the following information and, if so, when and by whom: (a) the reason that the day mefloquine was administered is referred to as psycho Tuesday or Wednesday, et cetera, by soldiers deployed to Somalia; (b) the March 1991 CF protocol entitled "Mefloquine Availability", concerning (i) potential central nervous system side effects, (ii) lingering concerns in the U.S. army over CNS side effects, (iii) inadequate data and (iv) lack of Canadian forces experience with the drug; (c) the problems resulting from mefloquine use in the relief mission to Somalia as reported in January 1993 CF medical report entitled "Medical Post-Op Report—Op Relief"; (d) the problems resulting from mefloquine use in the deployment to Somalia as reported in the April 1993 CF medical report from HMCS Preserver entitled "Post Deployment Report Op Deliverance 16 November 1992—7 April 1993"; (e) the problems resulting from mefloquine use in the deployment to Somalia as reported in the October 1993 CF medical report entitled "Medical Operations in Somalia, Surgical Section"; (f) the evidence and findings of the Somalia Inquiry in regard to the effects of mefloquine on soldiers deployed to Somalia; (g) that the mefloquine administered to soldiers in the Somalia deployment was an unlicensed drug obtained through a clinical study; (h) that the Canadian forces failed to systematically monitor either efficacy or adverse reactions as required by the Food and Drug Act for each soldier who received mefloquine in the Somalia deployment; and (i) that the death in 1994 of a Canadian soldier deployed to Somalia and then to Rwanda was found both by the Canadian forces and the United Nations to have been mefloquine related?

Mr. Bob Wood (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.): The Veterans Review and Appeal Board adjudicated over 49,000 cases in the past five years and does not track the nature of the evidence presented in support of claims. As such, the board cannot state with certainty that the information described by the hon. member has not been before the board. However, to the best of our knowledge and recollection the only

Supply

case where mefloquine was presented is the case referenced in the following paragraph (g).

(a) No, to the best of our knowledge, unless it was given by an appellant in the course of a specific appeal before the board;

(b) No, to the best of our knowledge, unless it was given by an appellant in the course of a specific appeal before the board;

(c) No, to the best of our knowledge, unless it was given by an appellant in the course of a specific appeal before the board;

(d) No, to the best of our knowledge, unless it was given by an appellant in the course of a specific appeal before the board;

(e) No, to the best of our knowledge, unless it was given by an appellant in the course of a specific appeal before the board;

(f) No, to the best of our knowledge, unless it was given by an appellant in the course of a specific appeal before the board;

(g) Yes, Eric Marinacci, pensions advocate, Bureau of Pensions Advocates, provided the information described by the hon. member in paragraph (g) when presenting a particular case to a former board, the Canadian Pension Commission, on December 6, 1994. That case subsequently proceeded to appeal and the Veterans Review and Appeal Board received the information between September 15, 1995 and December 21, 1995 when it obtained the file from the Department of Veterans Affairs in order to prepare for the appeal;

(h) Yes, the Veterans Review and Appeal Board received the information on April 30, 1999 from the Auditor General of Canada in his report to the House of Commons dated April 1999; and

(i) No, to the best of our knowledge, unless it was given by an appellant in the course of a specific appeal before the board.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Peter Adams: Mr. Speaker, I ask that the remaining questions be allowed to stand.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[*English*]

Mr. Randy White: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Further to the NDP member's presentation to the House a few minutes ago to remove God from the constitution and the failure of the government yesterday to assure this House that position would not—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): With respect, that is not a point of order.

Mr. Randy White: With respect, it is.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): With respect, it is not a point of order.

Mr. Randy White: Mr. Speaker, I ask for the unanimous consent of the House to ensure that the government will not remove the reference to God from our Canadian constitution.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): The hon. House leader of the opposition has asked for the unanimous consent of the House to move a motion. Does the House give its unanimous consent?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

Hon. Don Boudria: Mr. Speaker, in response to the point of order, amending the constitution is not done on the floor of the House by way of a point of order and it is not our intention to amend it using those devices.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): The issue is over and done with.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

• (1020)

[*English*]

SUPPLY

ALLOTTED DAY—MARRIAGE

Mr. Eric Lowther (Calgary Centre, Ref.) moved:

That, in the opinion of this House, it is necessary, in light of public debate around recent court decisions, to state that marriage is and should remain the union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others, and that Parliament will take all necessary steps to preserve this definition of marriage in Canada.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): Since today is the final allotted day for the supply period ending June 23, 1999, the House will go through the usual procedures to consider and dispose of the supply bill.

In view of recent practices, do hon. members agree that the bill be distributed now?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Eric Lowther: Mr. Speaker, today the Reform Party is showing leadership on an issue which is important to Canadians. People have become increasingly concerned that the definition of marriage in Canada needs to be strengthened and protected before

the courts, by ruling on one case, tell us that the opposite sex definition of marriage is unconstitutional.

Just in the last two years alone 84 members of the House have presented petition after petition, totalling thousands of names, calling for parliament to enact legislation to define that marriage can only be entered into between a single male and a single female.

In addition, I would like to take note of a few of the recent headlines. "Top Court Rewriting Laws of Marriage", was recently a headline in the *Montreal Gazette*. "Ruling Alters Way Marriage Viewed: Family Law Expert. . ." appeared in the *National Post*. "Blurring the Line between Marriage and Singleness" also appeared in the *National Post*. "Redefining our Partnerships: This week's Supreme Court of Canada landmark ruling could send aftershocks into almost every sector of Canadian Life" appeared in the *London Free Press*. We have recently seen many more of these headlines in Canada.

Are Canadians overreacting or do they have justifiable concerns? Let us examine some of the recent events that have added to the public concern about the erosion of the definition and the concepts related to marriage.

Up until recently Canadians understood the word spouse to be either a husband or a wife in a marriage. The courts and the Liberal government are telling Canadians that they have it wrong.

Just in the last few months alone immigration Bill C-63 was introduced and it will give the minister, or in fact the bureaucracy under her, the power to define spouse as whatever she deems it to be depending on the occasion on any particular day.

Bill C-78, recently pushed through the House, the 52nd bill that the government has forced early closure on, dealt with the public service pension plan. This bill removed every reference of wife, widow and spouse and replaced them with the word survivor in order to extend benefits previously reserved for marriage to same sex relationships.

Last week the Minister of Human Resources Development went beyond the Canada Pension Plan Act to extend pension plan benefits normally reserved for married couples to same sex relationships, even though there has been no legal or legislative authorization to do so.

In addition, a number of court cases have served to erode the distinctiveness of marriage and the concepts, rights and obligations tied to it.

Many Canadians are concerned about this trend. There are two examples of recent court rulings. The Liberals refused to appeal a tax code case, known as the Rosenberg case, when a provincial court redefined spouse to mean two people of the opposite sex or

Supply

the same sex, even though every dictionary, including legal dictionaries, have always and still do understand spouse to be the husband or wife.

The most recent development, perceived by many as a further undermining of the distinctiveness of marriage and the concepts surrounding it, was the supreme court's decision that the opposite sex definition of the term spouse in the *M. v H.* case was unconstitutional. With this ruling the complete section 29 of Ontario's Family Law Act was struck down.

Concerned Canadians are watching this trend. Some say that the last thing that remains is the full blown establishment of homosexual marriage in Canada as a normative practice. It becomes somewhat self-evident that sooner or later the opposite sex definition of marriage will be challenged in the courts. If they can rule that the way Canadians use the word spouse is unconstitutional and must include a same sex definition of spouse, why could they not rule that the current definition of marriage is unconstitutional unless it includes same sex and possibly a variety of other relationships as well?

• (1025)

I will be sharing my time today with the member for Surrey Central. All Reform members will be sharing their time today.

I am not intending to target the courts. I am attempting to describe the events which have been an increasing cause of concern for Canadians. The courts and Canadians have been asking for some leadership and some clarification on this issue. Reformers believe that as servants of the people who put us here we have an obligation to provide it.

Due to the lack of accountable leadership from the Liberal government, the courts end up setting social policy, often derived from a single case, using charter arguments. The Liberal government follows with legislation saying that the courts made the government do it and the people of Canada are left out of the process.

Today we have an opportunity to put the people back into the process. Let us respond to the concerns of Canadians and give the courts the direction they have been asking for. Let us start the process today with this motion.

Let me move to the second part of the motion, which states:

... that marriage is and should remain the union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others. . .

Why this wording? This is the government's own wording in response to petitions which I mentioned earlier and in recent letters from the justice minister. The response has been that the term marriage is clear in Canadian law and is defined as stated in today's motion. Therefore, let the government and the entire House affirm

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this position publicly and commit to proactively upholding this definition of marriage. Hopefully the Liberals will not vote against their own wording in response to private inquiries from citizens. Or will they?

Whatever the case, the vote today will allow the people whom we are supposed to serve to hold each one of us individually accountable, both today and in the future, on this issue. The Reform Party has long advocated greater accountability to the public.

Marriage, as it has been defined throughout history, is significant to people for a variety of reasons. It would be presumptuous of me to try to attempt to adequately capture all of the values and rationales that Canadians have associated with defining what marriage is in Canada.

In general, the institution of marriage has been important to Canadian society from the very beginning of our nation. In marriage, a man in a relationship with a woman gains insights, sensitivities and strengths which she brings to the relationship and vice versa. A lifelong, committed union of a man and a woman in marriage creates a unit that is stronger than the sum of the individuals because their differences complement each other.

In *Corbett v Corbett* the court said:

(Marriage) is the institution on which the family is built and with the capacity for natural heterosexual intercourse as an essential element.

Marriage provides a healthy biological design for procreation. Other types of relationships are technically incomplete.

What about children? Teachers, and my wife is one, have a saying. They say that more is caught than taught. Intimate, committed marriage provides the best possible learning ground for the socialization and character development of children. Boys who have a lifelong example of a father who is patient, kind, polite, calm, forgiving, truthful, trusting and protective toward his wife are more likely to be that way themselves. More is caught than taught.

The same concept applies for daughters. In fact, both genders learn from a myriad of subtle character messages that children pick up from different gender parents. These models help them to decide and to relate to their own life mate. Marriage provides children with parental fullness, versus the gender deprived parenting of same sex relationships.

This kind of positive character modelling within and across genders does not stay confined to the home but continues with children outside the home and adds to the stabilizing and strengthening component of society as a whole.

Recent Statistics Canada studies report that children in home relationships with both parents have far fewer behavioural problems and have a significantly higher percentage of children who complete high school.

• (1030)

It is also interesting to me that in a recent Angus Reid poll young people in Canada aspire to having strong families. Ninety-three per cent of the youth in the poll predict that their families are the most important part of their lives. Eighty per cent believe that marriage is for life.

It is reasonable to assume that some day there will be a constitutional challenge to strike down the opposite sex definition of marriage in Canada. Why wait until that happens? Why continue to let the courts lead? Why not respond to the people and lead instead of follow?

If we do not act now when the courts say the charter made us do it and the Liberals say the courts made us do it, the question of the use of the notwithstanding clause will come up again.

Would we use the notwithstanding clause to defend the current definition of marriage? Clearly the Liberals have a position that seems to say they will never use it. They will do everything in their power to make sure that no one else does either. We would not even need to enter that debate if the government protected the definition of marriage in statute now.

In summary, the Reform Party is demonstrating leadership today by bringing forward a motion that addresses three concerns: first, the public concern reflected in the media and the weekly petitions calling on the House to protect the definition of marriage; second, a motion that uses the government's own words to define marriage in Canadian law in response to private inquiries; and, third, an opportunity for us all to make a commitment to action in order to uphold and defend this definition both now and in the future.

I hope we see unanimous support for the motion before us as it is a reasonable expectation and certainly our hope.

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is important that Canadians witnessing the debate today understand the real agenda here. The real agenda is that the Reform Party not only does not believe in the equality of gay and lesbian relationships but does not believe in equality for gays and lesbians, period.

When that issue came before the House of Commons for a vote, the fundamental question of whether the Canadian Human Rights Act should be amended to include sexual orientation so that gay and lesbian people would not be fired from their jobs or thrown out of their homes or denied access to goods and services, they voted against that basic equality.

When they say today that they want to talk about marriage, let us be very clear what the real agenda is. That party does not believe in the fundamental equality of gay and lesbian people in Canada.

The member for Calgary Centre raised a number of issues. He has made a number of statements to which I would like him to respond in terms of the inaccuracy of those statements. He talked

about committed, loving, lifelong relationships. The fact is that gay and lesbian people also enter into committed, loving, lifelong relationships.

I have to ask the hon. member a question. How is it any threat to a heterosexual marriage to recognize and affirm our relationships as well? For gay and lesbian people who seek to marry, why should that right not be extended to them?

The hon. member has said that some day there will be a court challenge. I tell the hon. member that there has already been a court challenge. So much for what he knows. Is the member not aware of the fact that there has already been a constitutional challenge in the Ontario Divisional Court in the case of Layland and Beaulne, in which the court ruled that federal common law restricts marriage to one man and one woman.

Why is he misleading the House on this important issue? Why will he not respect the right of equality for gay and lesbian people?

Mr. Eric Lowther: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question. Certainly the Reform Party is committed to the equality of all Canadian citizens before the law.

In what we are doing here today we are not against anyone. We are simply affirming that marriage is an important institution to Canadians. Canadians understand that marriage is a unique institution in a relationship that involves the union of a man and a woman.

Our job is to represent our constituents and Canadians on issues that are important to them. We believe that marriage should remain the union of a man and a woman. It is foundational to family and foundational to the strength of the nation. We believe that strong families make strong nations and marriage is part of that.

• (1035)

Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, having listened to the Reform member for Calgary Centre today, it seems to me a massive contradiction to say that the Reform Party is committed to equality and is not against anyone.

The motion clearly states a bias and an opinion to which the Reform Party and the member are entitled, but to force that opinion or bias about marriage being between a heterosexual couple on all Canadians, it seems to me, is a direct attack on equality and a direct attack on many members of society.

It is interesting to hear the member also say that a marriage without children is technically incomplete. I am sure that all the heterosexual couples who for whatever reason have chosen not to have children will be devastated to learn that they are technically incomplete.

Supply

What authority does the member and the Reform Party have to impose their views on other Canadians if they believe in equality? If they believe in equality, where does that authority come from?

Mr. Eric Lowther: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for the question although I need to clarify a couple of her points. She is assuming I said that married couples without children are technically incomplete. That was not at all what I said.

I said in my speech that a marriage between a man and a woman provides for parental fullness. A marriage between same sex couples is technically incomplete and is deprived parenting in some ways because one gender is deprived.

The motion indicates what the government and the law already states, that marriage is and should remain the union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others. We are just saying: let us make sure that we are clear on what the Canadian law is and that the House stands behind it.

Apparently the member who asked me the question does not agree with Canadian law and does not agree with the responses to petitions that have been given in the House. That is a sad indictment of her party.

Mr. Gurmant Grewal (Surrey Central, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of the people of Surrey Central in support of the official opposition's motion. The hon. member for Calgary Centre made an excellent speech and I congratulate him on it.

For the benefit of those who do not understand the motion, I will read it again:

That, in the opinion of this House, it is necessary, in light of public debate around recent court decisions, to state that marriage is and should remain the union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others, and that Parliament will take all necessary steps to preserve this definition of marriage in Canada.

The reason we have caused this motion to be brought forward is simply that the courts and others are asking the House for clear instructions with respect to this matter.

Canadians are concerned about the possible erosion of the traditional definition of the institution of marriage. Our federal government, through the elected representatives in this place, provide our courts with legislation, the laws of our land, for the courts to interpret.

With respect to the sanctity of the traditional definition of marriage, the courts have been left to defining it themselves or calling on the government for direction. Today the official opposition is exercising its responsibility to ensure that the definition of marriage is reaffirmed in our federal legislature.

Supply

Marriage should be affirmed. The motion is not about being against anyone or anything but is about being for marriage. The official opposition believes that the term marriage is a cornerstone of public policy and ought not to be unilaterally changed by the courts, by bureaucrats or by cabinet behind closed doors as is usually done. There should be the full light of public input, parliamentary debate and free votes in the House.

• (1040)

Our courts take guidance from parliament on important social policies and other matters. Today's motion is intended to give expression to the will of the parliament on marriage, a cornerstone of our public policy.

It is legitimate for parliament to give guidance on important social policy matters. Parliamentarians can reform the current status of the law, especially given debates surrounding recent court decisions relating to the definition of spouse, et cetera. Today the official opposition motion provides that opportunity.

There have been, there are and likely there will be future court challenges to the definition of marriage. It would be inappropriate for parliament to remain silent about this important social policy term in the midst of great public debate on the matter.

The courts often indicate that they are looking for guidance from parliament on different issues. The motion is an opportunity to clearly express the will of parliament. The motion allows parliament to better engage in a dialogue with the courts with respect to the definition of marriage.

By having a debate and a vote on the matter in parliament we are allowing the elected representatives of the Canadian people to reflect the views of Canadians on what they feel about the definition of marriage, an important Canadian institution. This is properly the role of parliament as such input is not able to take place in court litigation.

The opinion of the Canadian people is very clearly in favour of the current definition of marriage. In the 36th parliament 84 members stood in the House and tabled petitions from constituents calling for parliament to enact legislation to define that a marriage can be entered into between a single male and a single female.

People should not be shut up. They are the ones we came here to represent. We should listen to these people when they send petitions to the House. The supply day motion is an opportunity for members and parliament as a whole to stand by their constituents and communicate so that their voices are heard.

Being a relatively new immigrant and new Canadian, I can share with the House that many people around the world choose to immigrate to Canada because of what they know about our country. When they come they believe they will find the traditional

definition of marriage, a union between a man and a woman. They trust that the federal government supports that definition. If we did not, these immigrants might have immigrated elsewhere in the world.

Canada's demographics have changed significantly since Confederation. People immigrating to Canada now come mostly from Asia. They share the social values that include the definition of marriage we are debating today. They believe the family is an institution, a cornerstone or a pillar of society. This strong belief in the traditional family values is another reason they often have joint families.

During the election campaign a young man came to my office and asked for my views on the definition of marriage. I told him I believed that marriage was a union of a man and a woman. He said that he did not agree and that two men or two women could marry. I asked him if he would like to have his own children. He said he did not care, that having children was not important. I told him that if his father or mother had thought the same way he would not be talking to me. There was silence for a moment and then he said he had never thought of that.

• (1045)

Later he told me that originally he would not vote for me, but he was sorry now. He thanked me for making him realize that. He not only voted for me, as he told me afterward, but he became one of my volunteers.

Recently the House dealt with Bill C-78, changes to the pension fund of federal government employees that will allow the Liberals to make a one time \$30 billion grab. One effect of the bill was to expand the benefits of the pension plan. It extended survivors benefits outside of marriage to marriage dependent on private sexuality regardless of gender.

When a contributor to a pension plan dies, the benefits go to the surviving husband or wife. The bill maintains that provision, which is good. It also extends the benefits beyond this point in a new way. The government said its intent was to extend the benefits to same sex relationships as well.

The issue here today is not of same sex benefits for couples; the issue is the definition of marriage. No sex means no benefits. This is not the right policy. It has added a new legal expression, a relationship of a conjugal nature with absolutely no definition of what it means.

In conclusion, the official opposition in our leadership role is asking the government and all sides of the House to affirm support for the definition of marriage as being a union between a man and a woman.

I would like to move an amendment to the main motion. I move:

Supply

That the motion be amended by replacing the words "in Canada" with the words "within the jurisdiction of the Parliament of Canada".

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): On a point of order, the hon. member for Surrey Central.

Mr. Gurmant Grewal: Mr. Speaker, I would like to withdraw that amendment and change it. I move that the motion be amended by inserting between the words "to" and "state" the word "unequivocally".

Mr. Svend J. Robinson: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

My understanding was that an amendment had been moved and seconded and was before the House and could only be withdrawn by unanimous consent. Is that not correct?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): The original amendment was before the House. I will just do a little consultation with the clerk to make sure we are on solid ground here.

The amendment had been presented by the member for Surrey Central in debate. It had not been presented to the House by the Chair and in that event had not been formally introduced to the House. It is perfectly within the normal procedure for the member on a point of order to rescind his earlier amendment and revise his amendment, which would then in due course be taken to the table officers and then to the Chair for presentation. We will do that right now.

Mr. Svend J. Robinson: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

I do not want to unduly prolong the debate, but there is a procedural issue here which is a serious one.

As I understand it, the hon. member during the course of debate had put forward an amendment, had moved and seconded an amendment to the motion which was before the House. He then sat down having concluded his intervention in the debate.

• (1050)

He subsequently rose on a point of order and sought the consent of the House to put forward a different amendment. Perhaps the Chair could assist us but as I understand it, it is not in order to seek to put an amendment before the House when rising on a point of order.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): The hon. member for Burnaby—Douglas has a point. I am going to consult with the clerk and we will sort this out.

Mr. Gary Lunn: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The hon. member for Burnaby—Douglas is challenging the rule of the Chair when it has already ruled. That is inappropriate and he is not permitted to do that when the Chair has already ruled on the point of order.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): The Chair is not so insecure that he cannot take guidance from wherever it comes.

The hon. member for Burnaby—Douglas is quite correct. On reflection, we had on debate recognized the original amendment from the hon. member for Surrey Central. The member had taken his place and did subsequently rise on a point of order. It is established procedure that an amendment cannot be introduced on a point of order.

Therefore the first amendment stands. The second amendment is not receivable. We will now look at the first amendment.

Ms. Marlene Catterall: Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to have confirmation of the Chair's willingness to be flexible and review its decisions.

I do want to be quite clear. I understood that the hon. member moved a motion during the debate and that is the one that stands according to your ruling. However, I also heard you say that the other member had proposed a motion during his speech in debate which is not before the House. Can we have that clarified?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): No, that is not the case. It was on a point of order that the hon. member for Burnaby—Douglas brought to the attention of the Chair a procedural error. This is being rectified. It is better to be rectified now than at 10 o'clock tonight.

Mr. Randy White: Mr. Speaker, I am not sure what that amendment was. Could the Chair please confirm it for me?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): To the House leader of the official opposition, I do not have a written copy of the second amendment which is not going to be introduced. I could return the first amendment to the hon. opposition House leader.

The clerk has brought to my attention that the Chair has yet to receive the original amendment. Until the original amendment is received by the Chair from the hon. member for Surrey Central, the debate will be on the motion as presented.

For clarification, the Chair does not have an amendment at this time.

• (1055)

Mr. Randy White: Mr. Speaker, let me clarify this. My colleague from Surrey Central introduced an amendment. He had a written amendment here which he tried to subsequently introduce. There is no other amendment. We do not have another amendment here.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): We will check the blues and we will take the time necessary to do so.

In his debate the member for Surrey Central presented an amendment verbally to the House. The normal procedure is that

Supply

that would be signed and presented to the Chair. If the Chair does not receive that, then we do not have it and we go to the original motion as presented.

Therefore, because we do not have an amendment the debate is on the original motion. It is not an amended motion. There has been no amendment presented to the Chair.

Mr. Gurmant Grewal: Mr. Speaker, I signed one amendment. I gave it to the clerk and the clerk has it. It has been presented to the hon. Chair.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): The member for Surrey Central says that he signed an amendment. Apparently the amendment he signed has been given to the Chair. That was the second amendment presented to the House. It is not an amendment receivable by the Chair.

Ms. Bev Desjarlais (Churchill, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it may come out as a question but I certainly have a comment.

The hon. member indicated that he is a fairly recent immigrant to Canada. He said that people come to Canada because of the definition of marriage and that this is of great value to him. I recognize that it is a value.

Another reason a good many people come to Canada is because of the persecution they face in their own countries. They may be in a same sex relationship and may not be given the same opportunities to be treated fairly as is what happens in Canada under our charter of rights.

To bring the marriage issue and the term marriage up as being the most important thing and then to slam same sex relationships is not the way to go about doing this. A number of Canadians believe strongly that those in same sex relationships should have all the benefits of other Canadians but they feel a great affinity to the term marriage because of how they have perceived marriage through Christian beliefs and through the unity of their partnerships.

I would suggest rather than be divisive that Reform take a serious look at its approach to things. The member should consider seriously the real reasons people come to Canada. It is not just for the term marriage.

Mr. Gurmant Grewal: Mr. Speaker, there are many reasons that motivate prospective immigrants to Canada.

One reason is the definition of marriage with family as the cornerstone of our society. What is a family? How do families begin? The definition of marriage is the one we are debating here. Prospective immigrants view the definition of marriage as it is stated in the law and which we are here to reaffirm today as one of the reasons.

That was one of the reasons I came to Canada. With due respect, this is the definition of marriage. It is between one man and one woman. That is what we are here to reaffirm today.

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member's colleague, the member for Calgary Centre, has referred to gay and lesbian families, the families of two gay men or two lesbian women who are raising children as gender deprived parenting. He said that these families are somehow deficient.

• (1100)

Does the hon. member for Surrey Central agree with this attack and this insult on families in Canada who happen to be made up of two women and their children or two men raising children? Does he agree that this is, to use the words of his colleague, gender deprived parenting? Does he also agree, presumably, that a single parent family in which there is only one woman raising children or one man raising children is a gender deprived family and similarly is a defective or a deficient family?

Will the hon. member for Surrey Central explain why he is apparently agreeing with this appalling attack on families in Canada who happen to be made up of gay and lesbian people raising children?

Mr. Gurmant Grewal: Mr. Speaker, what we are debating here is the definition of marriage. On this side of the House we are not against anyone or anything. We are here today simply to reaffirm the definition of marriage as a marriage between a man and a woman. That is the only issue we are debating today.

Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I heard the member speak about immigrants coming to Canada. I was recently at the citizenship court and heard the judge speaking to new Canadians who were swearing the oath of allegiance to Canada and becoming citizens. The citizenship judge in Vancouver told them that the most important thing about becoming a Canadian was understanding diversity and equality.

I was very surprised to hear the comments from the member that somehow the particular view that the member holds would be enforced on all other Canadians.

Mr. Gurmant Grewal: Mr. Speaker, my constituency is one of the largest constituencies in Canada. I have a diverse population in my riding. I am here to represent my constituents. They have been calling to tell me that they want to reaffirm the definition of marriage as a marriage between a man and a woman.

Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise to respond to the motion this morning on behalf of the Government of Canada.

Let me clearly state that the Government of Canada will be supporting the motion in the House today. The fact that we will be

supporting the motion should come as a surprise to no one. I would like to thank the hon. member for tabling the motion for the consideration of the House and for giving the government the opportunity to clarify our position on this important issue.

We on this side agree that the institution of marriage is a central and important institution in the lives of many Canadians. It plays an important part in all societies worldwide, second only to the fundamental importance of family to all of us.

[*Translation*]

The institution of marriage is of great importance to large numbers of Canadians, and the definition of marriage as found in the hon. member's motion is clear in law.

[*English*]

As stated in the motion, the definition of marriage is already clear in law. It is not found in a statute, but then not all law exists in statutes, and the law is no less binding and no less the law because it is found in the common law instead of in a statute.

The definition of marriage, which has been consistently applied in Canada, comes from an 1866 British case which holds that marriage is "the union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others". That case and that definition are considered clear law by ordinary Canadians, by academics and by the courts. The courts have upheld the constitutionality of that definition.

The Ontario court, general division, recently upheld in *Layland and Beaulne* the definition of marriage. In that decision a majority of the court stated the following:

—unions of persons of the same sex are not "marriages", because of the definition of marriage. The applicants are, in effect, seeking to use s. 15 of the Charter to bring about a change in the definition of marriage. I do not think the Charter has that effect.

• (1105)

One may then ask why we are here today and why we are using the already limited time of the House to debate a motion, on which, I suspect, there will be no fundamental disagreement inside or outside the House.

I am aware, as are other ministers, that recent court decisions and resulting media coverage have raised concern around the issue of same sex partners. It appears that the hon. member believes that the motion is both necessary and effective as a means to keep the Government of Canada from suddenly legislating the legalization of same sex marriages. That kind of misunderstanding of the intention of the government should be corrected.

Let me state again for the record that the government has no intention of changing the definition of marriage or of legislating

Supply

same sex marriages. No jurisdiction worldwide defines a legal marriage as existing between same sex partners. Even those few European countries such as Denmark, Norway and Holland, which have recently passed legislation giving recognition to same sex relationships and extending some of the same benefits and responsibilities as available to married spouses, maintain a clear distinction in the law between marriage and same sex registered partnerships.

Norway's ministry published a statement in 1994 that makes this distinction clear. Although a same sex relationship may have many of the same needs, the Norwegian government clarified that it, the same sex partnership, can

—never be the same as marriage, neither socially nor from a religious point of view. (Registered partnership) does not replace or compete with heterosexual marriage—and the opportunity for homosexuals to register their partnerships will not lead to more people opting for homosexual relationships rather than marriage.

I fundamentally do not believe that it is necessary to change the definition of marriage in order to accommodate the equality issues around same sex partners which now face us as Canadians. The courts have ruled that some recognition must be given to the realities of unmarried cohabitation in terms of both opposite sex and same sex partners.

I strongly believe that the message to the government and to all Canadian governments from the Canadian public is a message of tolerance, fairness and respect for others.

For those who remain concerned, I would point out that recent surveys of young people indicate that marriage has not gone out of style in Canada. The majority of young people still expect to marry. The marriage rate is still similar to that of the 1920s, although a rising number are re-marriages, and that Canadian marriages still on average last longer than those in the United States.

The motion speaks of taking all necessary steps to preserve the definition of marriage in Canada. While I and the government support the motion, I feel strongly that marriage is already very clear in Canadian minds and in Canadian law, and that there is little that the House must do as a necessary step to in any way add to the clarity of the law.

Marriage has fundamental value and importance to Canadians and we do not believe on this side of the House that importance and value is in any way threatened or undermined by others seeking to have their long term relationships recognized. I support the motion for maintaining the clear legal definition of marriage in Canada as the union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others.

At this time I would like to move an amendment to the motion. I move:

That the motion be amended by inserting after the word "steps" the words "within the jurisdiction of the Parliament of Canada".

Supply

• (1110)

Mr. Eric Lowther: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I believe that the seconder of the motion is required to be in his or her seat when he or she seconds. The member was not in her seat at the time of the seconding and I therefore think you should consider the motion null and void.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): As a matter of interest, I checked with the clerk on exactly that point no more than 30 seconds ago. I was informed that the member needs only to be in the House, recognized by the Speaker as a legitimate member, and to be anywhere within the purview of the Speaker.

The amendment is in order and is accepted. The debate is on the amendment.

Mr. Gary Lunn (Saanich—Gulf Islands, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the Minister of Justice for supporting the motion. I also agree with her comment about marriage being an important institution.

She posed a couple of questions in her speech. She asked why we are here today and then put out the suggestion that it is a redundant motion.

I went to sleep last night thinking about the motion. Often in the House we get so caught up in the day to day activities and with what is in the press that we sometimes lose focus on the truly important issues. Sometimes things create a life of their own. As we have seen many times through the courts on various issues, completely separate and apart from this, they do create a life of their own and the courts are left to interpret.

Does the Minister of Justice agree that parliament is the supreme lawmaker of the country? Is it not very important for the courts to get a very clear, simple message from the Parliament of Canada on where we stand on this issue? In the past in many cases we have not done that and we have left it up to the courts to shape the law of the country. The Minister of Justice and I both recognize that happens all the time.

Does the Minister of Justice not think that this will send a very clear signal to the courts on where the Parliament of Canada stands on the issue?

Hon. Anne McLellan: Mr. Speaker, I think the point I have tried to make on behalf of the government is that we do believe that the definition of marriage is clear. It is clear in the law of Canada and it was the courts that made the definition clear.

As I indicated in my comments, the definition of marriage as a union between one man and one woman is found in the common law of our country and the common law of our system of law. It is also found in the civil law of the country. This is clear and we are

therefore able to support the motion as presented by the official opposition. If it is believed that some clarity is required around that, so be it.

We thought perhaps we could spend our time debating other issues as opposed to that on which there is clarity in the law.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): You have no idea how much I enjoy the opportunity to stand and interrupt the Minister of Justice because when we first met 10 years ago I could not interrupt her. However, this time I can.

• (1115)

Mr. Peter Mancini (Sydney—Victoria, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the minister and is with regard to the amendment that has been moved in the House.

I think she would agree with me, given the nature of the amendment, that jurisdictional controversies in terms of authority, be it federal or provincial, is extremely clouded in this area. I quote from Professor Hogg:

The federal power in terms of regulating marriage has been largely undetermined.

In terms of the main motion there is some question as to the power and jurisdiction of the federal government. Would the minister agree with me on that?

Hon. Anne McLellan: Mr. Speaker, I respect the hon. member's comment and that of Professor Hogg, dean of Osgoode Hall Law School. There is divided jurisdiction in the area of family law and divided jurisdiction in relation to marriage. The federal government has jurisdiction over marriage and divorce. The provinces have jurisdiction over solemnisation.

That is why I moved the amendment. I wanted to clarify for everyone in the House and in the country that we as a parliament are operating within our jurisdiction. We are not arrogating to ourselves any jurisdiction that we do not have. Obviously we could not do that.

I would hope the official opposition, of all parties, would adopt the amendment and support it. It is important in this federation where we acknowledge diversity and the role of the provinces that we make clear parliament supports the motion operating within its constitutional jurisdiction, however that might ultimately be defined by the courts of the country.

[Translation]

Mr. Michel Bellehumeur (Berthier—Montcalm, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the opposition motion, as amended by the Minister of Justice, addresses an extremely important issue. I think it would be worthwhile for the House to express its views on this issue, which merits reflection.

Supply

I am a bit bothered by the turn the debate is taking. I think there is a slight difference between the motion as drafted and what I am hearing, and that is what is bothering me. I have the feeling Reform Party members want to oppose two concepts. They are using the topic of marriage to oppose the rights of gays and lesbians. It would appear that they want to steer the debate in another direction.

Contrary to what the government will be doing—and I do not know about the opposition parties—the Bloc Québécois will allow a free vote on this issue. Members will be able to vote according to their conscience. This is very important, given the underlying implications.

Personally, I think this is a poor time to debate this issue in the House, before there has really been a substantive public debate. This is an issue to which society must give some thought, one whose evolution over time it must consider. One cannot simply spring it on people as something parliamentarians must vote on.

Canadian and Quebec law and society are evolving. What marriage was considered to be in Great Britain in bygone times may not necessarily hold in 1999 in Canada and Quebec. The minister cited case law that goes back a few years. I would like the House to consider the question of marriage from a much more contemporary angle.

On May 20 the Supreme Court of Canada ruled on an equally important matter, the question as to whether partners of same sex relationships were entitled to support payments under Ontario's Family Law Act.

I can understand that such a ruling would upset some Reformers.

• (1120)

Here again the justices of the supreme court simply applied existing principles of law. They did not invent the wheel. I do not think this lends itself to wild demonstrations in Ontario, in opposition to the interpretation of these Courts have given to the Ontario Family Law Act.

I think things have changed. Had the same decision been rendered 25 years ago, I have no doubt that we would have demonstrated in the streets. Today people are perhaps more open than they were on a similar subject.

In Quebec, I would say we are in the lead. The national assembly has taken extremely important steps to try to establish some equality. Regardless of whether people recognize it, approve it, disapprove of it or not, the fact exists in Quebec society, and the members of the national assembly recognized it.

It was not a decision by the PQ government alone. It was a unanimous decision of the national assembly. I must point that out, because it is not every day there is a consensus in the national assembly or in a parliament. I think it was Bill 32, which obtained the unanimous support of the national assembly to amend a series of acts. If I recall correctly, 28 statutes and 11 regulations were amended in order to give gay and lesbian couples the same rights as couples in a common law relationship. This is a step forward, and I think it is one that received the approval of the people of Quebec.

As we can see, things are changing. We are mulling this question over. Today, in a motion, the Reform members want to block any discussion of this issue. I think it is too early.

It is proper to speak of it because outside the House, in the society as a whole, in our families, it is important for people to tell us what they think about it and how they see things.

Those who are adamant that marriage be between a man and a woman are afraid that one day gay and lesbian couples will claim the right to adopt and other rights. They wonder where their demands will end. This is a legitimate question.

I think that we still have not enough information to be able to make a definite position on such an important issue as this. I believe that marriage is a indeed sufficiently important institution in Canada and in Quebec to warrant our taking the time to address it and to have a definition that is the most representative of the society in which we are living in 1999, on the eve of the year 2000.

There are a number of different concepts involved. There is marriage, there is union, there is the couple. There are a number of different concepts, and I believe that each one needs to be defined.

I had a bit of fun looking up the definition of marriage in the *Petit Robert*. In the latest edition of the *Petit Robert*, it is defined differently than in the one dating from ten years ago. At that time it was defined as the union between a man and a woman.

Today, in the most recent edition of the *Petit Robert*, it is defined as the lawful union of two persons under conditions set out in the law. The dictionary definition of marriage has changed. This means that the definition is an evolving one. A societal debate is required in order to reach a definition.

That leads me to another point I want to address. Initially the Minister of Justice introduced an amendment to the motion to add the words “within the jurisdiction of the Parliament of Canada”. It is far from clear where the Canadian government's jurisdiction over marriage begins and ends.

I have consulted certain documents by constitutional experts in order to see what point we have reached in the evolution of jurisprudence and Canadian constitutional law in this connection.

Supply

• (1125)

In the last edition of their tome on constitutional law, Henri Brun and Guy Tremblay, two PhDs in law from Laval University's faculty of law, have the following to say about apportionment and jurisdiction as they relate to marriage:

The era of the federal government's exclusive jurisdiction over marriage has to do with the fundamental conditions, i.e. capacity of the parties, and impediments. The concurrent provincial jurisdiction with respect to the solemnization of marriage has to do with the preliminary formalities, including obtaining parental consent, in the case of minors.

. . . and it has to do with the actual conduct of the ceremony, including the competence of those officiating. And in the exercise of their jurisdiction, the provinces, like the federal government, may stipulate sanctions up to and including annulling a marriage.

In other words, when it comes to marriage it is not clear what is exclusively federal and what is exclusively provincial. The line is fairly blurred and over time the provinces have acquired increasing powers with respect to marriage, as opposed to divorce, which has always come under the exclusive jurisdiction of Ottawa.

Here too, things have evolved. I will take this opportunity to make my oft-repeated point: if the federal government were to act in good faith, it would withdraw completely from this jurisdiction and allow the provinces complete freedom to legislate with respect to marriage and divorce.

That being said, I think this is an important debate and one which merits public discussion. We cannot give a fast cut and dried answer to this issue, and there should be a much broader discussion. At the same time, great care must be taken not to interfere in what may, according to long-standing custom, be provincial jurisdictions.

[English]

Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member made reference to the dictionary and I thought I would share with him a reference from the dictionary which I looked at this morning. It has to do with the word discrimination.

The hon. member will know that for some members who argue this case the issue here is equality and to not extend equality is to discriminate against a particular group of people. We certainly have seen that in court decisions.

In the dictionary the definition of discrimination includes a mixture. It includes prejudice, bias and victimization, but it also includes distinguishing between favouring or giving notice to. It dawns on me that within the dictionary and within the context of discrimination there is negative discrimination and there is affirmative discrimination.

Would the hon. member like to comment on whether or not he believes that denying same sex marriages is in fact a question of negative discrimination or affirmative discrimination?

[Translation]

Mr. Michel Bellehumeur: Mr. Speaker, the answer to this question depends on the values of our society as a whole. The hon. member would like me to specify whether this is a form of negative or positive discrimination. I would be tempted to say that it is negative discrimination, given that I am someone—and I speak very personally—who is very open.

If someone put this question to me six or eight months ago, or a year ago, my answer might have been different. Today however, with the baggage I carry, with experience, and with what I regularly run into in a riding like Berthier-Montcalm, which is not near the island of Montreal, where there are gay neighbourhoods, but which has men and women with problems relating to their sexual orientation who come to see me, I think that discrimination as the member understands it, is negative. But this is really a very personal response.

[English]

Mr. Grant McNally (Dewdney—Alouette, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I have a very direct question for my Bloc colleague.

In the motion before the House for debate today it states that it is necessary, in light of public debate around recent court decisions, to state that marriage is and should remain the union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others.

• (1130)

I would like to ask my colleague from the Bloc if he personally agrees with that statement. Is he speaking for himself, his constituents or his party when he gives his answer to that question? It is a very direct question and I would like to know whether or not he supports that statement.

[Translation]

Mr. Michel Bellehumeur: Mr. Speaker, I do not know if it is because we do not speak the same mother tongue, but I answered this question at the very outset.

As far as the vote is concerned, I was speaking very personally. For the Bloc Quebecois, the vote will be a free vote. I think the member can understand what that means.

As to the second question, about whether I represent my voters, I will ask him the same question. Is he fairly representing his constituents when, without holding a substantive debate, without a public debate, his party brings such a motion to the House in order to put paid to any potential definition of marriage without even consulting the public at large? Does the member properly represent the voters in his riding?

Supply

I will not answer this question, but I leave a great big question mark. • (1135)

At the moment, it is impossible to make a definitive statement on such an issue, because in my riding, as throughout Quebec and across Canada, we have not looked seriously at the issue. Clearly no responsible decision on the matter can be taken using all the stereotypes brought up by the member.

[English]

Mr. Peter Mancini (Sydney—Victoria, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to address this motion today, especially following some of the eloquent and learned comments that have been made by the speakers preceding me. I particularly want to comment later on in my remarks on the Minister of Justice's amendment to the motion. I think it is an important amendment.

First let me say that there is no greater spiritual union than that of marriage. There is no more intimate spiritual union than that of someone who makes a commitment for life to an idea, to a person, to what they believe. We use that word marriage. It is the most private commitment one can make. Although we celebrate marriage as a public event, the reality is the signing of papers, the commitment that is made in writing, the commitment that is made before God is perhaps the most private and intimate commitment we can make as human beings.

I say that because the word marriage has been talked about in terms of definitions. An hon. member from the government side and an hon. member from the Bloc went to the dictionary to define marriage. We have commented that it changes with time and it does, but it is clearly to correlate a pair, it is clearly to join together. In fact, those of us from the maritime provinces grew up knowing that when we splice the ends of a rope together, we say we marry them. When a carpenter joins together certain pieces, they are married. We marry up certain things.

When I talk about the intense commitment of one person, I think about one of my relatives. She will not be happy that I am saying this publicly, but I believe next year she will celebrate her 50th anniversary. Fifty years ago she put on a wedding ring. She made a commitment. She has stayed true to that commitment. Her marriage was to her church. Her marriage was to the ideology and the beliefs she believes came to her intimately and that is the career to which she is married. That is the intimate contract she has made with whom she sees as her God.

Marriage takes all kinds of forms. From reading history we know that Elizabeth I under pressure from France, from her ambassadors to marry the king of France, to marry the king of Spain, finally came to parliament and said "Behold lords, I am married. See the ring. I am married to England".

Marriage has many connotations. We have to bear that in mind because we are dealing with words. Words in this chamber are important. I look at the motion in that light; I look at it in terms of what the words are. Some of them are important. We have had definitions of marriage and what it means.

I have some concern with the motion when it says that parliament will take all necessary steps to preserve that definition. We need clarification on that. I do not know what that means. Obviously it could mean invoking the notwithstanding clause of the constitution should the courts at some future date overrule what is contested here as being the legal definition of marriage, but how much further do we go if we invoke the notwithstanding clause? Do we go further than that? If two individuals of the same sex, let us say, decide that they will fill out forms and say that they are married, how far do we go to preserve the definition? We need some clarity on that.

We look at the constitution. I am glad the Minister of Justice made the amendment, because when I first read this motion, something did not sit right. It has been a long time since I have been in law school, but somehow I thought, there is a jurisdictional issue here and I do not know what it is. I did a little research. It has been commented on by my colleague from the Bloc. Professor Hogg said:

The federal authority in relation to "marriage"—the first branch of s. 91 (of the BNA Act)—has to be read side by side with the provincial authority in relation to "the solemnization of marriage in the province" (s. 92 of the BNA Act). In fact most of the laws concerning marriage have been enacted by the provinces, and the courts have tended to construe the provincial power liberally. The scope of federal power has been left largely undetermined.

I put that question to the minister and she agreed with me. I do not know what it means to the House that the minister and myself agree. There is Professor Hogg who may be a little more authoritative. I cite again:

The only federal law ever to come before the courts was one which declared that every marriage performed in accordance with the laws of the place where it was performed was to be recognized as a valid marriage everywhere in Canada.

It goes on to say that it was challenged, but their lordships expanded the power of the provinces.

We are debating a motion that clearly is one of those that overlaps the two spheres of federal and provincial authority. I caution the House on that. We have to be very careful before we interfere with the jurisdiction of the provinces.

A red light went on when I read this motion. I remember when I was married that we applied to the province for a marriage licence. It is the province that sanctions the marriage. It is the federal government that sanctions divorce.

Supply

We have to bear in mind those words and those jurisdictional questions when we look at this motion. They require further debate. We will hear about that as the day wears on and it will be a long day. I understand we are here until 6.30.

We also have to go behind the motion. This has been commented on by the mover and seconder of the motion. We began discussing what marriage is and what it should be and whether or not this government has the power and jurisdiction to enforce the legal definition. Then we moved into a debate about recent court rulings. It is fair to say that there is a great separation here between what is marriage and what the courts have determined in terms of same sex benefits.

There has been some comment by both the mover of the motion and the seconder or the speaker who immediately followed him in reference to some of the cases. The mover of the motion cited the Corbett case when he mentioned that the supreme court has determined what marriage is. In that definition, which is the court's and not his, he says it clearly requires the physical sexual intercourse relationship, the intimacy of that physical relationship.

It will be noted that in my opening remarks I did not refer to that. Marriage is a spiritual union more so than a physical union; even more so is the spiritual element of it.

• (1140)

If this debate is really about limiting benefits to same sex individuals, I would go further than that. A constituent came up to me and said, "I have no problem with this issue of same sex benefits. I think it should go further. Why should I be precluded from naming as my survivor my daughter who has looked after me for 20 years?" Why should two sisters who are elderly and have looked after each other their whole lives, be prohibited from the rights of survivorship that we traditionally ascribe to a husband and wife?

If this debate is really about fear of extending same sex benefits that were traditionally to a husband and wife to members of the same sex who have a longstanding relationship or to members of the same family who have a longstanding relationship, then I think that is a different debate altogether. I have some concern that that may be the underlying thrust given the comments that have been made and all the references to same sex benefits and supreme court decisions.

In light of that, it is a complex motion. I applaud the member for bringing it before the House because it is an important motion. But those are questions we will have to hear from the Reform Party on in terms of clarifying this important issue as the day wears on.

Mr. Keith Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the Reform Party has articulated a tolerant message on the situation. Overarching the motion which we are putting forth today

is one of tolerance. I want to make that clear. I applaud the Minister of Justice for her fine speech most of which we agree with—

My hon. colleague touched on a very important issue, that of registered domestic partnerships. If we take the concept of what people do in their bedrooms behind closed doors completely out of this issue, it will enable us to uphold the traditional concept of marriage, one which this party supports. It will also enable us to recognize and respect the diversity of relationships that occur and the reciprocal relationships of responsibility and long term commitment that exist in our country.

I ask the member from the NDP whether he would support the concept of registered domestic partnerships when it comes to dealing with the issue of benefits.

Mr. Peter Mancini: Mr. Speaker, I have some history and experience in this regard, having practised family law for some 10 years.

I not only encourage registered domestic partnerships, I encourage marriage contracts. I have represented many people who have been through difficult divorce situations. I represented people in common law relationships, before the courts took the initiative to define what were the rights of people who had not gone through a marriage ceremony but who lived in a common law relationship for a long time. It seemed to me it would have been a whole lot clearer, a whole lot saner, a whole lot easier and probably a whole lot cheaper if those parties had registered what the nature of their agreement was, what assets would be divided, what assets would be shared, what obligations if any would arise from the termination of the relationship.

Registered domestic partnerships are a good thing. They lend clarity. In terms of survivor benefits, I agree it would take care of the issue I raised which was brought to me by a constituent about someone who wants to ensure that the person who has looked after them who may be a family member is entitled to share in the benefits that a traditional spouse before the supreme court changed that definition would have shared in.

I thank the member for the question. I think it is an important question. I would have no objection to it.

Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, earlier the NDP member for Vancouver East and the NDP member for Burnaby—Douglas talked about equality and that to deny equality to gays and lesbians is inappropriate and we have to address that.

The government and now most members who have spoken have said that they support the definition of marriage which is in the law, that of a man and a woman and to the exclusion of all others. We then are faced with the proposition that anybody who supports heterosexual marriage, to the exclusion of same sex marriages, is going to be labelled as a homophobic. It is clear that anybody who

supports heterosexual marriages will then be labelled as homophobic. I want the member's reaction to that.

• (1145)

There is a commercial on credit cards which says that membership has its privileges. When the member considers the decisions of *Egan, M. v H. Rosenberg, et cetera*, it is clear that all of the privileges of marriage are no longer distinctive and distinguished.

The only thing that same sex partners do not enjoy right now are property rights, which can be dealt with as common law couples do, by contract.

The fundamental question is this. If there is marriage, but if there are no privileges and no distinction to marriage, then does it not just become a piece of paper? Why is it that the Government of Canada, the laws of Canada and virtually everybody in the House support marriage with no privileges?

Mr. Peter Mancini: Mr. Speaker, the first part of the question concerned equality. I am paraphrasing, but my recollection of Aristotle is that he said equality means that all people are entitled to the same thing. It is a simple definition but, like everything Aristotle said, it is open to interpretation and it has been for some three centuries. I would also look to section 15 of the charter of rights and freedoms in determining that equality does mean that people are entitled to the same treatment before the law.

I do not think the hon. member meant this in the harshest tones in which he said it, that everybody who supports heterosexual marriages is seen as being homophobic. I do not think that is true. I know many homosexuals who support heterosexual marriages. I support heterosexual marriages, as I am in one. However, I do not think it is fair to say that people who came to our wedding are homophobic, because they certainly are not. I know he did not mean it in that context. I think that requires some clarification.

In terms of equality, I would look to section 15 of the charter and I would look to the court's interpretation.

Mr. Peter MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, PC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise on behalf of the Progressive Conservative Party to take part in this debate. The hon. member for Calgary Centre has brought forward an issue that raises a great number of questions, perhaps more questions than we will be able to deal with in the time allotted for this debate.

The difficult aspect that I have with the motion and the wording of the motion is that it talks of the need to deal with this issue, which suggests that it is one of timeliness. I have to take some umbrage with that. I find myself agreeing with much of the discussion and the debate that is taking place, in particular when it was stated clearly by the Minister of Justice and echoed by other

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members that the definition of marriage already has quite a clear definition in common and civil law in this country. The acceptance of that reality in Canada is such that it leads me to question the necessity for this debate at this time, particularly given some of the very topical and more timely issues that exist.

We know of the strife that currently exists in places like Yugoslavia. We know, as well, that within our current justice system there is much that needs more full and open debate. We know that there is a crisis on the agriculture scene in western Canada, where most, if not all, Reform Party members find their homes. We know that tremendous challenges are being faced by our citizens in Atlantic Canada because of high unemployment and downturns in traditional industries like the fishery.

That is not to say for a moment that this issue is not one of importance. It is certainly one that I would suggest raises a great deal of emotion, which sometimes leads to extreme lines of thought.

• (1150)

Although it is an important issue, and is indeed important for those assembled here today and for those across the country to reflect on, I would suggest, given the amount of time that we have and the issues that are currently before us, that this is not something in which we should become bogged down. In acknowledging that marriage has very sacred and religious connotations and implications, and that there is always the need for the involvement of the church in this type of debate, there is also a need to acknowledge that there is a great deal of tolerance and clear thinking that has to be put forward before one draws clear legal definitions in the sand.

In my previous statement I said that the definition of marriage remains in place and intact to this time. To suggest, as is presumptive in this particular motion, that this is somehow under attack and is an issue of panic or urgency for Canadians is a misrepresentation.

This motion is very broad and asks for an affirmation, I suggest, of what already exists. The motion restates the current state of the law, both common and civil. Therefore, I question the nature of the motion, but I also question the motive for this debate. I cannot help but suggest that it is a presumptive and provocative attempt to raise what is considered a very divisive issue.

That is not to undermine the importance of the issue. There are many who would argue, in fact we have heard the argument today, that there is an erosion of social morals and that it stems from a decline in the institution of marriage. I personally do not prescribe to that thought. I believe that it runs much deeper and is far more complicated. My friend, the previous speaker from the New Democratic Party, spoke very eloquently about the intimacy and the personal elements of marriage. I believe that to be very true.

Supply

This motion does not call for specifics. It does not call for an amendment to current legislation, particularly the Criminal Code. It does not speak of charter amendments. It does not speak of highlighting one particular right over another. It calls for the Government of Canada to acknowledge that this is an important issue. I think we have been given fairly concrete and static assurances from the Minister of Justice in her appearance in the House today.

What the motion does not do is dwell on the important issues which, in a sense, I feel we have perhaps a higher degree of responsibility to respond to in a timely fashion. We do not talk about jobs, health care, education, a desire for a better quality of life or deal with conflict where we find it. In fact, this is an attempt to seek out a conflict on a moral issue. I am afraid that leaders sometimes simplify issues that divide instead of bind our Canadian people.

Some day there may be a challenge to the constitutional definition of marriage. We heard from a speaker today that this has occurred in the province of Ontario, and it may occur again. Again, it underscores that there is a sense of paranoia that the courts will completely betray us. There have certainly been controversial decisions made, but they will be remedied over time. There will be an opportunity for us to reflect on them and to make corrections when needed in this legislature.

Why on the last day do we find ourselves, before we are to grant supply to the government, discussing an issue such as this? I cannot help but suggest that there is some degree of an attempt to raise ire and hackles and to divide individuals, not only in the House amongst party affiliations but around the country, for crass political gain.

We are going to be exercising our rights in the House of Commons today to raise grievances before voting on all of the money that the Government of Canada is going to spend in the coming year. To a certain degree this allotted day is a little different than any other day. This day has a greater priority. We have an opportunity to bring grievances to the Government of Canada. This is an ancient right that we can exercise in this place. It is an opportunity for us to remind the government that there is a greater degree of accountability and responsibility that it should be exercising.

I suggest that the government has in many ways abused the privileges and its relationship with parliament. To a degree we know this is happening. There is strife within the caucus of the government.

We have an opportunity to send a message to the government today with respect to our confidence in the job that it is doing in representing Canadians. One of the messages that I believe should be sent is that we are not having enough opportunity to interact directly with ministers of the crown at committee or in the House.

Time and time again we see important announcements made in the press gallery instead of here in the House of Commons. We have a very limited opportunity to interact at the committee level. We have one hour wherein we might be able to pose a handful of questions and receive very packed, evasive, non-informative answers.

• (1155)

There is a message that can be sent tonight with respect to the confidence that we have in the government when we stand in our place to vote. I believe that, in and of itself, it is an important message which should be sent and received by the government.

Turning back specifically to the motion before the House, I do not profess to stand to speak for every member of the Progressive Conservative caucus when I say that this is a motion of importance which needs to be flushed out. It is not the priority of the government at this time, nor should it be. This motion is an attempt, I believe, to somehow give Canadians the sense that a crisis exists and that is simply not the case.

I believe that we should be having consultations. I am sure the mover of this motion has heard from his constituents. I know that in my constituency of Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough there are many who have very strong and very reasonable attachments to the institution of marriage. That is fine. That is the way it should be. I do not believe that the institution of marriage is under attack or is in jeopardy, as this motion might suggest.

There are two very separate and distinct issues. I believe the hon. member would acknowledge that the issue of financial security, the issue of same sex benefits accruing to partners, is quite separate and apart. I do not believe the suggestion that one leads necessarily to the other. The courts themselves have given very clear rulings. The legislatures throughout the country, provincially and at the federal level, have in some cases led and in some cases followed. However, I do not believe that in this forum, in this debate today, we are going to find the magical answers that will preserve or fortify the institution of marriage. That is not going to be accomplished.

Again, I do not believe that the institution of marriage is in jeopardy. I believe that it is going to remain a very strong and important institution. When we talk of family and family definitions we find that traditional views of family have changed and they will continue to change and evolve. That is not to say that they will change necessarily for the worse, where there will be a clear reversal of what we have traditionally viewed as family. The importance of fortifying values in this country is recognizing what is safe, what is healthy and what is going to create a better citizenry.

I am afraid that this debate will not further that, at least not to the desired end. When we have an opportunity to vote this evening, the Progressive Conservative Party will be voting individually.

Supply

Mr. Gary Lunn (Saanich—Gulf Islands, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I find that the member for Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough is not too sure where he stands. On the one hand he is suggesting that members of the Reform Party are trying to create panic or are attacking. He even used the word “misrepresentation”. The member suggests that we have ulterior motives, that this is a divisive issue. Yet on the other hand he said that this is a motion of importance.

The member cannot have it both ways. He is talking about jobs and health care. Those are issues which we talk about every day. No one is suggesting that they are not important issues.

The member has to decide which way it is. I know that he and I both agree on the definition of marriage, without question. The member said that this motion will not fortify the institution of marriage. Is the member telling us that this House of Commons has no influence on our courts? We are both members of the bar. We know that judges look to the House of Commons, to the comments which were made and how we voted. Will this not send a message to the courts telling them exactly where the Parliament of Canada stands?

Which way is it? Is it an issue of importance or does the member not believe it is? Nobody in this party is suggesting a panic attack. Those are words coming out of the hon. member's mouth, not from the Reform Party of Canada.

● (1200)

Mr. Peter MacKay: Mr. Speaker, this is an issue of much consternation, even within the member's party. I fully acknowledge that decisions made in the House of Commons and in parliament generally will affect the current law. They will change the current law in most instances.

The definition of marriage and all the implications that flow from marriage, be it a legal definition, a moral definition or a person's own personal decision, will not be decided ultimately here. I suggest there are constantly changing definitions and constantly changing views of what is and what is not traditional in the country.

It is fine for the hon. member to suggest that we should clearly state that this is black and this is white, but that is not the case in an issue such as this one. Try as we might to cram things into small packages and to paint people into a corner, I do not believe we will further the debate by taking that stance, which is classic of the Reform Party.

Ms. Bev Desjarlais (Churchill, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I commend the hon. member for Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough on his very cohesive and reasonable remarks regarding the issue at hand.

I happen to agree with him. I believe the motion has been brought forth to be divisive, to create friction and to create a feeling that anyone who opposes the motion is opposed to heterosexual relationships, is un-Christian and all other things that will stir up the feelings of Canadians.

I have my own personal feelings about the terms of marriage. Just as my colleague from Sydney—Victoria stated, it is a spiritual relationship as well. It does not tie into having children or ensuring a sexual relationship. There is more to marriage than that, but I believe very strongly that the issue is before the House just to create friction which does not necessarily have to be there at a time when there are many things of great importance to Canadians.

It is not that the issue is not important, not that marriage is not important and not that recognizing the institution of marriage is not important. It is. To suggest that anybody who would oppose the motion is anti-marriage, anti-heterosexual and pro-gay lesbian as compared to being in favour of heterosexuals is just crazy.

It is despicable that we have a party sitting in the Parliament of Canada which pushes that kind of let us get on gays and lesbians attitude. Quite frankly that is what the Reform Party does when it brings forward these types of issues ahead of very important issues that should be before the House.

Mr. Peter MacKay: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for her comments. I tend to agree that hot button politics are not needed at this time in the country. Hopefully we will enter a perhaps more stable period on the political landscape. The last thing we need to do is to try to find open wounds and pick at them. That is not productive.

Because of our charter and because of the way our history has evolved, individuals in the country have been left with many rights and freedoms, but they are often collective rights and silent majority rights that are not always heard.

It is never difficult to find issues that inflame passions. What is difficult is trying to find a very tolerant and non-intrusive path to take that will be respectful of the collective rights and respectful of individual rights. That is what we should be striving to do.

Mr. Gary Lunn (Saanich—Gulf Islands, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise on this very important issue. After listening to the last few speakers, I want to read something:

That, in the opinion of this House, it is necessary, in light of public debate around recent court decisions, to state that marriage is and should remain the union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others, and that Parliament will take all necessary steps to preserve this definition of marriage in Canada.

● (1205)

I do not know how much clearer we can get than that. We talk about hot button politics. With some of the comments being made

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by the other parties in the House, I would be ashamed to be associated with those parties.

We are here to talk about one issue and only one issue. That is the definition of marriage between one man and one woman. I lay awake last night for a long time thinking about this issue. I truly want to thank the hon. member for Calgary Centre for bringing forward the motion. He has been a very strong person in support of this message and has had the courage to bring this very important issue before parliament.

Often in the House we get caught up, and rightly so, in raising our standard of living, taxes, health care and the war in Kosovo. We talk about those subjects hour in and hour out and sometimes it is my belief that we lose focus on the bigger, very important issues. This is one of them.

I have been in the courts as a member of the bar. Judges are always shaping the law of the land. The law of the land has been by no means static. It is very dynamic. It changes over time. When judges make their rulings it is very important to them that they look at where the legislatures and the parliament of the country stand on various issues.

Quite often lawyers presenting cases will refer to *Hansard*. We have seen in recent court decisions where the courts interpret a variety of issues. In British Columbia this year a judge ruled that possession of child pornography is not a crime in Canada. Of course the country was immediately outraged.

This is a case where parliament has an opportunity to send a very clear message, and it is painfully simple, on where the Parliament of Canada stands on the definition of marriage. Parliament is the supreme lawmaker of Canada. We know the definition of marriage in the books right now and we have an opportunity to reaffirm that, which I think is very important.

Many members have suggested that there is a much deeper meaning to what we are trying to do. I want to talk about that deeper meaning. I want to go deep inside this definition and this motion to what we are trying to do.

After spending hours thinking about this and looking at it from all angles, the deepest meaning I can come up with is that we are reaffirming the definition of marriage between one man and one woman. Nothing else. That is it. It is painfully simple. It cannot be confused with any other issues.

I have sat in parliament for the past few years. I appreciate that somebody would bring forward this motion because it is what really matters to Canadians. Actually I am offended when I hear members of other parties trying to minimize its importance. They

have asked what the Reform Party is doing. They have said that this law is on the books and have asked why it is wasting time and why it has come forward with this meaningless motion.

Some 85 members of the House of Commons, or almost one-third, have tabled petitions on the definition of marriage containing hundreds of thousands of signatures. I cannot recall another issue in which so many Canadian people have believed so strongly that they wanted to send a message and table that many petitions. I have seen members table petitions that are inches high.

• (1210)

I am truly offended by members who suggest that this is not an important issue to Canadians; that it does not deserve time in parliament; that it does not deserve members of the House taking a stand and sending an unequivocal, clear message to all of Canada, to all the courts and to all members of the bar that this is where the House of Commons stands on this issue. There is nothing deeper than that.

We have heard the Minister of Justice say that she will support it, but to suggest that this is not an important issue is to have missed the mark. I emphasize the number of signatures. How much plainer and simpler can we get than this definition? There are no other issues. There is no hidden agenda, absolutely nothing.

Mr. Paul Szabo: Your nose is growing.

Mr. Gary Lunn: Mr. Speaker, I heard a member on the other side say my nose is growing. It is ridiculous to even suggest that.

There is one agenda. I say that sincerely, with all my heart. In all my discussions with my colleagues in the Reform Party behind closed doors in our caucus, the one topic that has come up is the definition of marriage between a man and a woman. That is it and nothing else.

If the members cannot accept that, if they cannot accept the importance of that and what it means to Canadians, I believe they have missed something. It is important. As a member of the bar, as a lawyer, I think it is truly important that the House of Commons sends very clear messages to all courts. They are looking for that. Often we see our courts struggle with decisions because parliamentarians have not had the courage to make a statement; they do not want to make a statement. The courts say this is an issue on which parliament should rule.

This is an opportunity for us. I anticipate that virtually every member of the House will support the motion for the right reasons. It states just what it does. It is a truly important motion, one that I am proud to speak on, one I am proud to represent the constituents of Saanich—Gulf Islands on, that the Parliament of Canada believes that the institution of marriage should be preserved, that it

should be between one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others. We should be prepared to make that statement without minimizing it, without saying that it is not important or without saying we should not be talking about it.

I truly believe it is an important issue. It is worthy of the time of the House to push it to a vote to make sure that all officers of the courts and all the judges in the country know exactly where we stand on the issue.

It is high time that we start sending messages to the courts on many other issues such as child pornography and others that we often do not deal with. It is time that we take a stand so that the courts understand and make the definition so painfully simple that nobody can misinterpret it.

In conclusion, I will read the motion one more time so that everyone remembers what we are talking about, because some people have not been able to read it:

That, in the opinion of this House, it is necessary, in light of public debate around recent court decisions, to state that marriage is and should remain the union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others, and that Parliament will take all necessary steps to preserve this definition of marriage in Canada.

This is what the debate is about and nothing else. Hopefully members have got it now.

Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, despite the protestations of the member it is very clear to all in the House, and indeed to all Canadians, that the issues are certainly much broader than the definition of marriage and what constitutes marriage.

• (1215)

The Minister of Justice spoke in the House earlier and confirmed that the motion as stated with the amendment that it is within the jurisdiction of the federal parliament is in fact the law of Canada. The member is quite right. The government will support the motion on the basis that the government is defending the laws of Canada.

The member will also well know of the supreme court decisions. In the Egan decision there was the concept of permitted discrimination with regard to survivor benefits. In the Rosenberg decision and in *M. v H.* the Supreme Court of Canada raised a number of issues. In fact it has painted parliament into a corner to act and in the absence of acting the courts will make those decisions.

It is one of the reasons the discussions are going on now about whether or not there should be an omnibus bill to deal with all of the items pursuant to those court decisions, rather than approach them as we did with Bill C-78. Despite the protestations of the member it is very clear that there is a much broader issue on the table.

Supply

My question for the member has to do with the concept of discrimination. If the Government of Canada, and I believe it will, supports the definition in the existing laws and as repeated in the motion, does the hon. member believe that constitutes discrimination in favour of heterosexual couples or is it discrimination against those who do not fit that definition?

Mr. Gary Lunn: Mr. Speaker, I know the Minister of Justice introduced an amendment. It is unfortunate that she does not understand the standing orders of parliament. There is a standing order that says that all motions before this House can only be for the purview or the jurisdiction of the Parliament of Canada. That goes without saying. That is why it was not in our original motion. In the House we can only debate anything within the jurisdiction of the Parliament of Canada. That is an automatic and a given. It did not need to be stated.

With regard to the hon. member's comments on discrimination, there is no discrimination. We are only reaffirming the definition of marriage. Members can talk about all of the other issues. I will state on the record that I know and I have worked with many people who are homosexual. I have no problem with that. That is not the issue. It is not an issue about sexuality. This is an issue strictly about the definition of marriage. I personally do not discriminate against any of those people. I am quite happy to state that on the record.

That is where the members of the House want to take this discussion which is very unfortunate, as opposed to talking about what it really and truly is and that is reaffirming that the definition of marriage is between one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others. We need to send that message out in light of recent court decisions and court interpretations. They are not getting a clear direction from parliament and it is high time they did. We do it on many other issues so that the courts know exactly where the Parliament of Canada stands. The Canadian people have elected us to make those statements in the House.

Mr. Eric Lowther (Calgary Centre, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I want some feedback from the hon. member on the issue that was raised by the Conservative Party member for Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough. He seemed to be making the case that this was not an issue that needed much attention, that perhaps we were misusing a supply day.

I have noticed that the Conservative member for Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough has been a regular presenter of petitions on this very same subject, along with 84 other members of the House. There have been hundreds and hundreds of petitions, thousands and thousands of names of petitioners calling for the definition of marriage to be defended by the House.

I have also noticed a number of headlines recently across the country pertaining to recent court decisions about this. I too think it is troubling that in the House of Commons we are having to debate this issue which seems to be a no brainer for most Canadians. I ask my hon. colleague what he thinks about that.

Supply

Mr. Gary Lunn: Mr. Speaker, it is very obvious. There are five official parties in the House. Members of every single have presented petitions on this issue. Almost a third of the members of the House have presented petitions with hundreds of thousands of signatures. The member for Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough less than one year ago, last June, presented a petition in the House regarding this definition. To suggest that it is not an important issue is an insult to every single person, every single Canadian who signed those petitions and all other Canadians who believe in this issue.

• (1220)

Mr. Monte Solberg (Medicine Hat, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to address this issue today. I want to commend the member for Calgary Centre for leading the debate on this issue for the Reform Party and also the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands for an excellent speech. I want to pick up where he left off and say that this is not about hot button politics. We heard that from the member for Churchill and seconded in a way by the member for Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough. That is ridiculous. Every day Canadians contact their members of parliament about this issue.

Millions of Canadians currently live in the institution of marriage. We all come from the union of a man and a woman at some point. This is not something that is foreign to people. This is something that is part of everyday life. We are simply taking the time to address an extraordinarily important issue in the Parliament of Canada where it should be addressed, not necessarily only exclusively in courtrooms or in public debate in the newspapers or in human rights commissions. This should be debated in what is supposed to be of all places the most democratic chamber in the country, in the House of Commons. That is exactly what we are taking the opportunity to do today.

I commend my colleague from Calgary Centre for really pushing this issue. I think it is extraordinarily important. I want to answer some of the objections I have heard today from various members.

We heard the justice minister suggest that somehow this is a frivolous debate, that it is trivial. I point out that we have had 84 petitions delivered in this parliament on this issue alone. Thousands and thousands of Canadians have signalled to this parliament that they are very concerned about this issue and they want it addressed.

Canadians want parliament to state unequivocally that it believes the definition of marriage, the traditional definition, should be maintained and that we should affirm it. We should send a strong message to the courts that we believe in this traditional definition of marriage. It is a definition that has been passed down over the ages, a definition that I suppose goes back to the time before there were legislatures, before there were courts, back into the mists of prehistory. People around the world settled on this relationship, the union of one man and one woman as a privileged relationship. We need to affirm it. That is what we are doing today.

We ask our colleagues across the way to not be cowed by people who suggest that this is somehow hot button politics. This is an important issue. It should be dealt with in the Parliament of Canada.

I reject what the Minister of Justice was saying. I think the Minister of Justice too often hides behind the robes of the supreme court and behind the robes of provincial courts. I think it is time that she showed leadership and we are giving her a chance to do that today.

I simply want to point out that the courts are very unpredictable. Many court decisions have overturned what we thought was the common law, the common wisdom of the ages. My colleague from Saanich—Gulf Islands pointed out that recently a court in B.C. threw out the law against child pornography in Canada. That is alarming to me and to many other Canadians.

When all kinds of debates are going on in the courts today with respect to other institutions which we thought were protected in the common law, institutions like the traditional definition of what constitutes a spouse in common law relationships, Canadians become alarmed. They start to say that they are concerned that somehow this is going to end up with the courts determining that marriage is something else other than what it has always been defined to be. That concerns them and it concerns me as somebody who represents those people. That is why we are speaking out on this issue today.

• (1225)

How many times have we debated things in this place that have been absolutely inane? I would argue many times. I remember the lead-up to the referendum in 1995. Over that whole period we never did debate the issue of national unity. In that whole time there was never a debate on that, but we debated whether or not Canada should have a national horse. That was worthy of debate in this place for some reason.

Here we are talking about an institution that is one of the foundations of civil society and somehow people are suggesting that it is not really that important, “Why do we want to mention that? Some people will feel badly about that”. I say that is too bad. That is the job of parliamentarians, to deal with these issues even if they are controversial so that they are not determined or settled by somebody else. We are elected to do that job. We are paid well to do it. Let us do it. That is what we are saying today.

I want to address some of the comments that came from members of the NDP. The member for Vancouver East suggested that marriage as traditionally defined discriminates against same sex couples. I have news for the member for Vancouver East. Does she realize that homosexual couples by the very definition of what that means discriminate against heterosexuals? Maybe by definition but the definition itself tells us about the very essence of what

it is we are talking about. It is not discrimination. It is simply a definition that tells us what constitutes a marriage.

Gay couples can have their own relationships. They can call them what they will. There are other relationships. Friendships are called friendships. They are not the same thing. That does not mean it is discrimination. It means that they are all different and they describe different circumstances. That is all it means. It has nothing to do with discrimination. I reject that as another red herring. It is an obvious attempt to take us down a whole other path and get us embroiled in this whole debate about what constitutes discrimination.

I must address some of the comments by the member for Burnaby—Douglas which I say are laughable. They were ridiculous comments. My friend from Calgary Centre pointed out that in a same sex relationship one of the genders is missing. What did the member for Burnaby—Douglas say? He said that was an appalling attack. He went on and on and tried to raise the temperature in here. He somehow suggested this was discrimination. It is a fact. If it is a same sex relationship, one of the sexes is missing. It is pretty clear. It is by definition the case. It is not discrimination. It is a fact. Hello over there.

I say to the member for Burnaby—Douglas that it is time to quit playing this game of hot button politics, to use the rhetoric coming from the other side, and to address the issue. The issue is whether or not parliament wants to affirm the traditional definition of marriage.

There was also an objection from our friend from Sydney—Victoria who spoke rather temperately on this issue. I applaud him for his remarks. He said that this is an issue of provincial jurisdiction, that there is a lot of overlap and that really the federal government does not have as big a role to play as we might suggest.

I say right off the top that no party, with the possible exception of the Bloc, supports the upholding of provincial jurisdiction more than this party does, but it is pretty clear in the constitution that the federal government does have a very important role to play when it comes to the issue of marriage. That role is to determine who has the capacity to marry. That is determined by the federal government.

We have to weigh in on this. We cannot wait for the provinces and certainly not for the courts to decide on it. We have a constitutional obligation to be involved in this and to send a message to the courts. The courts have often asked that parliament send a clear message. That is precisely what we are proposing to do today. That is what I say to my friend from Sydney—Victoria.

• (1230)

I will wrap up with a comment to the member for Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough who said that this is an issue of hot button politics. He presented a petition in this place a year ago saying that

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we must uphold the traditional definition of marriage as the union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others. He spoke on behalf of his constituents at that point. I would argue that he did a very important thing when he did that. I trust he thinks he did something important as well. If he is going to be consistent, then he has to admit and concur in the debate today because this is an important issue to all Canadians.

I encourage my friends across the way to vote in favour of the motion.

Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am glad the member encourages the government to support the motion. The Minister of Justice, who spoke earlier today, announced that the government will support the motion because it reaffirms the existing laws of Canada.

The member spoke strongly about making the point that the debate today was not trivial, and I concur. The fact is that laws of Canada have been changed pursuant to supreme court decisions. If parliament does not reaffirm its position on fundamental tenets, then it is clear that the courts will always have that opportunity. We have to keep reminding the courts of the principles which the supreme parliament holds.

It is often said in some advertising that membership has its privileges and its rights. In marriage there are certain rights extended in our Income Tax Act, in our pension programs, et cetera. In fact, after reading the press, it appears that the only privilege that same sex partners do not have that married couples have is property rights under family law. Therefore, if a same sex couple enters into a contract with regard to property rights, the rights and privileges of membership are all there in hand.

All of a sudden it appears to me that marriage has rights and privileges, but can we turn that around? If I have all the rights and privileges, or can effectively achieve all those rights and privileges, then why is it that I cannot be called marriage? This is the dilemma that the House has to deal with. It appears that the House and parliament does discriminate, but it discriminates in favour. It is affirmative discrimination of the family and of heterosexual couples. I want the member's comments.

Mr. Monte Solberg: Mr. Speaker, of course it is true that there is an exclusivity about marriage as we traditionally define it, which means that all other relationships are outside of that institution. I do not believe that constitutes discrimination, at least not in the most negative sense that the opponents of this point of view would use.

I think no matter what we do on this issue, it has to come before this place. It is ridiculous to see these decisions being made so often today by the courts. Ultimately, the courts cannot establish the mores of the country. That has to come from the people. We, as their representatives, have to give voice to that. Those decisions should be made here in a free and open debate.

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My friend mentioned that the government will support the motion. If my friend is an independent parliamentarian, I am surprised to hear him say that the government will decide that. I would expect that individual MPs will make these decisions for themselves. That is typically what happens in a free parliament.

While I appreciate that this is probably what will happen, I simply want to point out that in a sense he is saying that no matter what the minister said, he would be going along with it. I hope that is not the case.

• (1235)

Mr. Charlie Penson (Peace River, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I listened with great interest and I thought the member for Medicine Hat made a very well informed presentation. The member spoke about the affirmation of marriage and I really agree with that.

There was a couple in my riding who had their 60th wedding anniversary last year, Harold and Ruby Reiswig. They renewed their vows in a reaffirmation about the important institution of marriage. It sent a very strong message to their friends and family about the importance of that.

The phones in my constituency are ringing again today supporting this resolution and—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): That seems like a good spot to interrupt. The member for Medicine Hat has 30 seconds to respond.

Mr. Monte Solberg: Mr. Speaker, I congratulate my colleague from the Peace River country. I know he is a real champion on these sorts of issues.

I simply want to say that this is a chance for the Parliament of Canada to reaffirm its vow to this traditional definition of what constitutes a marriage. I encourage members on all sides to do exactly that today.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Eleni Bakopanos (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to address the question submitted to us by the official opposition, namely the conditions for a marriage to be valid.

It seems that our friends over there are particularly concerned that nothing be done to change the existing law, particularly the rule that marriage may be contracted solely by two persons of the opposite sex.

Today I would like to address this question within the very specific context of our government's initiative, which dates back

several years now, aimed at making federal legislation and regulations fully compatible with the civil law of the province of Quebec, the province in which I was elected. The government considered, and continues to believe, that it is important to take the necessary steps to ensure that this valuable Canadian aspect of bijuralism is reflected in fact.

What is bijuralism? It is the term that has been used for some time to describe a situation that has existed in Canada since the passage of the Quebec Act of 1774, namely the co-existence within one territory, Canada, of two contemporary legal traditions, the British-inspired common law, and the Roman-inspired civil law.

Since 1994, the year in which the new Quebec Civil Code, adopted in 1991, came into effect, during the reign of Quebec Minister of Justice Gil Rémillard, the Minister of Justice for Canada carried out numerous preliminary studies on thirty or so complex issues, with a view to best ensuring compatibility between federal laws and the new Civil Code. It is important to note that this reform affected more than 80% of the rules in the Civil Code of Lower Canada, which had been in effect up until then, and dated back to 1866.

The federal government then proceeded to hire experienced legal experts as well as engaging the services of a number of professors of law and other experts. These were consulted then, and will be again now, on the numerous questions raised by such an undertaking.

In order to set the stage, let us say that of the 700 laws in the body of federal statutes, over 300 will have to be amended in the coming years to ensure compliance with the distinctive nature of Quebec's civil law, in both letter and spirit, of all the laws passed by this House.

One of the most difficult questions the civil code section of the federal Department of Justice had to examine involves pre-confederation provisions, that is, those passed by the legislature of United Canada prior to Confederation. Although this is only one of the 30 studies released by the federal department in relation to its work, it is interesting to note that it concerns much more legally complex subjects, which have up to now been essentially not tackled.

• (1240)

While the Constitution Act, 1867, gives parliament the legislative authority over marriage conditions, the government had to give some thought to the impact of repealing some 300 sections of the civil code of Lower Canada dating from 1866 in a whole range of areas, including the one that we are concerned with today and to the way to ensure the necessary legal continuity.

Another basic principle of the long job undertaken by the civil code section of the Department of Justice is to not change existing law except to the extent and only when harmonization with civil law requires it.

Canada's legal minds have therefore had to analyse the question of repealing some dozen sections of the civil code of Lower Canada on marriage in order to decide whether they should be re-enacted and if so, how.

[English]

The institution of marriage is historically, as I said earlier in my short history lesson, culturally and by definition a heterosexual institution. In Quebec, a fundamental condition of a valid marriage has always been that the two people involved are of the opposite sex. That condition is inherent in the very institution of marriage.

[Translation]

In its 1994 Civil Code, the Quebec legislature restated the rule whereby only a man and a woman may enter into marriage. This rule can be found in article 365 of the Civil Code of Quebec.

[English]

This is also reflective of the state of the law in all other Canadian jurisdictions. This is also part of the reason why we moved an amendment this morning to make the difference between the federal and provincial jurisdictions.

[Translation]

The opinions of our experts led us to propose a number of substitute clauses in Bill C-50, four of which have to do with marriage. These clauses concern age, consent of the partners, and dissolution of marriage, and ensure that enforcement of these provisions is limited to Quebec.

It should be noted that this work has involved broad consultations with associations of jurists in Quebec, i.e. the Quebec bar, the Chambre des notaires, and the Quebec chapter of the Canadian Bar Association, as well as the Quebec justice department. These learned bodies have all had an opportunity to examine the provisions of Bill C-50, including those having to do with marriage.

In fact, representations were made to us by the Quebec justice department, urging us to use the wording of article 365 of the Civil Code of Quebec in clause 4 of the bill, so that harmonization of the applicable rules would be as consistent as possible.

We can therefore see that all necessary precautions have been taken by government legal experts to ensure that the rule of law, which is well established in our country with respect to what constitutes a spouse, is not inadvertently changed.

[English]

The government has taken all the necessary steps in Bill C-50 to ensure that the current definition of marriage in our society would be implemented in a uniform manner across the country.

Supply

I would like to respond to comments made by opposition members. If the government has never expressed any intention to change the legal definition of marriage, then what is the point of the Reform Party's motion? That is really the question today.

As a parliamentary secretary, I have often been privy to matters in the House dealing with justice issues. I see the Reform Party as unfortunately attempting to continue to either spread fear or to pit, which is more dangerous, Canadians against each other. I see it as a divisiveness in terms of pitting same sex partners against heterosexual partners or pitting Canadians of other origins against other Canadians. This constant attempt to divide society has to be one of the most despicable things that I have heard in the House and, in my opinion, it continues with the motion. It constantly tries to make and score political points by confusing the issue.

• (1245)

There is no issue here. The Minister of Justice was clear this morning that the government has no intention of changing the definition of marriage. It has never said that it would and she put that on the record this morning.

I ask Canadians who are listening to this debate to ask the question of themselves: Why was the motion brought forward in the House?

I will be sharing my time with the member for Mississauga South.

Mr. Rick Casson (Lethbridge, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I listened to about 95% of not a bad presentation and then the last 5% got a little crazy, I think.

I have received over 100 phone calls in my constituency office in the last two days in support of this motion and in support of what we are doing today.

People are concerned about this because of the confusion that has been created by recent rulings. It is not clear to people where parliament stands on this issue and for the member to say it is irresponsible for us to bring the issue to this place is not acceptable.

An hon. member: It's cheap politics.

Mr. Rick Casson: That's wrong.

The fact is that Canadian people are concerned. There is no other issue on which I have received this many phone calls from people in my riding.

It is important to Canadians that this be discussed and that parliament reaffirm that the definition of marriage as it exists is the one we will stand by.

Ms. Eleni Bakopanos: Mr. Speaker, I am also a member of parliament and I also receive phone calls. A lot of time those phone calls are made because Canadians are misinformed. I would like to

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say that they are misinformed by the fact that these types of motions are brought forward. They lead to confusion.

Yes, people want to know where the government stands. I am not debating the fact that we should not have a definition of marriage. As the minister said, there is a definition of marriage.

As parliamentary secretary I have been privy to a lot of discussions in the House about the role of the judiciary, the role of the rule of law in the country, something which I believe Her Majesty's Official Opposition has never respected.

The hon. member made a comment earlier about the minister hiding behind robes. That is a totally irresponsible comment, that the Minister of Justice should not respect a decision made by the highest court of the land, the Supreme Court of Canada.

An hon. member: The rule of law.

Ms. Eleni Bakopanos: The rule of law has never been respected, unfortunately, and every time we want to change a decision made by the highest court we turn to parliament. This is not a police state where the government runs the courts; this is quite the opposite. We respect the courts. That is what the government has shown. That has not been the intent of Her Majesty's Official Opposition.

Mr. Eric Lowther (Calgary Centre, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the member's position. I do not agree with it, but I appreciate it.

Really what we are trying to do, and I want to help her understand it, is assist the government in showing some leadership on this issue.

The courts themselves have asked for direction from this House on these issues. I am referring to a case in Ontario in which a judge said "The fact that there was a dissenting opinion in this case", which was a case having to do with marriage, "indicates that there is indeed confusion about whether marriage could be between people who are not of the opposite sex. Again, there is a need for parliament to show leadership and give guidance on the issue". Those were the words of the judge. The courts are looking to the House to give direction on these issues.

Did the Liberal government intend for spouse to be redefined as the courts have done? We do not know. Is it going to wait for the courts to redefine marriage or will it step up to the leadership role that people expect of it and which the courts are calling for?

Ms. Eleni Bakopanos: Mr. Speaker, I do not think anybody has said in the House that we want to stifle debate.

There has been a pattern created, whenever a decision has been by the highest court of the land, that Her Majesty's Official Opposition chooses, when it dislikes that decision, to ask that parliament act.

I do not believe that is the role of parliament. The role of parliament is to ensure that we have the best legal minds in the country to interpret the type of legislation that is adopted by the House.

I will repeat what the minister said this morning. There was never any intention by the government to redefine marriage.

• (1250)

Mr. Charlie Penson (Peace River, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, it is my feeling that the highest court of the land is the Parliament of Canada. I wonder if the hon. member would disagree or agree with that.

Ms. Eleni Bakopanos: Mr. Speaker, the highest court of the land, if we are talking about the Supreme Court of Canada, is a place that we should all respect. I dare to say that often in this parliament I have not heard respect for the best legal minds that we have in the Supreme Court of Canada given by Her Majesty's Official Opposition.

Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this morning when I watched the news a representative of a particular group said "It is sad that parliament will be debating the continued discrimination against a certain group of people".

I came into the lobby this morning and a staff member walked in. It was quite quiet in the lobby. The staff member made a comment to the effect that "The motion today is about marriage. Boy is that boring and inconsequential". It is neither boring nor trivial. In fact it is a very important motion. It comes down to some fundamentals.

I often hear in this place talk about the broader issue, which no one wants to mention, about the proverbial line in the sand. The line in the sand, apparently, for many has to do with marriage. That is the line in the sand.

Policy by its very nature is discriminatory. It has to be discriminatory. Otherwise we would not need laws to identify who is included and who is out, who gets benefits and who does not. Policy by its very definition, by its very nature, is discriminatory.

To say that is to raise the issue of the context of discrimination. Earlier I spoke about the definition of discrimination. It is clear that if we look to many sources we will see that discrimination has negative connotations, prejudice, bias, victimization and so on. It also has the connotations of distinguishing between groups or favouring or identifying distinctive characteristics. There are other applications. In our laws we have many forms of discrimination which discriminate in favour.

I will highlight a couple of examples. On the income tax return for Canada there is a line for old age security. We get it because we are 65. It is age discrimination. It is in the charter of rights that we cannot discriminate on the basis of age, but we do discriminate

because if a person is 65 they receive old age security. It is discrimination in favour of seniors.

Why is someone not here saying that we all have to be equal? Should we not all be equal?

What about disability benefits? There is discrimination in favour of those who are disabled.

There are a number of provisions for things such as investment income. A couple can pool their income. One can invest all of theirs and declare all the income. A single person with a partner cannot do that. There is discrimination on the basis of recognized partnership.

Alimony is another example. Another is registered pension plans, RRSPs. We can buy a spousal RRSP which can be rolled over upon death. These are all discriminatory in favour of a particular group.

If we look at child care expenses, we discriminate in favour of those situations in which both persons in the union are working. They receive a deduction, which is not available to those families who have one spouse providing direct parental care. It is discrimination, but it is discrimination in favour of something.

On that point I look back at history. It was brought in initially to take care of the situation of lone parents, because of that unique situation where there was hardship. It was a social benefit. It was not an employment expense. There is a debate on that as well.

There is an age for the non-refundable tax credit. When a person is 65 they receive it. There is the Canada pension plan, the transferability of tuition fees and education amounts. I could go on and on. That is simply from the Income Tax Act. We could imagine how many examples there are in our system of taxation and of benefits which are discriminatory by their nature. They are discriminatory at the discretion of parliament, reflecting the social values and the will of the Canadian people.

• (1255)

We should not talk about discrimination solely in the context of a negative. I think it is important for the House to stop using the word discrimination and start talking about valuing. How do we value things?

I have heard members of the NDP today, from Burnaby—Douglas, Churchill and Vancouver East, all demand that we need equality among people. The equality they are seeking is equality of individuals. NDP members are asking for the equality of individuals as represented by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and our constitution. They want individuals to be the lowest common denominator.

Everyone should be treated the same, but the issue is, if we are going to treat everyone the same in regard to the context of this

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debate, it will then lead to the question of how we treat everyone with regard to all of our other tax laws and policies. Should we not treat everyone the same? Should we not reduce ourselves to the lowest common denominator? Should we not just be a vanilla society? Should we not just say that relationships do not exist in our laws? Why do we not just say that we are all individuals? There is a very good reason. It is because we are a society and a society, by definition, is more than a collection of individuals. There is a synergy in a society. There are certain things that happen.

Some will object to my doing this, but I want to note that the Archbishop of Toronto, Cardinal Aloysius Ambrozic, wrote a letter concerning Bill C-78, which, as members know, has something to do with this issue. He talked about the family. We have not talked about the family yet and whether we put the family on a pedestal because the family has an important role to play. I would throw in that there is one definition of family that we all have in common, which is a child with a biological mother and a biological father. That is the family.

The Cardinal referred to the family. He said "They and their children constitute the family—the original cell of social life". He quoted Pope John Paul II:

In their primary mission of communicating love to each other, of being co-creators with God of human life, and of transmitting the love of God to their children, parents must know that they are fully supported by the Church and by society.

We are here representing the interests of that society, not a collection of individuals. In fact we are also here very delicately trying to defend the family, trying to defend that fundamental basic unit of society without which we would cease to exist.

There is a special role. It is the procreative role that a couple has, a man and a woman. It is that role which we hold very dear, which we put on a pedestal, of which we discriminate in favour. It is why we have spousal benefits, spousal transfers, survivor benefits and all kinds and manners of benefits for the family.

I challenge anyone in this place to look at history, at the debate on all of those items on which some would say there is discrimination, to find one example of anybody who suggested that the reason it was being done was to be detrimental to some other group.

The debates underlying the laws of Canada are clear that discrimination within our system is affirmative discrimination. We discriminate to reflect values. If we did not do that then it would be a vanilla society. It would be a society which has no values, no vision for a millennium, nothing to pass on other than we are all individuals.

The issue here also has to do with the courts. Some believe that the courts have made law to the exclusion of parliament. Some believe that the courts have gone too far, that the pendulum has swung too far. Some are calling for parliament to stop the pendulum and to revisit this issue. Are we going to discriminate?

Supply

The very definition of marriage, to the exclusion of all others, which has been part of British common law since 1866, is discrimination: “to the exclusion of all others”. However, it is affirmative discrimination on behalf of the Canadian people who value and cherish and have great pride and joy in the Canadian family.

• (1300)

Ms. Bev Desjarlais (Churchill, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have to comment on the lowest common denominator. I am sad to say the member for Mississauga South sort of reached the lowest common denominator by suggesting that the only recognition of family in Canada is of a biological father, a biological mother and a child. That certainly might be his narrow minded vision of a family, but I would suggest a great many families out there are not biological children or biological parents.

Canadians have recognized over the years that the definition of family needs to go beyond biological mother and father. Part of the reason for that is that families of biological mothers, fathers and children have not always been perfect. The relationships among those families have not been perfect. Because of the imperfections, families do not stay together as biological mothers, fathers and children. Changes have to be made. The numbers were great enough that there was an understanding among Canadians that family could not just be considered in that way.

I take this opportunity to say once again that the term marriage should be all that it is, but it is quite clear to me that the Reform Party and the member for Mississauga South have an underlying agenda. It is not just the term marriage. They are talking about Canadians rehashing the whole issue of whether or not same sex relationships should have any benefits and any recognition. That should not be the case.

Mr. Paul Szabo: Mr. Speaker, I believe the member misheard me. I did not say the exclusive and only definition of family is child with biological mother and biological father. If the member would check the blues, she would see that I said that there is one definition which we all have in common. I bring that to the attention of the member. It is different.

With regard to another agenda, I raised the points not to stir up the pot, as it were, but rather to suggest that the definition of marriage is discriminatory in favour of heterosexual couples. It is affirmative discrimination. Some are suggesting that affirmative discrimination is okay. Others are suggesting that discrimination against same sex couples is negative and should be thrown out. There is a debate pointer.

Mr. Jason Kenney (Calgary Southeast, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, like the member for Mississauga South, I attended the last Liberal Party of Canada annual convention.

We heard earlier the Minister of Justice say that this was not an issue, that it was redundant. I have the Liberal talking points put together by some nameless hack which say that if the government has never expressed any intention to change the legal definition of marriage then what is the point of Reform's motion and that clearly it is just part of a continuing attempt to fear monger, et cetera.

I was at the last Liberal Party convention as was the member. I remember a resolution being passed by the Liberal Party of Canada which strongly urged the federal government to recognize same sex marriages in the same way that it recognizes opposite marriages in its distribution of benefits.

Could the hon. member comment on the remarks of the attorney general that this is not a relevant point when her own party, the party of which he is a member, voted to change the definition we are seeking to uphold through the motion today?

Mr. Paul Szabo: Mr. Speaker, the member will know even from his own party that the party membership passes resolutions, many of which are in contradiction to each other. They do not form government policy. They are there on an advisory or on a discussion basis. They are not binding on the party, and the member will know that.

I take the opportunity to point out that I think the debate should take on a view or a focus which talks about what we value. We have to talk about being for things and not against things.

In my speech I tried to identify that there are certain things we value in society such as healthy stable families with children who provide the future of society. Those things should be valued to the exclusion of others simply because of the most special role the family provides. I support them and I discriminate in favour of the family.

Ms. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West—Nepean, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I must very respectfully disagree with my colleague and his definition of family. Frankly my husband and I are family whether we do or do not have children living with us or whether we ever had children living with us. His narrow definition is one I do not accept.

• (1305)

Mr. Paul Szabo: Mr. Speaker, I will repeat the same answer I gave to the other member. I did not define the family exclusively and that is it.

I said very clearly, and I will repeat it again, that there is one definition of family that we all have in common. For everyone on the face of the earth the common denominator is a child with biological mother and biological father. That is not speculation. That is not some wild idea. That is a fact.

Supply

Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to enter into the debate today on the issue of marriage and its importance to society.

As we get into things such as definitions, the roles of marriages and families and so on, we should withdraw a bit from some of the debate and reflect upon the joyous state of marriage which many people enjoy and covet in a free society.

Personally speaking, I just celebrated my 24th wedding anniversary. I often say that the years I spent before I was married were the only wasted years of my life. Since then it has been pretty good. What we are debating today is:

That, in the opinion of the House, it is necessary, in light of public debate around recent court decisions, to state that marriage is and should remain the union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others, and that Parliament will take all necessary steps to preserve this definition of marriage in Canada.

The reason it is a delight to have the motion before us today is that it affirms marriage. It does not say that it is against anything. It does not say that we belittle other relationships, but there is only one marriage. A marriage is the union of a man and a woman as recognized by the state. It may be a church wedding. It may be a common law wedding. It may be a justice of the peace. The fact is that a marriage is a union of a man and a woman, and a glorious union that is. Again we are affirming that today.

We are asking parliament to step up to the voting line to say where it stands on the issue. We have read a lot in the press about different court decisions and about different positions in response to petitions. We have heard comments from different parties about their reluctance to agree and so on. Now is the opportunity to step up, as we will do that later this evening, to say whether we in favour of this, yes or no. It will be my pleasure to step up to say this is the definition of marriage.

Someone earlier asked about the definition of family. Our party has defined it but not loosely. It is pretty easy to define family. Family is those people who are related by blood, marriage or adoption.

Is a single mom with some kids a family? Yes, by blood. What if she adopted a couple of kids? By all means. What about a single father? Of course. Those are families, and we recognize that. Our party recognizes that and affirms that they play an important role in society. That is another great debate. Today we are affirming that marriage is a union of one man and one woman as recognized by the state. That is what this is about.

Why should we bother with this debate? I believe the courts and society in general look to parliament to set the pace and the agenda not only for legislation and human rights tribunals but also for the courts. The courts often state that they are looking to parliament and legislatures for guidance on issues like definitions contained or not contained in legislation.

When I gave a speech about the supreme court in my home riding a while ago, I mentioned that some people were exasperated, with some justification, with how pervasive rulings had become and how much they influenced society and parliament.

• (1310)

While I agreed there was cause for concern, I said that the greater concern was weak-kneed, yellow-bellied legislators who do not have the courage to step up and say what needs to be said in legislation. They should step up to the batter's box and tell the supreme court not to worry about a definition in the immigration law or in the spousal benefits law or in whatever law it might be because we will give it to them. We are not afraid of it because we had a good debate on it, took a vote on it, and Canadians through their House of Commons decided and gave direction to the courts.

When people get annoyed with the supreme court I ask them to pause for a second. While they may be annoyed with the supreme court, they are also annoyed with legislatures and legislators that do not do their job in this place and in provincial legislatures across the country. That is where we should expect good, intelligent debate and where decisions should be made and carried to the courts, not the other way around.

The next point is allowing Canadians to be heard on the subject. I debated with the member for Burnaby—Douglas this morning on *Canada A.M.*. He was proposing that God be removed from the constitution. I took the opposing view and we had a debate back and forth about whether or not it should happen. The only thing we agreed on was the need to have and to allow good debate on a controversial topic.

He may want to remove it. More power to him, if he can convince somebody. Personally I think an overwhelming majority of Canadians would agree with my position. Whatever, the place to debate controversial subjects is not in the back rooms of a courthouse. By all means bring it here for Canadians to discuss in their House of Commons. We should not be afraid of any of that.

At one time I had an experience with the unique position of marriage as opposed to common law. It was at a funeral held for a soldier, a constituent of mine who was killed during a land mine exercise in Bosnia. He married the lady of his dreams just before he went there. They had a ceremony. He went over there and he was killed in a land mine accident.

I remember his commanding officer saying to me that it was fortunate the couple had married before he went away because now they could help her. They could look after her. They could extend the open arms of friendship, which any human being would do for another human being, but because of the unique marriage relationship it would not involve a two year waiting period or a court case. There was a marriage certificate. I do not know whether it was a civil or a religious ceremony. It did not matter because the marriage ceremony brought with it a sanctity recognized by this

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place about the important role of marriage in that the survivor would receive survivor benefits from the Canadian Armed Forces.

It was a very emotional ceremony during which the colonel pointed out the unique role of marriage in society. We could leave that funeral and say to one another that at least she would be well looked after, at least by being married they had sent a message to Canada and in return our Canadian parliament said that it respected that and would help her in her time of loss in a material way, a small way.

I am thrilled that we can talk about something as positive as marriage today, that we can affirm it and the role of this place. There are other legitimate relationships of all kinds, but today we are talking about marriage and the need to preserve that definition. I am glad the Minister of Justice has said she also agrees with that.

Let us put aside other relationships and their importance for another debate on another day, but on this day Canadian parliamentarians will stand to be counted on the definition of marriage and talk about the positive, important role of marriage in society.

• (1315)

Mr. Janko Perić (Cambridge, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I listened very carefully to the member's excellent speech. In my point of view, marriage is not just a contract between a man and a woman, it is more than that.

I have been married for 29 years. When my wife and I entered into our marriage, we made a commitment to each other that we would share good and bad things for the rest of our lives. More than that, to me as a Roman Catholic, marriage is a holy sacrament.

I ask my hon. colleague, how has marriage expanded in his view, not only as a contract, but from the spiritual side? How would he look at it?

Mr. Chuck Strahl: Mr. Speaker, that is an excellent question.

For the purposes of this debate I talked about the technical definition of marriage, which is the union of a man and a woman as recognized by the state. In other words the state recognizes that there can be a civil ceremony with a justice of the peace and so on.

What the member is talking about of course is a church wedding, a church marriage. People make a vow not only about the recognition before the state, but they also make a vow based on their faith in God and the scriptural perspective they bring to it.

I agree with the member that many people, I would suggest most people, when they enter into a marriage contract, do not think of it in terms of what one or the other can get. They enter into it in the traditional faith perspective of the two shall become one. It is not

just a case of having a prenuptial agreement and splitting things up later if it does not go right. Most people enter into it in a very serious and solemn way. It is a joyous but a solemn occasion where they say "You and I are getting together. We are not getting together to split things down the middle; we are getting together so that we two shall become one".

I agree with the member that most people on their marriage day make that commitment because they want it to last forever. I agree that is why most people head into it. That is why the tearing apart of a marriage when it does not work out is so traumatic. It is said that when it comes to stress, it is next to a death in the family. There is nothing more stressful than a separation in a marriage.

That is why the things we can do here to promote and encourage marriage and to help—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): It was really difficult for me to capture your eye but I had to interrupt.

Mr. Pat Martin (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in making some of his points, the hon. whip for the opposition used a very moving story about a soldier who went off to Bosnia but was married just prior to leaving. I understand the point of the story to be that it made it easier for the widow to collect benefits by virtue of the fact that they had gone through the actual marriage ceremony.

I would like to ask him in the most serious of ways, what if that soldier who went away and was killed was part of a long term homosexual relationship, a long, stable, loving relationship? Maybe they co-owned a home and had joint assets. Then the soldier went away and had the terrible accident with the mine. Does the hon. member think that the grieving spouse in that relationship should have access to the same benefits as the spouse in the member's story?

Mr. Chuck Strahl: Mr. Speaker, the member did get the point of my original story. Because of the marriage contract, so to speak, and the fact that a marriage has taken place, the state has said that all the waiting periods and all the proving of conjugality are set aside. They do not have to prove they are sleeping together. They do not have to prove it is a long term commitment. They do not have to go through a two or three year waiting period. They do not have to have children. The marriage ceremony brings with it a certain legitimacy which happens the moment the documents are signed. Not to belittle other relationships, marriage brings with it legitimacy and carries it from that moment forward.

• (1320)

The member put forward a hypothetical case. The idea of long term relationships and dependent relationships is an issue which probably deserves another debate in the House. I encourage the member and his party to bring it forward. Other members have

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brought forward the idea that we should base our benefits on dependency rather than on marriage.

I used the example because marriage brings with it something special which has been recognized for eons. The moment the ink is dry and the couple runs out of the church under a shower of confetti, that moment is special. It is special not only in the church, not only before the state, but it is special between the two people. For the marriage definition, those two people are a man and a woman.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott (Wanuskewin, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, it is remarkable that we should even be debating this in the House of Commons today but I take real delight in addressing the motion that has been put forward and I gladly affirm it.

When one thinks of the glue that holds societies together, one cannot help but think of the institution of marriage and the family unit which is the fundamental building block of society.

The motion the Reform Party put forward today speaks to the current legal definition of marriage in Canada as the union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others. In putting forward this motion the Reform Party is simply affirming or echoing its longstanding policy that marriage is the union of a man and a woman as recognized by the state.

Why are we debating such a topic? Why are we spending time discussing something that would seem to be so self-evident? There has been a chronology of events over the last number of months.

Some people believe that the institution of marriage is in danger of being radically changed in law due to recent court rulings. As we all know, a series of court decisions have been made in which various kinds of benefits previously restricted to heterosexual couples have now been extended to gay partners.

A year ago in the Rosenberg decision the Ontario Court of Appeal changed the Income Tax Act to extend pension benefits to gay partners. Just last month the supreme court declared in its *M. v H.* ruling that gay partners are subject to the alimony provisions of Ontario's Family Law Act. Some people believe that marriage will be the next to fall and that gay marriages may be just on the horizon or just around the corner. This does not need to be the case and should not be the case in my view.

We are here today to affirm both in debate and by means of a vote that there is no necessary connection between extending benefits to gay partners and legalizing same sex marriage. Some people will want to see a connection between them but there does not have to be and there ought not to be.

Let me quote the justice minister on this point. In an April 24, 1998 letter she stated:

I continue to believe that it is not necessary to change well-understood concepts of spouse and marriage to deal with any fairness considerations the courts and tribunals may find.

That statement clearly distinguishes between the extension of benefits, which is what the courts have been ruling on, and the definition of marriage, which is what they have not been ruling on. The conclusion drawn by the justice minister is that homosexual individuals can be treated fairly without having to alter the definition of marriage.

The Prime Minister of the land made the same point in a May 21, 1999 press release which responded to the *M. v H.* decision. He said:

We believe that it is not necessary to redefine concepts like marriage in order to ensure access to benefits and obligations for people in committed relationships in a way that is fair to all Canadians.

Clearly the government and the Reform Party are in agreement that gay marriage is not a logical progression from recent court rulings on questions of benefits. They are different issues that belong in different categories.

I want to address the question of why it is that marriage is a unique institution that deserves to be guarded and strengthened in our nation. The institution of marriage has brought great benefits to our society. In the vast majority of marriages, children are brought into the world providing our country with its future citizens, workers, leaders, mothers and fathers, and so it goes.

• (1325)

Marriages provide the most stable, enduring context for the development of individuals during the formative years of childhood and thereafter on through their teenage years. A mom and a dad have an influence on a son or a daughter well on into their adult life.

It has been proven statistically that families in which the parents are married are the most stable families. That is a documented fact. In this way marital relationships contribute to the dignity, the stability, the peace and prosperity of the family and of the greater society.

Why does a marriage bring these benefits, we ask. When a man and a woman enter into the marriage relationship, it is almost always for the express purpose of making a lifelong commitment which will form the basis of family life and the environment in which children will be reared.

I have had the privilege over a decade and a half in a previous life of officiating at marriage ceremonies, as the one solemnizing that marriage. It has been a awesome privilege to watch the groom and the bride stare into each other's eyes as their emotions well up.

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On those many occasions I found myself being caught up in the significance of that very momentous occasion when a man and a woman come together to commit their lives together. I would say in all of those cases and in the premarital counselling that preceded, although marriages do break down, it was the intent of the two coming together that it be a lifelong commitment to one another, a loving relationship in richness and in poverty, in sickness and in health and so on as the marriage vows go.

Even though regrettably marriages sometimes break down, the fact that marriage relationships are much more stable than common law relationships makes one thing very clear: very few people enter into the marriage relationship flippantly. It has been my experience and the experience of many others whom I have talked to, colleagues and numerous other people, that most have carefully thought about that commitment, some more than others. They thought about the commitment they were making and they said those vows sincerely and solemnly. They realized that they were participating in something much larger than themselves, something that most Canadians from various religious backgrounds believe is designed by God.

My point here is simply that people are serious when they get married. This seriousness and depth of commitment to the marriage is what benefits the children who are born and raised in that context in those stable families. That is of great benefit to all of society.

Because of the way in which the institution of marriage benefits society, we need to guard it, we need to protect it and we need to promote it. The institution of marriage as a union of one man and one woman must be preserved, protected and promoted in both the private and the public realms. It would be foolish to undermine the uniqueness of the marriage relationship. Any society that does so risks losing the benefits that have come to society from marriage and from the high regard in which it has always been held.

Of course some people are not thinking about the health of the larger society when they are willing to sacrifice the societal benefits that come from marriage in order to engage in a form of social experimentation. Such people may regard marriage as little more than a form of self-expression, but marriage must not, marriage cannot be reduced to that level. It is much more than a form of self-expression. It is the glue, some would say the crazy glue that holds society together today and lays the groundwork for the society of tomorrow.

The institution of marriage is not something to be toyed with. Were we to abandon the uniqueness of marriage, I am convinced that we would pay a heavy price for such social experimentation. We would be killing the goose that lays the golden egg. Down the road, two decades from now or whatever number of years down the road, we would be looking back and we would rue the day that the slide began and that decisive moment of change occurred. We must not go down that road and have to pick up the pieces later.

To tinker with the institution of marriage would send the wrong message. First, it would send the wrong message to our young people. Surveys have shown that young people are actually more optimistic about relationships and starting a family some day than even many of their parents were. This optimism is good. It needs to be encouraged.

Second, were the institution of marriage to be changed, we would be sending a wrong message to common law couples who have children and are contemplating making a lifelong commitment to each other in marriage, that formal commitment, that celebration and that actual ceremony before the public.

• (1330)

Obviously many couples who are married today were formally living together in common law relationships and at some point decided to commit themselves to each other in marriage, which is something to be encouraged and welcomed. The children in such relationships can only benefit and society in turn benefits.

The motion we have considered today is an important one. It seeks to defend the current legal definition of marriage in Canada as the union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others. In putting forth the motion, the Reform Party is simply echoing its long-standing policy that marriage is the union of a man and a woman as recognized by the state. It is monogamous. It is one man and one woman for life. Opposite sex is defined as well.

We look forward to the vote tonight and to see the House affirm that long-standing, age old, historic definition of marriage.

Mrs. Judi Longfield (Whitby—Ajax, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the motion before us from the member for Calgary Centre is pretty straightforward. It asks that the House reaffirm its commitment to marriage with the legal definition of marriage as being the union between one man and one woman. Quite frankly, I have absolutely no hesitation in saying that I support this 100%. What is regrettable is that the motion has taken on a life other than what it should be.

The whole idea of survivor benefits and what we are doing in other pieces of legislation needs a full and wholesome debate on its own. That is the subject of another debate and I would not want to see it confused.

I have great difficulty with pieces of legislation that deal with conjugal relations because I do not think survivor benefits should be based on one's sleeping habits or who one is sleeping with. There are other ways to define who might be the recipient of a survivor benefit. It in no way demeans other kinds of relationships. What we are talking about here is the legal definition of marriage.

I do not have a question so much as a comment. I do not think it is inappropriate that we, in this House of Parliament, state for one and all our reaffirmation that marriage is the union between one man and one woman.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the affirmation of the member across the way. The whole intent and point of the debate is to make it very clear to the public and have it on the record that we are defending, affirming, strongly avowing and supporting the institution of marriage and the traditional view of it.

Mr. Sarkis Assadourian (Brampton Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I too have no problem supporting the motion, but I have a question for the hon. member.

Many Canadians of the Muslim faith are allowed to marry more than one woman. The motion defines marriage as being the union between only one man and one woman. How would this affect a person of the Muslim faith if he is married to more than one woman? Would that be defined as a family by this motion or would there be a different category for them?

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring to the attention of the member, as he is obviously aware, that within Canada, this great Dominion of ours from sea to sea to sea, monogamy between one man and one woman is the law. That is the rule.

Ms. Bev Desjarlais (Churchill, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I also want to acknowledge that I support the term of marriage as a union of a single man and a single woman. However, I do think other issues have been brought into this as well.

Can the hon. member tell me what he would perceive as the relationship of same sex couples and whether or not they should receive the same benefits that married couples receive? Should that be the case, or is the issue that we want to affirm marriage and make sure that same sex couples never have the same benefits that married people have? Does he have another term that may be used for the commitment that same sex couples show to each other?

• (1335)

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: Mr. Speaker, for the purposes of our debate today, we are of course debating the marriage definition itself.

The member raised a very valid question. Her party may put it forward on a future day that it should not be based on sexual involvement or a conjugal relationship, but we would also need to know the cost. The public would then have to be engaged in the debate to determine if that were in the greater societal interest. There would also have to be a full debate the House of Commons, and I would encourage that.

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Mr. Sarkis Assadourian: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member should know that when a man with more than one wife applies for immigration status in Canada, he is disqualified by this motion from being called a family. If a Muslim family from the Middle East or anywhere else applies to come to Canada with more than one wife, the hon. member is basically asking them to drop the other wives at home, break up the family and come back here.

The hon. member must address this issue before we vote on the subject. It is a very important issue.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: Mr. Speaker, does the hon. member want to put forward a motion to the effect of affirming polygamy in our country? I am not exactly sure of his intent. However, as our law presently states, a marriage is between one man and one woman. It has been long held in our Judeo-Christian setting.

Mr. John McKay (Scarborough East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the hon. member for Wentworth—Burlington.

I think this is an important debate and I am pleased that the hon. member has brought the issue to the House. The motion reads:

That, in the opinion of this House, it is necessary, in light of public debate around recent court decisions, to state that marriage is and should remain the union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others, and that Parliament will take all necessary steps to preserve this definition of marriage in Canada.

I would like to take this opportunity to comment on the public debate around the recent court decisions, in particular to talk about those decisions and suggest some steps that we must next take.

In my view, parliament has been silent too long on this issue and has, by its neglect, deferred to others in areas of intense controversy among Canadians. The leading decision in the field is Egan and Nesbit, which was a challenge to the spousal allowance provisions of the Old Age Security Act. In May 1995, the Supreme Court of Canada dismissed the appeal of Egan and Nesbit by a 5:4 margin.

The court, however, was unanimous in its view that sexual orientation was an analogous ground and triggered section 15 protection. A 5:4 majority found that the spousal issue discriminated on the basis of sexual orientation and therefore infringed section 15. However, a different 5:4 majority found that the discrimination was justified under section 1 of the charter. The conclusion appeared to be based, at least in part, on the view that the court should be reluctant to interfere in parliament's choice in respect of socioeconomic pieces of legislation.

It is quite obvious therefore that this is a very divided court, as is society. However, it had the wisdom to offer this advice to parliament in May 1995 when the decision was rendered:

The issue of how the term spouse should be defined is a fundamental social policy issue and parliament should decide it and parliament should listen to and balance the

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competing social issues, the philosophical issues, the legal, moral, theological issues that go into this definitional process. The court shouldn't be deciding it. Parliament should be deciding it and the court should defer to parliament.

This is hardly an enthusiastic endorsement for interfering in different areas of jurisdictional competence or, as some have suggested, judicial activism. I would submit quite to the contrary, the courts are quite prepared to defer to parliament.

The next leading case is *Rosenberg*, which the government chose not to appeal. It basically showed that the court of appeal was a little fed up with parliament. It had a case before it concerning tax deferral and the advantages of a heterosexual couple over a homosexual couple with respect to the Income Tax Act.

The attorney general conceded that under the Income Tax Act section 15 was in fact violated, but at a lower court ruling this was a justifiable limitation and was found to be reasonable under section 1. The court of appeal, in overturning that decision, said that this discriminatory action could not be justified as pressing and substantial. It also said that it failed the test of rational connection, minimal impairment and proportionality. There was no rational connection between the limitation and the goal of protecting heterosexual partners from income security on the death of their partners. It also found that the cost was not a constitutionally permissible justification of discrimination under section 1 and judicial deference was not a presumptive argument against judicial scrutiny.

• (1340)

A conclusion to be reached after a section 1 analysis, in other words the discriminatory provisions, could not be justified as they had no rational connection and the courts were no longer prepared to defer just on the basis of institutional competence.

I think the fair conclusion is that if parliament does not decide these issues then the courts will take over. In my view that effectively shuts out the voices of the people of Canada so that the chattering classes get to have their say on what they think should be the proper definition of spouse or conjugal relationship. The courts can have their say as to what constitutes a conjugal relationship, but the people of Canada and parliament do not get their say.

The point I want to make is that *Rosenberg, M. and H.*, and *Egan* did not deal with marriage. *Rosenberg* deals with the tax advantages of a heterosexual couple. *M and H* deals with section 29 of the Family Law Act but, as such, marriage itself is left alone.

It is a clear legal conclusion that in *Egan, Rosenberg, M. and H.* on the issue of what constitutes a marriage has, per the terms of the motion before us, not been attacked. While there has been a great deal of public debate surrounding those court decisions, there has been no initiative on the part of either the courts of appeal or the

Supreme Court of Canada to say that marriage is anything other than what the motion states, namely a union between one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others.

Having said that the institution of marriage and the definition of marriage is not under attack does not mean that parliamentarians can have a nice summer and enjoy themselves. In my view, the courts have got themselves locked into a dialogue out of which they cannot emerge because of the logic of their positions.

Courts necessarily operate in a rights-based environment and everything is put through that particular lens. Courts, by definition, do not have a broad perspective. What is in front of an individual judicial officer at any given time is a set of litigants who deal on a narrow set of facts, on a particular set of legal principles at any given time. Necessarily, the courts' focuses are narrow and specific.

Parliament, however, is best able to look at the broad socio-economic implications of changes to legislation. Parliament, in its own funny little way, goes through this committee type process where witnesses are brought in and a variety of viewpoints are sought which have an effect on how the government of the day deals with the issues. The process is fairly open and democratic. Legislation emerges hopefully encompassing what has been heard from witnesses. No judicial inquiry can ever match the breadth of a parliamentary process.

I would submit that one of the reasons the court decisions have been so controversial is that the court processes have ended up dealing with language concepts that are very limiting by their nature. The rights based and rights concept view of life is very individualistic and does not deal very well with other institutions in our society such as the family.

For instance, if one uses the concept of spouse, one necessarily ends up expanding the language to accommodate the demands of same sex people. It tends to render the meaning of spouse, as has been understood over the millennia, as meaningless to many others.

The reasons that the courts end up dealing with phrases like "spouse" and "conjugal rights" is that their language is limited and limited to a particular decision. They end up expanding the language in the way language was never intended to go in the first place and then of course that in turn offends some people.

I would like to propose that the direction for the government in this particular area should be to first de-conjugalize the language. The first and foremost principle, as set out in the motion of the hon. member, namely that the definition of marriage remains as is and that the Government of Canada should give a positive statement, rather than merely double negatives from lawyers, that marriage is a separate institution recognized by a variety of religious authori-

ties throughout the millennia and that it enjoys a unique and particular status in the lives of Canadians.

Having said that, the second step of the process is much more problematic. The conjugalizing of the definition of dependency for the purposes of family law legislation, or for the purposes of divorce, or for the purpose of pension entitlements has set up a whole new set of discriminatory practices which the courts will find endlessly frustrating.

My suggestion is that once we de-conjugalize those sorts of definitions and move toward truer concepts of dependency and inter-relationship we will avoid a lot of legal absurdities that the courts are currently and inadvertently in the process of setting up.

• (1345)

The most obvious legal absurdity is that the people who have sex will be entitled to certain kinds of benefits and the people who do not will not. The dependencies are the same, the relationship is the same, yet the entitlement to a panoply of benefits is generated only by virtue of sex. I would suggest that is an absurdity which sets up a level of discrimination which is unnecessary and will be the source of a great deal of additional litigation.

I would suggest that it is up to parliament to get the courts out of some of their own logical absurdities. The suggestion that you made, Mr. Speaker, with respect to domestic partnerships, is in some respects entitled to a great deal of scrutiny.

Other suggestions may be to maintain the definition of spouse for married couples only and apply a different term, most likely partner, for all other relationships, including common law, same sex or non-conjugal. Many non-married couples use the term partner for significant terminology, as is reflected in society general. Or the definition of spouse could be used for all non-married partnerships, including common law, same sex or non-conjugal, and the terminology applied to married spouses could be that of husband and wife.

These are only suggestions, but I would suggest that this is the institution that best deals with those kinds of suggestions and that the courts themselves are institutions to which we should only defer in certain circumstances. As I see it, the courts are quite prepared to defer to parliament and to listen to what parliament has to say in dealing with this very vexing issue.

Mr. Grant McNally (Dewdney—Alouette, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member from the Liberal Party seems to be in contradiction with what the parliamentary secretary said earlier about the supremacy of parliament. The member who just spoke seems to be concurring with members of the opposition and others who have said that parliament is supreme. The parliamentary secretary

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clearly stated that the supreme court is supreme, so there certainly is a conflict on that side of the House.

I know he spoke in support, generally speaking, of this motion, but I want to know how he justifies the following statement:

“Be it resolved that the Liberal Party of Canada strongly urge the federal government to recognize same sex marriages in the same way that it recognizes opposite marriages in its distribution of benefits”.

I am wondering how the member from the Liberal Party of Canada can justify supporting this motion? We appreciate his support, but there is a definite contradiction between the policy of the Liberal Party of Canada and what they are saying in the House today. How can he justify that?

Mr. John McKay: Mr. Speaker, as I said in my speech, in my view parliament is the proper forum to deal with this issue. In fact it has a means to it that allows us to deal with what apparently are irreconcilable concepts.

May I suggest that in some respect any motions that deal with same sex marriage, or words or phrases to that effect, are in fact imprecise versions of language. We want to be much tighter in our use of language. We want particular words to mean particular things to particular pieces of legislation.

My suggestion, and I think it is a good suggestion, which is supported by others, is that if we de-conjugalize the issues outside marriage we arrive at a solution or we move toward a solution which is in fact far healthier and allows us to get past this constant flinging of words back and forth, whether it is spouse, conjugal, marriage, husband or wife. If we were far more precise in our language then I think we would give the courts instruction as to how to resolve the issues on a case by case basis.

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to follow up on the question that my colleague just asked because we are very concerned that the policy resolution that was passed by the Liberals at their convention is in fact what is behind a lot of the concerns that we are raising today.

We talk a lot about the courts and we are very concerned that there is going to be more and more of an erosion of our fundamental beliefs. We need to send a message to the courts that the definition of marriage is sacrosanct. We would like to stop sliding down the slippery slope.

• (1350)

The basic building block of our society is the family and we are very concerned that this will lead to an erosion of that.

I would like to return to the court case which has formed the background for this discussion, the *M. v H.* case, which was before the supreme court. There was no disagreement on their legal rights

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by the time that case got to the court. The case had turned into an abstract argument over gay marriage. The monetary aspect had been closed. Both sides wanted the court to rule in the same way.

Why would the supreme court accept a case under those circumstances? Why did it not wait to decide whether gay marriage should be imposed on the country until a live argument was before it? My feeling is that the court did not wait because it was wanting to write gay marriage into the law. That is why this whole discussion today is so important.

I would like to know if the member has any response to my comments.

Mr. John McKay: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member's premise with respect to the analysis of *M. v H.* is completely false. *M. v H.* did not deal with marriage. *M. v H.* dealt with section 29 of the family law legislation of the province of Ontario, and it dealt with that legislation in section 29. Section 1 concerns the definition of marriage. Section 29 concerns spousal rights; that is, what we would consider to be common law spousal rights. The court analogized that common law heterosexual spousal rights are equivalent to common law homosexual spousal rights, and that is where it left it.

As to the issue that is on the floor, it has nothing to do with marriage, as *M. v H.* had nothing to do with marriage. In fact, the courts in *Egan, Rosenberg* and *M. v H.* all said the same thing. They were not dealing with marriage; they were dealing with rights and benefits that may accrue by virtue of a relationship.

The next step is to de-conjugalize the issue. If we do that we have taken the steam right out of the debate.

Mr. John Bryden (Wentworth—Burlington, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to follow my colleague from Scarborough East because I share many of the sentiments he has expressed.

First, let me say that I am a member of parliament. My decisions are made here and they are made by my brain and my conscience. I am not bound by any policy decisions made by a Liberal convention. The Reform Party may be bound by the suggestions from policy conventions but not me. These are merely suggestions of policy that have come from the membership of the Liberal party. But, when push comes to shove, as members of parliament we have to decide on our own consciences in this Chamber.

I have no difficulty saying that I support this motion. It is a little premature for me because I would have liked more time over the summer to formulate a better expression of my thoughts concerning the controversy surrounding same sex couples in terms of the benefits they should receive and the absolute necessity in my mind in preserving the legal concept of marriage as a union of opposite sex couples.

The reason I support this motion is because there are two very important things behind the need to recognize the legality of marriage as an opposite sex union. First, it is the idea that many Canadians still believe, despite the fact that there are some Canadians who have lost some faith in the various organized churches, absolutely in the sanctity of marriage. We owe those Canadians an obligation to respect their feelings on this issue. We should not willy-nilly trample on something that has been a tradition for many thousands of years.

For me the really crucial issue with respect to the legality of an opposite sex union being termed a marriage is the idea of adoption. I voted against my government several years back on this very issue. I support absolutely the need to support couples who are in an emotionally dependent relationship that becomes materially dependent, be they same sex couples or couples that are dependent for other reasons. I feel very strongly that while I support that idea absolutely, I am very concerned that we must never, in furthering that goal, extinguish the rights of others. By this I mean specifically children. My fear about recognizing same sex marriages is that it would infuse a right for homosexual couples to adopt children.

• (1355)

Right now there is a discretionary ability for homosexual couples to adopt children and I think that is fine, because I am not one to say that it is impossible, indeed, even unlikely, that a homosexual couple might make excellent parents. What I am not prepared to say is that, all things being equal, a homosexual couple make equally as good parents as a heterosexual couple. I do not think society and our understanding of the human psyche has progressed that far that we can be prepared to make that judgment.

The idea or the concept of retaining the legal concept of marriage as an opposite sex union is, I think, extremely important in terms of preserving the rights of children, the right of a child to be brought up by heterosexual parents.

That being said, I really do welcome this debate, because what has happened is that in the courts, when we leave it to the courts, the judges sit back and they hear the evidence presented before them. However, if that evidence is flawed or that evidence is incomplete, then what happens is that the court will make an incomplete decision.

We saw that in the use of the word conjugal, which came up in Bill C-78. The government used the word conjugal based on its use in previous court decisions. When I examined that, I discovered that the courts did not consider the meaning of conjugal. The courts merely made a change to existing legislation and ignored the fact that conjugal means heterosexual, unless we had a situation where even the supreme court was implying that the word conjugal means same sex unions when it does not mean that at all. What we have to do—

The Speaker: I stand, my colleague, to advise you that you are now about halfway through your speech. In order that you can keep the balance that you already have in your speech, may I suggest that we proceed to Statements by Members and you will have the floor when we return after question period.

[Translation]

We will now proceed to Statements by Members.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

THE PERSECHINI RUN

Mrs. Karen Kraft Sloan (York North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, a prominent resident in my riding of York North, Mr. Joe Persechini, has raised over \$2 million in the past 23 years to aid children with physical disabilities and their families.

The Persechini Run is a fundraising event for Easter Seals. It has grown from an event that raised \$2,700 in its first year to raising over \$190,000 this year, with more than 3,000 people involved as participants and volunteers.

I congratulate all of the people who took part in the Persechini Run, especially the hundreds of schoolchildren. To Joe Persechini, his team of volunteers and the community and business sponsors I extend my greatest thanks.

* * *

TAXATION

Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, this is a very special day in the House. The Reform Party is standing in defence of the family and of marriage between a man and a woman.

There are other ways of supporting families too. For example, we think that it is high time to free families from their crushing tax load. We believe in leaving more money in the hands of the people who have earned it so that they can provide for their families. How can families be strong if half of their earnings are confiscated in the form of taxes, making it a constant struggle for them to make ends meet?

I am very appreciative of my family. After 38 years of marriage, my wife and I have three children, two in-laws and four grandchildren. However, thanks to the Liberal and Conservative governments of the past 35 years, the collective share of the debt spread over our 11 family members is over \$200,000.

Can we not see that debt and taxes are a threat to our families? Let us get debt and taxes down.

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THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Lynn Myers (Waterloo—Wellington, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the global community recognized World Environment Day on June 5 and will recognize World Population Day on July 11.

• (1400)

Population growth has a significant impact on our environment as growing human activity around the world consumes the resources that all living things require. Clean freshwater and farmland are becoming more scarce. Fish are declining in the world's rivers, lakes and oceans. The loss of forests impacts biodiversity when habitats that shelter plant and animal species are destroyed. Billions of tonnes of topsoil are lost through erosion each year. Toxic chemicals in the environment especially threaten the health of children, the elderly and the urban poor. Our ecosystem and our health bear the brunt of these impacts.

My aim is not to dishearten but simply to raise awareness of the links between population, the environment and human health. By considering these links and the principles of sustainable development and by formulating our priorities, policies and laws we can make a great step forward.

* * *

LEUKEMIA

Ms. Carolyn Bennett (St. Paul's, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to encourage this House to consider June as Leukemia Awareness Month and to congratulate and thank the Leukemia Research Fund of Canada for its hard work and dedication.

Approximately 3,300 Canadians will be diagnosed with leukemia and 2,100 will die in 1999. When we think that the loss of people like my friend the gifted filmmaker Philip Borsos will be prevented in the future, we can see the importance of this fight. I would like the House to recognize the work of the Leukemia Research Fund of Canada.

The medical community has made tremendous progress in understanding leukemia. Just this weekend at the 25th reunion of my medical school class, my classmate Dr. Mark Minden illustrated just how close they are to a cure. As the second leading cause of death among children and adolescents, cancer and especially leukemia deserve our attention.

On June 24 the Leukemia Research Fund of Canada will present research grants to the best and most promising scientists who are dedicated to finding a cure for leukemia. I would like to congratulate the Leukemia Research Fund of Canada for all its hard work. I am sure we will see a cure to leukemia very soon.

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RELAY FOR A FRIEND

Mr. Lou Sekora (Port Moody—Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am proud to have played a small part in the Canadian Cancer Society 1999 Relay for a Friend held last weekend in my riding. What the organizers and the participants achieved in this event was truly amazing. Over a period of 12 hours, 2,000 participants raised \$366,500 for cancer research and equipment. We have all been touched by cancer at one time or another either personally or through a loved one.

Many of those involved have survived cancer. Congratulations to everyone involved.

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AGRICULTURE

Mr. Jake E. Hoepfner (Portage—Lisgar, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, for weeks we have been warning the government about the devastating flood crisis in parts of Manitoba and Saskatchewan. The survival of many farms is in serious jeopardy. U.S. farmers hit by this flood will get \$100 U.S. for every unseeded acre. Canadian farmers are getting political rhetoric.

The government responded to last year's farm income crisis with a program that is itself a disaster. It is so bad that the Saskatchewan agriculture minister said at a rally in Regina this weekend, "Forget about the farms, forget about everything else. We have seen this thing doesn't work so let's use that as an experience to make it work for everybody".

Is the government listening? Useless programs and inaction from this government are not going to cut it with western Canadian farmers. They need solutions, not empty promises.

* * *

OPERATION BLUE STAR

Mr. Gurbax Singh Malhi (Bramalea—Gore—Malton—Springdale, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the month of June marks the 15th anniversary of Operation Blue Star, when the Indian army stormed the Golden Temple in Amritsar and 37 other Sikh religious shrines. The 1984 attack resulted in the deaths of many innocent men, women and children.

Religious freedom, which is protected here in Canada, was violated. Canada's attachment to basic religious freedoms is in many ways similar to that of the Sikh faith which upholds human dignity regardless of country of origin, sex, race, skin colour, creed or religion.

We must remember the victims of Operation Blue Star and ensure that such a tragedy and abuse of religious freedom never happens again.

[Translation]

LAVAL HOSPITAL

Ms. H el ene Alarie (Louis-H ebert, BQ): Mr. Speaker, at the ceremony for the various Persillier-Lachapelle awards for 1998, Laval hospital, which is located in my riding, was given the award of excellence in the category "Personalization of care and services", for its respiratory rehabilitation program.

Laval hospital developed a respiratory rehabilitation program for people with chronic pulmonary disease, who cannot obtain any more relief from the standard medications.

A sizeable multidisciplinary team works with program participants, providing them with a variety of services: information for a better understanding of the disease, a medically supervised exercise program, respiratory therapy, and occupational therapy, to name but a few.

• (1405)

Laval hospital was chosen for the Persillier-Lachapelle award because of its strict global approach, its variety of actions, its impact on research, and its multidisciplinary rehabilitation program.

Sincere congratulations.

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[English]

OCEANS

Mr. Peter Adams (Peterborough, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we know more about the surface of the moon than about the sea floor. This is curious considering oceans cover 75% of the earth and contain 97.5% of earth's water. With this in mind, the United Nations declared June 8 World Oceans Day. The purpose of this day is to create waves about the life sustaining role of oceans and inspire us to take better care of our salty seas.

About seven million Canadians live in coastal communities, but even people who have never seen the ocean are connected to it. Water is constantly making its way from us and our regions to the ocean through a network of waterways. All water flows to the sea which is why it is crucial to keep these water systems clean and healthy.

Global warming makes oceans even more important. They act as both heaters and air conditioners for our planet.

I encourage all Canadians to become familiar with the Oceans Act passed by the government, to learn more about oceans and to keep in mind that our health is directly related to the health of our oceans.

NEW BRUNSWICK ELECTION

Miss Deborah Grey (Edmonton North, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, there is a new government in New Brunswick today. Thank the Lord.

The election really was a horse race and what a finish it was. The winner came in with a message which is that absolutely nothing can stand in the way of people who agree it is time for political change.

Hurray for New Brunswickers who demonstrated their political muscle yesterday. They considered carefully the policies, the parties, the leaders and the candidates. But most of all, they weighed the past against the future, and the future won.

That is what change is. It is a powerful statement of faith in new people and new ideas. It is about letting our children and our youth have their say in their future. It is about hope and energy going in new directions. Change is powerful. And it is on its way to Ottawa. It is going to thunder through those front benches and halls of power. It is coming around the bend now and nothing will be able to stand in the way when it is time to change the government. All I can say is, heads up, your time is coming too.

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[Translation]

WORLD SKILLS COMPETITION

Mr. Bernard Patry (Pierrefonds—Dollard, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Quebecers have distinguished themselves in the latest Canadian selections for the 35th annual world skills competition to be held in the Olympic Stadium in Montreal from November 11 to 14 this year.

After a series of trade and technology skills tests conducted over four days in Kitchener, Ontario, 25 of the 40 Canadian representatives selected are from Quebec.

This is a continuation of the successful performances by Quebec young people in the Canadian Skills Competitions held in Montreal in 1996 and Vancouver in 1998.

I might point out that, in the last world event, only Quebecers won any medals.

This year in Montreal more than 600 young people from 34 countries are expected to compete. We wish all participants the best of luck, especially the Quebecers who will be representing us.

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[English]

FAMILY TRUSTS

Mr. Pat Martin (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is usually the rich and famous who get the Order of Canada but

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Winnipegger George Harris is a true Canadian hero who deserves it as much as anybody ever has.

In a classic David and Goliath story, Winnipegger George Harris is taking on two giants: the mighty Bronfman family empire and Revenue Canada. In 1991 the Bronfmans moved \$2.2 billion in family trusts to the United States. They should have paid \$700 million in capital gains tax on that money but incredibly the finance department and Revenue Canada did not go after it. Mr. Speaker, if you or I owed \$100 to Revenue Canada, it would hound us into our graves.

George Harris has taken the matter to court. He wants to know why the government is slashing budgets for social programs and will not even try to collect \$700 million from its corporate buddies. I think George Harris is a hero for defending our interests. I think George Harris should get the Order of Canada for exposing this obscene loophole and demanding that it—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Drummond.

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[Translation]

DRUMMONDVILLE

Mrs. Pauline Picard (Drummond, BQ): Mr. Speaker, this summer, Drummondville will again be a dynamic and diverse place to be.

For the second year running, the Légendes fantastiques will take visitors on a fabulous imaginary voyage. Over 300 volunteers and actors will dazzle crowds with breathtaking special effects in a charming country setting.

Visit the model of a Quebec village from bygone days and travel back in time for a glimpse of the life and history of our forebears.

• (1410)

From July 8 to 19, the atmosphere will be one of friendly fun and festivity. The dancing and musical performances of the Mondial des cultures are not to be missed.

Drummondville's very fortunate media representatives are here today in the gallery and join with me in inviting members and the public to pay us a visit this summer.

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QUEBEC PREMIER

Ms. Raymonde Folco (Laval West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, cracks are already beginning to appear in Lucien Bouchard's government. Mr. Bouchard is beginning not to like what he sees in Quebec.

He is not at all happy that associations and unions are making demands he can no longer meet. He is not at all pleased with

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criticism of his decisions. And he does not appreciate having entire sections of his administration questioned.

In fact, the Quebec model and identity are not threatened: Quebecers are seeing to that. What in fact seems to be threatened is the PQ model. There is a difference.

* * *

[English]

NEW BRUNSWICK ELECTION

Mr. John Herron (Fundy—Royal, PC): Mr. Speaker, what a great day it is for New Brunswick.

Today Bernard Lord and the New Brunswick Progressive Conservative Party form the newly elected majority government. Lord's campaign platform, a new vision for New Brunswick, sent the right signals to voters, and he is ready for the job.

This election gave democracy back to the people. A Bernard Lord government will listen and consult, and change the complacent attitude of the last 12 years of government knows best.

Lord's New Brunswick Tories campaigned on a platform of lower taxes. This victory proves taxpayers liked what they heard. The federal Liberals can learn a good lesson from the New Brunswick and Ontario campaigns. Tax relief is important to Canadians.

On behalf of New Brunswickers, the federal Tory caucus, and particularly Bernard Lord's and my aunt Renie Lord-Herron, I wish to congratulate Mr. Lord and the New Brunswick PCs on their tremendous success.

Today, New Brunswickers embark on the first day of 200 days of change, and it promises to be a great ride.

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PARKDALE COMMUNITY CLEANUP DAY

Ms. Sarmite Bulte (Parkdale—High Park, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I recently had the honour of attending Parkdale's fifth annual community cleanup day.

The event was organized by Parkdale Collegiate students in partnership with local residents, community groups and elementary school students. On a cool and rainy Saturday morning, over 100 volunteers cleaned up parks, school grounds, back alleys and offered assistance to seniors and the disabled in our community.

This year's event was co-ordinated by Kane Kakar, a young student at Parkdale Collegiate under the leadership and guidance of principal Ken Hanson.

Volunteers and projects such as this give Parkdale its heart and soul. Their efforts to improve our community spirit and our local environment serve as a role model to all constituents.

As the member of parliament for Parkdale—High Park, I am delighted to offer my thanks and congratulations to all those who contributed to the cleanup of our community on the fifth annual Parkdale community cleanup day.

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GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES

Mr. John Williams (St. Albert, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, what does Maude Barlow have in common with beds and rats? All are the central characters in movies sponsored by the National Film Board of Canada. The total cost to Canadians for just these three movies is over \$670,000. These gems and many more can be found in the latest edition of the waste report released earlier today.

Taxpayers did not only fund absurd movies. We have also spent over \$3 million to bail out banks for bad loans to a hot dog franchisee in Quebec. We will continue to spend thousands of dollars on millennium projects such as the grant for \$130,000 to 21,000 musicians to try to break the world record for the largest marching band.

I am surprised that the National Film Board did not make a movie called "The Toilet", a delightful look at how the Liberals can flush taxpayers' money down the sewer.

* * *

[Translation]

SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN

Mrs. Christiane Gagnon (Québec, BQ): Mr. Speaker, every year thousands of children, who have been sold by their parents or kidnapped, become victims of sexual tourists cum child abuser.

Although two years ago, Canada passed legislation to prevent the sexual exploitation of children abroad, a human rights defence organization known as Human Rights Internet has criticized its ineffectiveness.

When I tabled my bill, I criticized the limited scope and difficulty of implementing the government's bill. Time has, unfortunately, proven me right. The federal legislation never had the teeth necessary to lay a single charge, and those who tried to do so ran into a veritable wall.

If the government is using the same process to make known and implement its legislation on excision, we have to ask ourselves whether it really wants to comply with its own legislation and its international commitments on human rights.

*Oral Questions***ORAL QUESTION PERIOD**

• (1415)

[English]

KOSOVO

Mr. Preston Manning (Leader of the Opposition, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the House welcomes the news that the G-8 countries agreed today to a draft UN security council resolution which promises to bring us one step closer to peace in Kosovo.

The fact that Russia is now a signatory to the deal clearly adds credibility to the resolution with the Serbs, but to proceed this resolution must also carry the judgment of the Chinese government.

Is the prime minister confident that this UN resolution will in fact proceed and that China will not use its security council veto to block it?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition asks a very good question. If all the steps are followed carefully and if this agreement is implemented in the way that has been agreed, I am pretty sure the Chinese will go along.

As the House knows, there is a series of steps that has to be met before the resolution will be presented at the security council. If those steps are respected by all the parties, I am pretty sure the Chinese will not use their veto on that issue.

Mr. Preston Manning (Leader of the Opposition, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, obviously a number of issues need to be ironed out with respect to implementation of the G-8 peace plan, but one of the central problems is the question of how to implement a ceasefire, particularly with the Kosovo Liberation Army remaining something of a wild card.

Will the Prime Minister tell us whether any progress has been made in agreeing to the terms of the ceasefire and whether or not the KLA is being brought into these discussions?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in the resolution that will eventually be adopted by the United Nations security council there is provision for the disarmament of the KLA.

As to the terms of the negotiations, I am not in a position to say with whom people are talking at this time. All the G-8 has agreed that to have peace in Kosovo we have to proceed with the disarmament of the KLA, just as we want the Serb army to withdraw and go back to Belgrade.

Mr. Preston Manning (Leader of the Opposition, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, 800 Canadian forces personnel are on their way to the former Yugoslavia. The Minister of National Defence is musing

about sending more, even though his chief of defence staff has advised that may be beyond our capability.

It is not unreasonable for Canadians to want to know what our troops will be doing, what role they are assigned to, and whether or not it is within our capability. Canadians want specific answers to these concerns and questions, and not just vague assurances.

Will the Prime Minister tell the House what specific role Canadian forces will play in the implementation of the G-8 peace plan and what resources will be made available to them in order to do the job?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we can tell the Canadian people, as we agreed some weeks ago. Briefings were given to members of the House and to the media about the role of these 800 people.

As to the next group to possibly go, it is being discussed at this time with the NATO commanders. The Canadian government is not in a position at this moment to agree because we do not know exactly to our satisfaction all the details that are needed to make a final decision.

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PRIME MINISTER

Miss Deborah Grey (Edmonton North, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has avoided answering more than 50 questions in the last three weeks about Shawinigate. He and his human shield have done everything possible to hide their shame for the Shawinigan shame, hoping it will just go away. I have news. It will not go away.

The Prime Minister insists that he does not own the shares he is trying to sell. He cannot explain why he is selling something that he does not really own but, gee whiz, it is like we are all just supposed to accept it and go on, right?

We do not and we would like an answer to the question once and for all. Where is the receipt?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I do not believe I can add to what the Deputy Prime Minister and I have said in the House.

Before I became Prime Minister I sold those shares and I gave the problem or the receivable to my trustee as with my other assets. She is in charge of managing it. Mr. Wilson on May 6 explained the situation in front of a committee of the House of Commons.

Miss Deborah Grey (Edmonton North, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, it is just great that he gave the problem to somebody else. In fact he says that he sold something that he did not really sell, that somebody bought something but he did not really buy it. It is as clear as mud.

Oral Questions

• (1420)

This Liberal arrogance, this going to see me through attitude, is just not working. Just ask Camille Thériault and Dalton McGuinty how well that works.

We have asked the Prime Minister to produce the proof that he is not in a conflict of interest and he just tells us that he is being a good little MP. We asked him to show us proof that the shares were actually sold to somebody and up comes the human shield. The question remains. Where is the proof?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am told that the ethics counsellor looked into that, discussed it with my trustees and reported it to the committee on May 6, last month.

I said, and I repeat, I sold those shares. For the rest, I have done my job as a member of parliament helping to create jobs in an area where they have 12% unemployment, as it is my duty. I have been doing what the members of the Reform Party by the big numbers have done for their constituents, making sure that federal programs apply to their constituents as I do for mine.

[Translation]

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, in the apparent conflict of interest involving the Prime Minister and business people in his riding, the Prime Minister could easily remove all suspicion.

The Prime Minister, who says he sold his shares before being sworn in, claims that the sale was final.

I ask him quite simply why he does not table the bill of sale. It seems to me that would resolve the whole mess we are in at the moment.

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will repeat the same thing over again. I signed the sale of my shares before becoming Prime Minister, and gave that to the person looking after my trust, as we are required to do.

The person in question is responsible and spoke with Mr. Wilson, who explained what he learned from this person. She is the one who has been handling these matters since November 1993, when I became Prime Minister.

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister says he sold his shares before being sworn in as Prime Minister.

So, the decision is his. He did so as a member of parliament, as a citizen, and not as Prime Minister. The trust is not involved.

It would be so easy to remove all suspicion. Why does he not table the bill of sale he made as member—not as Prime Minister and not through the trust—but on his own before he was sworn in? It is simple. It would put an end to all these questions and all these suspicions weighing on him.

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Mr. Wilson discussed this problem with the person in charge of the trust in which I am required to deposit my assets. This person manages the matter and discussed with Mr. Wilson, who testified before a committee of the House and provided all the relevant facts in response to the questions put to him.

As for me, my assets are in a trust and I have no say in the matter. I leave its management to the person in charge of it.

Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ): Mr. Speaker, quite seriously, the Prime Minister could avoid a good number of problems if he simply complied with this request and agreed to clarify the situation.

I am asking him once again, quite simply this: in light of all the hullabaloo surrounding this situation, and the fact that the sale occurred when he was just an MP and not the Prime Minister, does he not think that it would be so much simpler if he were just to produce the record of sale? That will settle it.

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Mr. Wilson, who is responsible for ethics for all members of the House, has looked into the matter. I repeat: all of my assets are managed by a trustee. I have no oversight over the management.

I have done what the law and regulations require me to do, and all this was explained by Mr. Wilson before a committee of the House of Commons, on May 6.

Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister will understand that some doubt still remains when he refers to his ethics adviser, this person who is hard to speak to, who works on order, and reports to him, not the House of Commons.

I ask him once more: this business of keeping this sale secret, refusing to produce something as simple as a paper stating “I have sold my shares and here are the signatures”, does this not leave even the Prime Minister with doubts?

• (1425)

He could clarify the situation. Let him do what needs doing, then. Is there something in this contract that we ought not to see? If so, he should let us know.

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Mr. Wilson is the one to deal with problems of this nature for all MPs and ministers. He has looked at the portfolio my trustee is handling for me. I have no right of supervision whatsoever over that trust.

I turned my assets over to it and years from now, when I leave this position, I will see whether the trustee has handled my affairs well or not. That is when I will know whether to laugh or to cry, but right now I have no say in this, I depend on her competency and I trust her greatly.

*Oral Questions**[English]***THE SENATE**

Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister.

The House is once again set to vote on the Senate's budget of over \$50 million. Here stands Canada on the eve of the 21st century and we still have an unelected, unaccountable Senate, a Senate that refuses to account for how it spends public dollars.

Why is the government content to push through yet another Senate budget without public scrutiny?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Senate is an institution of this parliament that is part of the Canadian constitution. It is there until it is changed in the constitution. It is a very useful institution and is doing a good job for Canada.

We wanted to change it some years ago. I remember very well that when we wanted to have a reformed and elected Senate many people on the other side voted against it. So we have the Senate that has been given to us by the Reform Party.

Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP): Mr. Speaker, a lot of Canadians beg to differ. A lot of Canadians had hoped to see from the government a little more interest in real democracy.

The Canadian Senate has no place in a modern democracy. It is a joke and an embarrassment. It is indefensible.

Will the Prime Minister agree to write to the first ministers? Will he sound out their support for ridding us of this relic and moving on with democratic renewal in the coming century?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there is no desire by the premiers at this time to spend a lot of time on changing the constitution to change the Senate. They did it for months and months to no avail. I am telling the House that they do not want to do this at this time.

When we had a chance we voted for reform of the Senate. The NDP voted for reform of the Senate too, but I am sorry to report to the House that the Reform Party made sure that we kept the Senate in exactly the same form it is today.

* * *

*[Translation]***KOSOVO**

Mr. André Bachand (Richmond—Arthabaska, PC): Mr. Speaker, so far, we know, and there is evidence to back this up, that the Canadian government's position with respect to the KLA has always been complete disarmament. However, we know that the

United States and the G-8 nations have now decided to talk about demilitarizing the KLA.

My question is for the Prime Minister. Can he tell us the difference between demilitarizing and disarming the KLA and what the Canadian government's position is today?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government's position, like that of all the G-8 nations, is to ensure that the Kosovars can return home safely.

This means that the Kosovo liberation army and Serb forces must leave the area so that the international force can restore peace and freedom for the Kosovars, who, I hope, will return as soon as possible, within a few weeks, to their own country.

Mr. André Bachand (Richmond—Arthabaska, PC): Mr. Speaker, with all due respect, the Prime Minister is unaware of the agreement that has been negotiated with the G-8 nations. There is a big difference between demilitarizing and disarming. Canadian troops will be among the first to enter Kosovo.

● (1430)

If the KLA is not disarmed, there is a risk. What are the Canadian army's rules of engagement? Will it be able to disarm the KLA or will it let KLA soldiers leave with their arms?

I would like the Prime Minister to accurately inform us on this important issue. I hope he will be able to answer clearly this time.

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the resolution was clear.

[English]

It demands that the KLA and other armed Kosovo Albanian groups end immediately all offensive action and comply with the requirement for demilitarization as laid down by the head of the international security council in consultation with the special representative of the secretary general.

That is the text that has been agreed to by everybody. It has satisfied me and I hope it will satisfy the hon. member.

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PRIME MINISTER

Mrs. Diane Ablonczy (Calgary—Nose Hill, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, when the Liberals were in opposition they said that Sinclair Stevens had mixed his public and private business. In fact, the now heritage minister went berserk trying to force Sinclair to admit he was wrong. Berserk is looking kind of good right now.

There is a simple way to clear up questions about the Prime Minister's similar conflict. Owing the Grand-Mère shares places

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the Prime Minister in a clear conflict of interest. If they were sold, where is the receipt?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when Mr. Wilson was at the industry committee on May 6 he said that that it was a sale free and clear of the Prime Minister's interest in that golf course. He also said that a sum of money had been denominated and that there was a repayment schedule.

I think what Mr. Wilson said to the committee is very clear.

Mrs. Diane Ablonczy (Calgary—Nose Hill, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I am sorry, but we are trying to give the Prime Minister an opportunity to tell Canadians that he did nothing that would constitute a conflict of interest. Perhaps I can put the question another way: Où est le reçu?

[Translation]

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will quote Mr. Wilson.

[English]

He said that in his view this was a done deal and that there were no financial connections regarding the Prime Minister in either the auberge or the golf course. It is very clear. He is an official who has been looking into that and is consulted by all the members of parliament. I have confidence in him.

My trust fund has to administer my assets. As I said in French, it is only at the end of the process that I will know what has been done. It is a blind trust and blind means blind. I am just doing what is required. From the day I became Prime Minister, I have had no decisions to make on it.

[Translation]

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister refuses to table the record of sale, whereas he sold his shares even before becoming PM. He says it is in the hands of the trust.

There is something he could do very easily, namely instruct the trustee to make the record of sale public.

Why does he not instruct the trustee to make the record of sale public? Then the members and the public will be able to make a judgment based on facts, rather than on an act of faith in the Prime Minister.

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the trustee is the one in charge of these things. Under the circumstances, ministers, like the Prime Minister, have no right of supervision. It is a matter of having a blind trust manage one's assets. This is done for all ministers, as it is for me.

I have said all I had to say. I have nothing to add.

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, we are not asking the Prime Minister to administer his shares, we are merely asking whether this was the case.

There are two choices for clarifying the situation, dispelling suspicion and tidying up the matter. One is to do it himself, because he did this before being sworn in, and the other is to ask the trustees to do it, and stop hiding behind the ethics counsellor.

The ethics counsellor is not controlled by the House. He is hired by the Prime Minister, is answerable to the Prime Minister and seems to be receiving his orders from the Prime Minister. It makes no sense.

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I believe what makes no sense is the question itself.

* * *

• (1435)

[English]

CORRECTIONAL SERVICE CANADA

Mr. Randy White (Langley—Abbotsford, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I have been asking the solicitor general for weeks about drugs in prisons.

He said that he knows about it and that he is studying it. What he does not say is who is doing the study, how long it will take and what the scope of the study actually is. My sources say that no such study is taking place in these prisons.

Since drugs are out of control in the prisons, why does the solicitor general not have a plan to do something about it?

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I have said a number of times in the House, when I was appointed solicitor general I became aware of the massive drug problem.

I have asked Correctional Service Canada to review the drug program in the penal system. It has indicated to me that it will have a report on the review in about three months.

Mr. Randy White (Langley—Abbotsford, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, it is refreshing that the solicitor general will know about it in three months. I have known about it for six years.

Let me quote the solicitor general in the House last week. He said that after prisoners are on parole, there needs to be some type of program to help people who are addicted. What does he mean by after they are on parole and in some type of program? This does not sound like a plan, it sounds like a cop-out to me.

After all these years of drug abuse in our prisons, why does the solicitor general have no plan at all?

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Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that my hon. colleague has known this for six years. I thought he found out last week.

If I did have all the answers that were needed for the alcohol addiction and drug abuse problem in the prisons, I would not have to do a review, I would just tell them how to do it. We must do a review.

* * *

[Translation]

PRIME MINISTER

Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I have the impression there is double standard in government.

While the Prime Minister is asking the Minister of Finance not to intervene in transportation matters because he has interests, he boasts about how he intervenes in matters in which he has interests.

Why may the Minister of Finance not intervene in matters that concern him in cabinet, when the Prime Minister must intervene because it is his duty to his constituents?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as far as interests are concerned, I sold them.

When people in my riding apply for grants available to all ridings with high unemployment, I do my duty as an MP and I hope that the member for Roberval does the same.

I have intervened in cases, but I have never intervened with respect to the interests in a golf club that I do not have and that has never received any sort of grant from the Canadian government.

Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister's defence is that he sold his interests. But nobody has seen hide nor hair of a deed of sale.

What we want the Prime Minister to do, if he wants to be left in peace, is to table the deed of sale.

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, all I can say is what I have said. I have nothing to add.

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[English]

CORRECTIONAL SERVICE CANADA

Mr. Jim Abbott (Kootenay—Columbia, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, indeed there is a drug problem in the prisons. Let us take a look at what happened last Saturday in the Kingston Penitentiary.

After prisoners were observed consuming and possibly concealing drugs during an evening yard exercise, they were penned up and taken back to their cells, but the final group of them would not

go. What they did was break everything in sight and cause \$10,000 worth of damage.

This is the last event that has taken place. There have been many events that have taken place over a number of years. Why has the minister just suddenly discovered that there is a drug problem?

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, your hon. colleague is the one who discovered a week ago that there is a drug problem. We have known for years that there is a drug problem. We have indicated that we will address the drug problem, and that is exactly what we will do.

The Speaker: Order, please. I ask hon. members to please address the chair in the question and in the answer.

Mr. Jim Abbott (Kootenay—Columbia, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, is that not really something? They have known about it for a long time and yet the minister has no plan. He has just started his study. He said that we have to do a study in order to be able to find out what we will do. Dither and dither.

Why does he have no plan? Why will he not tell us about the scope of the study that is supposedly going on?

• (1440)

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I indicated previously, there was a review done in 1995. A review was also done a year ago which indicated that there has been about a 300% decrease in drug use in prisons.

As I have indicated, even 12% is too much. We intend to address the problem.

* * *

[Translation]

PRIME MINISTER

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister says he sold his shares in 1993. The Deputy Prime Minister told us yesterday that the alleged buyer returned the shares to the trustee.

This is saying that the trust has the shares belonging to the Prime Minister. He is not the one administering them, we agree, but they are in his trust.

The Prime Minister is therefore in the same situation as the Minister of Finance, who has shares in a trust, but who withdraws from Cabinet discussions on shipping, whereas the Prime Minister boasts of having participated in the awarding of funding in his region to business people.

Can he explain all these about-faces to us? Does he not think it would be clearer to table the bill of sale so we might have something specific rather than acts of faith?

Oral Questions

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member has said exactly the opposite of what the Deputy Prime Minister said yesterday. He said clearly that the shares had never been returned.

I sold and I gave the debt to my trustee, and the shares are not being administered, as far as I know. This is exactly what the ethics counsellor said in his testimony before the committee on May 6.

* * *

[English]

GRAIN TRANSPORTATION

Mr. John Harvard (Charleswood St. James—Assiniboia, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport.

On May 12 the minister appointed Arthur Kroeger to work with industry stakeholders to implement a framework for grain handling and transportation reform. Farmers and industry have asked for a review of the costs of moving grain by rail as part of the Kroeger process.

Will the minister commit to the House that railway costs will be examined?

Hon. David M. Collenette (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I said when I announced Mr. Kroeger's appointment, a full costing review would delay the whole process by a year. There is no question that for Mr. Kroeger to do a thorough job, he has to get a real handle on the true costs of grain transportation by rail.

I am pleased to announce that Mr. Kroeger has requested the Canadian Transportation Agency to conduct an immediate analysis for him so that he can be assisted in his work and report to me by the end of September.

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PRISONS AND PENITENTIARIES

Mr. Chuck Cadman (Surrey North, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the solicitor general just said that we had a 300% decrease. A 300% decrease should mean that we have a zero problem, but we now have a massive problem.

In my riding, a convicted armed robber said that when he went into prison decades ago he had no drug problem. When he came out he was addicted to heroin. Nothing has changed.

Where is the solicitor general's plan? Who is doing it? When are we going to get some results?

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased that the opposition members realize there is a problem. Quite simply, no human could come up with a plan for alcoholism and drug abuse in a couple of months.

Mr. Chuck Cadman (Surrey North, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, before I came here I was on an advisory committee to the deputy commissioner for the Pacific region years ago. We complained about bleach being in the prisons to sterilize needles. We complained about a convicted killer who actually murdered his wife in prison during a conjugal visit by overdosing her with heroin. The problem has been there for years.

I will again ask the solicitor general when we will get a solution to this?

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I indicated previously, yes, the problem has been there for years. Yes, we did do a survey in 1995 and we did a survey a year ago. There has been a 300% decrease in the use of drugs and alcohol in our penal institutions. It is not enough. We will do more.

* * *

THE FAMILY

Mrs. Michelle Dockrill (Bras d'Or—Cape Breton, NDP): Mr. Speaker, during the hearings of the subcommittee on taxation and families, witnesses from across the political spectrum spoke of the need to extend and improve maternity and parental benefits.

In view of the widespread agreement that clearly exists in the country, will the Minister of Human Resources Development commit his government today to extending and improving maternity and parental benefits for Canadian families?

• (1445)

Hon. Pierre S. Pettigrew (Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am looking forward to reading the report of the subcommittee. I always look forward to constructive ideas to improve the social security of our Canadian families and our Canadian workers. I will certainly look into any creative and imaginative solutions and ideas that the parliamentary committee might want to submit to the government.

Mrs. Michelle Dockrill (Bras d'Or—Cape Breton, NDP): Mr. Speaker, three months ago the minister realized, several years after everyone else, that this government's 1996 Employment Insurance Act discriminated against women. As usual, he promised to study the problem. The 56% of women who are ineligible for maternity benefits do not need a study to tell them what is wrong.

How much longer must they wait before the minister stops studying and starts acting?

Hon. Pierre S. Pettigrew (Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have been very clear on this topic that we are monitoring very closely the impact of our EI reform on families and on women in particular. Indeed, we have identified that the re-entrance requirements might be penalizing women in a particular way. I have been raising this issue with my

Oral Questions

officials and we are looking into solutions because we want to serve citizens as well as we can.

Indeed, it is important to bring in the right solutions to the right problems and not jump to hasty conclusions, as the member is doing right now.

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NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mrs. Elsie Wayne (Saint John, PC): Mr. Speaker, on April 8 the Minister of National Defence testified before the defence committee that the government was a matter of weeks away from initiating the maritime helicopter program to replace the Sea Kings. We have also been told that the statement of requirement has been done for months.

Where is the statement of requirement for the Sea King replacements? Is it at the chief of air staff level, the chief of defence staff level, the armed forces council or gathering dust on the minister's desk?

Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is not gathering dust anywhere. We are putting the final touches on it and hope to be able to bring it forward soon because we want to get on with the replacement of the Sea King helicopter. It has provided yeoman service for the Canadian forces and it continues to be well maintained, but eventually it has to be replaced and we need to get on with doing that and we intend to.

Mrs. Elsie Wayne (Saint John, PC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday in the province of New Brunswick the people wiped out the Liberals because they got answers like that. They never got a straight one. This Liberal government is going to go too if it does not give me some straight answers.

Where is the statement of requirement for the Sea King replacement? Is it at the chief of air staff level or is the minister waiting until parliament recesses for the summer so he can get out of the heat on this issue?

Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I do not know what part of my response the hon. member does not understand. I made it quite clear that we want to replace them. We are waiting on the statement of requirement. All of the entities, as the hon. member knows, are working on the statement of requirement. If we could get it out today or tomorrow, I would love to do that. I would love to do that here and now. We are going to get it out just as quickly as we possibly can.

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KYOTO

Hon. Charles Caccia (Davenport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance. It is a well known fact that

federal tax subsidies to the petroleum industry stand in the way of Canada meeting its Kyoto commitment. In 1997 the Standing Committee on the Environment and Sustainable Development recommended the elimination of subsidies to the fossil fuel industry.

Does the Minister of Finance agree that if we are to achieve Canada's Kyoto commitment the government has to eliminate the counterproductive tax subsidies currently allowed to the fossil fuel industry?

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member knows, it is the government's position that we must, at the same time, create a strong economy, create jobs and protect the environment. That is why in the 1997 budget the government increased direct financial support for energy efficiency and for renewable energy. It is also why in the 1998 budget the government moved to narrow the gap between renewables and non-renewables by extending the benefits to the extent of \$150 million for renewable energy projects.

It is also why throughout its budgets the government has extended funding for environmental technologies and why we will continue in that vein.

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• (1450)

TORONTO PORT AUTHORITY

Mr. Lee Morrison (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the Toronto port authority weighed anchor today and the Minister of Transport has maintained his flawless record of questionable appointments to port authority boards.

Contrary to the Canada Marine Act, he rejected three out of four nominees of port users and he made personal selections, including Robert Wright, a close friend of the Prime Minister.

Is he so personally insecure that he cannot bear the thought of an independent board or is he just doing what he is told?

The Speaker: I would rather we de-personalize the questions, if it is at all possible.

Hon. David M. Collenette (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again the hon. member has got his facts wrong. In this case the Canada Marine Act provides for the appointment of four nominees, four directors, in consultation with users. To facilitate this process we set up port advisory committees across the country.

By and large the system has worked well. There was a small problem in Vancouver where there were not sufficient names from which I could select. This also happened in the case of Toronto.

The people who were selected are of the highest calibre. Their names were put forward in consultation with the users. I regret that there was some flaw in the process at the port advisory committee,

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but I think the people of Toronto will be well served by this particular group.

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[Translation]

KOSOVO

Mr. Daniel Turp (Beauharnois—Salaberry, BQ): Mr. Speaker, this morning, the G-8 foreign affairs ministers reached an understanding on the text of a resolution that will be debated in the security council with a view to ending the conflict in Kosovo.

We have just learned that the G-8 is also recommending cessation of bombing in order to facilitate passage of the resolution in the security council.

My question is for the Prime Minister. Before the security council passes this resolution, could he tell the House what Canada's specific contribution will be to the new international security force in Kosovo, or KFOR, and to the effort—

The Speaker: The Right Hon. Prime Minister.

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as soon as the Yugoslav army generals have begun withdrawing their troops, bombing will cease, and the United Nations will consider the resolution. This is the sequence of events provided in the agreement.

As to Canada's participation, 800 troops are already assigned and will arrive soon in Macedonia. We may be sending more.

At this point, the Department of National Defense and NATO are looking at how Canada might participate, and when we have more details, we will be able to tell you if we are going to add—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre.

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[English]

REPRODUCTIVE TECHNOLOGIES

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (Winnipeg North Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, today in testimony before the health committee Dr. Patricia Baird, a geneticist who headed up the Royal Commission on New Reproductive Technologies, said that young women can earn as much as \$50,000 as an egg donor, this despite a voluntary federal moratorium on buying and selling human eggs and sperm.

Will the Minister of Health send a clear message to fertility clinics which are defying his moratorium and say no; no to egg selling, egg buying and egg bartering? Will he give assurances to all Canadians that whenever he reintroduces the long awaited

legislation on reproductive technologies it will include a definitive prohibition on commercialization in this area?

Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I have already told the House, I intend to table legislation later this year which will deal with the whole question of reproductive technologies.

In fact I have met with Dr. Baird and with a variety of other people who are knowledgeable in the area. I am consulting with them and with many others in preparing the legislation. I assure the member and the House that the legislation, when tabled, will deal with all of these areas.

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KOSOVO

Mr. David Price (Compton—Stanstead, PC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has just said that he accepts the demilitarization of the KLA. He has said many times "disarm". The Minister of National Defence has said many times "disarm". The Minister of Foreign Affairs has said "disarm".

Does this mean that the Minister of Foreign Affairs has folded to the Americans at the G-8 meeting and is putting our peacekeepers in danger's way by not disarming the KLA?

• (1455)

Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, demilitarization and disarmament are not incompatible. We will need both of those things to happen. Disarmament of the KLA will happen in the initial stages. It is in the interests of the KLA to disarm so that the peacekeepers can go in to allow the Kosovo refugees to be able to re-enter their country in peace and security. It was foreseen that way in the Rambouillet talks to which the KLA agreed.

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NATIONAL RURAL HEALTH STRATEGY

Mr. Larry McCormick (Hastings—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this morning the rural caucus of Liberal MPs presented to the Minister of Health a report on the development of a national rural health strategy. The report calls for a co-ordinated and sustained focus on health care in rural Canada. Will the minister be acting on the concerns of rural Canadians in adopting the recommendations of this report?

Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this morning I received from the hon. member, in his capacity as chair of the rural Liberal caucus, this remarkable report which contains a variety of excellent recommendations. I intend to act on most of those recommendations shortly.

Oral Questions

To begin with, I should say that we have already taken important steps such as appointing the executive director of rural health, Dr. John Wooton, who is in the gallery today and who is doing a fine job preparing our policy.

We have also set aside money in the budget for rural health initiatives. Throughout the coming months we will be consulting directly with Canadians on their priorities. We intend to make sure that we have one tier of health care in this country.

* * *

CANADA MARINE ACT

Mr. Lee Morrison (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, in the previous answer of the Minister of Transport I was not sure whether he said highest calibre or highest contributions.

The new Canada Marine Act was supposed to depoliticize port governance in this country. It was a lot better during the former port commissions than it is now under the new Canada port authorities.

Why does the government even bother to pass legislation like the Canada Marine Act which it then persistently ignores?

Hon. David M. Collette (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have now put in place 12 of the 18 ports. The process has gone remarkably smoothly right across the country. We have put people in place who have reflected user concerns. There have been a couple of flaws, one in Vancouver and now in Toronto, which I regret. However, all of the people who were nominated came via the user community route and were fully nominated in consistency with the Canada Marine Act.

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*[Translation]***QUEBEC'S POLITICAL FUTURE**

Mr. Pierre Brien (Témiscamingue, BQ): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs said he was going to introduce a bill on the rules governing Quebec's accession to sovereignty.

On June 22, 1990, Robert Bourassa stated "Whatever is said and done, Quebec is a distinct society responsible for its own destiny today and forever".

Does the minister seriously think he can bypass the law and Quebec's National Assembly and impose his Canadian rules in the debate on Quebec's political future?

Hon. Stéphane Dion (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, unless they have clearly opted out of Canada, Quebecers have the inalienable right to be Canadians.

The problem with the Bloc Québécois and the sovereignist leaders is that they know Quebecers want to stay in Canada. That is why they want to use confusion and trickery in carrying out their plan, and that is not on. It is against democracy and against the law in this country.

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*[English]***NATIONAL DEFENCE**

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of National Defence and it concerns the federal expropriation of the Nanoose Bay testing range in British Columbia. On May 5 the federal negotiator agreed that 11 kilometres in the southwest corner of the range were not required and that another 11 kilometres would be dedicated for public use.

Why is the Liberal government now seizing the land which it has admitted it does not need for military purposes?

Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are not talking about a change of use or a change in the practices from what they have been for some 30 years. The area we use is necessary for these purposes, but every provision is made in order for pleasure craft and other boaters to be able to pass in and out, as has been the case for many years. We are not talking about any change at all and we are not talking about seizing anything. We are going through the appropriate expropriation process which involves giving fair market value for the property.

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● (1500)

AMHERST

Mr. Bill Casey (Cumberland—Colchester, PC): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister.

In January I wrote to the Deputy Prime Minister in charge of the millennium project requesting that a vacant public building in Amherst be turned over to the town of Amherst. The building has been vacant and empty for 10 years. No other government agency wants it.

It is available. It would make a very appropriate millennium project to turn it over to the town. Will the minister approve that transfer?

Hon. Herb Gray (Deputy Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would be happy to look into this matter further.

I think this matter may well involve the jurisdiction of the Minister of Public Works and Government Services. I will take this up with him and get back to the hon. member as soon as possible.

*Privilege***PRESENCE IN GALLERY**

The Speaker: I draw the attention of hon. members to the presence in the gallery of the following persons and groups.

First I would like to introduce my brother Speaker from the Irish House of Representatives, Mr. Séamus Pattison, and a delegation from Ireland.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

The Speaker: I would also like to draw the attention of hon. members to the presence in the gallery of His Excellency Abdul Aziz Abdul Ghani, Chairman of the Consultative Council of the Republic of Yemen.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

* * *

PRIVILEGE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON TAX EQUITY FOR CANADIAN FAMILIES WITH
DEPENDENT CHILDREN

The Speaker: Last Thursday a question of privilege was raised in the House whereby one hon. member alleged that another hon. member had made a statement about a subcommittee report that was made. The hon. member who was named in the allegation was the hon. member for Vaudreuil—Soulanges.

I said that I would hold in abeyance any decision until we heard from the hon. member for Vaudreuil—Soulanges and he is in his place today. I would like to go directly to him.

• (1505)

Mr. Nick Discepola (Vaudreuil—Soulanges, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank you for giving me the opportunity to clarify this situation.

I have too much respect for the House of Commons and the Speaker to leak any document. I find the comments of the member for Sherbrooke, who claims that over three years these kinds of documents have been leaked, a bit exaggerated since he has only been in the House less than eight months, I believe.

To get directly to the point, I did give an interview to the *Toronto Star*. From the outset it was clear to the reporter that it was my personal opinion. If members take the opportunity to read the headline of that article, they will see that it says “MP Report”. It does not comment at all on what I reported in the House of Commons and in the subcommittee per se.

I was also approached by another newspaper reporter as early as last Friday who told me that they had in their possession the said draft report, and I refused comment again.

I draw the attention of the House to a quote in that article of the Conservative member for Fundy—Royal who proposed a \$700 refundable tax credit per child. In the subcommittee last Wednesday the member for Fundy—Royal admitted to talking to the same reporter that I talked about.

In my opinion all I did was reflect my personal opinion. I made that clear with the reporter when I spoke to him. I might have erred in judgment, but in no way did I ever disclose the contents of the report which will probably be tabled in the House tomorrow.

The Speaker: The hon. opposition House leader wanted to intervene last Thursday on this exact matter. I will recognize the hon. House leader of the opposition, but may I put into context what we are talking about.

To reiterate, as I understand it, last week we had an hon. member alleging that another hon. member made a statement about some of the things that were discussed in a meeting of a subcommittee. We are honour bound not to repeat anything from meetings which are held in camera and we take all hon. members at face value.

Today the hon. member who was alleged to have spoken has made a statement in the House of Commons. He says, and I want to be corrected if I do not understand it, categorically that he did not make any statement of any material forthcoming from this meeting. That is my understanding. Is that correct?

Mr. Nick Discepola: Mr. Speaker, that is correct. I would also like to point out for the House that these meetings were not in camera. They were public meetings.

The Speaker: The issue here is: Was this information leaked or not? We have one hon. member alleging that it was leaked material. We have the hon. member who is alleged to have leaked the material saying categorically that he did not. We at all times take the word of hon. members of parliament and we are honour bound in that way.

With that in mind, and before I render a final decision, I will hear very briefly from the opposition House leader if he has anything to add.

Mr. Randy White (Langley—Abbotsford, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, what we have facing us is something a lot bigger than this particular incident.

• (1510)

A report from procedure and House affairs on leaked documents that was supposed to resolve the issue of confidence and confidentiality within the House of Commons was tabled in the House, but that was it. It was not even concurred in. We as a House are supposed at least to concur in that report, at least agree to it so that we could get some guidance from the Chair. That has not happened.

Points of Order

Since that document has been produced by the committee, there have been at least three such incidents which have been matters of complaint by members here.

It seems to me this will not go away. I think the onus is on the Chair to make some decision. Obviously the procedure and House affairs committee could not make the decision. The House in its entirety is incapable of making the decision because it will not make any decisions on this matter.

I ask you, Mr. Speaker, to set some standards and guidelines, to set some rules and to provide some sanctions for those who show contempt of the House and abuse the privileges of the House.

The Speaker: The hon. member of course is not addressing himself to this specific issue.

With regard to the specific issue that I am dealing with now, which is the allegation that the hon. member for Vaudreuil—Soulanges leaked information, I accept and I want the House to accept the hon. member's word. I consider the matter closed.

With regard to the other matter that the opposition House leader has raised, this was put into the hands of the committee on procedure. We are awaiting its report. It has not been concurred in.

If it is before the House I would tend to be informed about it, but if it is not brought to the House in very short order I want you to know that I do not feel it is the personal responsibility of the Chair to make the rules for this House. It is up to the House to decide how it will conduct itself. It is up to the Speaker to see to it that the rules of the House are adhered to.

I do not believe that this parliament or any other parliament should be subject solely to what the Speaker of the day wants to introduce as the rules. I believe that the Speaker is the servant of the House, and he or she will take direction from the House when the time comes.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Yvan Loubier (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I have often had occasion in the House to raise the problems of leaked committee documents and reports. I have brought numerous problems to your attention. The need to find a solution to these problems has become so great that even the report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, which was to analyse these cases and propose sanctions, has itself been leaked. It is ridiculous beyond belief.

Given what has gone on here for the last two or three years or so, with more and more of these leaks taking place and members saying they are not responsible for releasing documents to be tabled in the House before they are made public, now we are wondering whether the rule of confidentiality still applies in the House and in committees, which are an extension of the House.

• (1515)

We in the Bloc Québécois are wondering whether these parliamentary rules and traditions should be taken seriously in future, because the situation is becoming ridiculous.

A solution must be found because I, as a parliamentarian, have the feeling that my rights and privileges are slipping away from me. In case after case, no solution has been proposed to prevent documents from being leaked before they are tabled in the House.

It is too easy for a member who is quoted four times in an article to say that that was not what he said. At a certain point, people should stop taking us for idiots.

[*English*]

The Speaker: My colleagues, it is not usual for the Chair in any way to give directions of this type to the House, but I suggest to all hon. members that any member of the House can move concurrence in a report from committee. When this is done, this could trigger a full-fledged debate about this particular report to which we are referring.

Hon. members could get the specific rules from the table officers, but I believe we need to know 48 hours ahead of time. If it is the wish of the House to have a full-fledged debate on this particular matter, then it is a decision which will be taken by the House. I as the Speaker will react as soon as the House decides what it wants to do.

I am going to put that aside for now and I am going to go directly to a point of order.

* * *

POINTS OF ORDER

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Mr. Jim Abbott (Kootenay—Columbia, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. During question period the solicitor general referred to a review of drugs in prison in 1995 and again in his supplementary he said last year. I assume that is 1998.

According to the rules of this House, through you, Mr. Speaker, I ask the solicitor general to table those reviews.

The Speaker: Although the solicitor general referred to a report, I will review the blues but I do not think that the solicitor general referred to this. However, I will hear some advice.

Hon. Don Boudria (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, citation 495(3) of Beauchesne's states:

Tributes

A public document referred to but not cited or quoted by a Minister need not be tabled.

The Speaker: I think this is clear. I did not hear the hon. solicitor general quote directly from it. I will review the blues and if it is necessary, I will come back to the House.

During the 35th Parliament, the last parliament, one of our colleagues, Mr. Hugh Hanrahan, who was a very respected member of the House and of the Reform Party took ill. Just recently he passed away and today we are going to have tributes. We will begin with the leader of the Reform Party.

* * *

THE LATE HUGH HANRAHAN

Mr. Preston Manning (Leader of the Opposition, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join with others in paying tribute to Hugh Hanrahan, the former member of parliament for Edmonton—Strathcona who passed away on May 19.

Hugh served in this place from 1993 to 1997. He was particularly active as a member of the House of Commons industry committee and as an advocate for the interests of small business and for the research and development community.

Hugh's voyage through life, like that of so many Canadians, took him from eastern Canada to central Canada, to western Canada and then back to central Canada as a member of parliament.

He grew up in Antigonish, Nova Scotia in a family of five boys. He obtained his undergraduate degrees in arts and education from St. Francis Xavier University. Hugh then came to this city where he obtained his master's degree in education from the University of Ottawa. He then moved west to pursue his career as a teacher. He taught in the Edmonton Catholic school system for some 20 years. He was recognized as teacher of the year for his devotion to teaching high school students something about economics.

• (1520)

In 1993 Hugh returned to Ottawa as the Reform member of parliament representing the constituency of Edmonton—Strathcona, a constituency which includes many students, faculty members and employees at the University of Alberta.

I personally feel that one of the measures of the accomplishments and progress of ourselves as human beings is what the younger generation thinks of us. Perhaps that comes from being a father of five children. Do we inspire confidence, hope and aspirations on the part of younger people or do they see in us

particularly as we grow older a wet blanket, an obstacle or an impediment to their dreams and aspirations?

Hugh Hanrahan had a gift for inspiring the confidence and hopes of young people which in the final analysis is a greater tribute to the positive aspects of his life than anything that I could say.

It was Hugh's students, some of whom had yet to cast their first ballot in a federal election, who persuaded him, their teacher, to run for public office. It was Hugh's students and former students who helped him win the Reform nomination in Edmonton—Strathcona and formed the heart of his successful election campaign.

Hugh was never happier in pursuing a public issue than when it was related to the hopes, aspirations and success of young people. It is no coincidence that when he retired from political life because of ill health his constituents chose one of the youngest candidates in the 1997 federal election to follow in his footsteps as the member for Edmonton—Strathcona.

On behalf of the official opposition, we pay tribute to our former colleague, Hugh Hanrahan, today. We extend our heartfelt sympathy to his wife Dianne, to his daughter Margaret Ann and his four brothers. We thank them for encouraging Hugh to share his life with young people and to share his life with us.

Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today on behalf of the government to offer tribute to the former MP from Edmonton—Strathcona. Hugh Hanrahan was a fellow Edmontonian and someone I got to know when we were both elected for the first time to the House in 1993. In fact the points of coincidence between Mr. Hanrahan and myself do not end there.

As the hon. Leader of the Official Opposition has pointed out, the University of Alberta was in Mr. Hanrahan's riding and I had the opportunity and pleasure to teach at the University of Alberta for over 13 years before becoming a member of the House. Mr. Hanrahan and I on our frequent flights back and forth from Edmonton to Ottawa often sat beside each other. We had the opportunity to talk about our shared love and commitment and at times concern for the University of Alberta.

The hon. Leader of the Official Opposition is quite right that Mr. Hanrahan carried a very deep commitment to the University of Alberta and the research and development and intellectual life of that institution. He did all that he could to ensure that it was nourished and fostered.

As the Leader of the Official Opposition has pointed out, Mr. Hanrahan, like myself, was born in Nova Scotia. We then made our way west. Mr. Hanrahan was born in Antigonish, Nova Scotia where he earned degrees in both education and arts from St. Francis Xavier or as Mr. Hanrahan would say, St. F. X. Later he obtained a master's degree in economics from the University of Ottawa.

Tributes

He did make his way west where he accepted a teaching position first in Calgary. Soon afterward he moved to Edmonton where he taught economics and earned a reputation in and out of the world of education as a man of commitment and thoughtfulness.

Mr. Hanrahan spent over 20 years teaching in the Edmonton Catholic school system. He was honoured as teacher of the year in 1998 by the Alberta Foundation for Economic Education. Many of his students have commented on how influential Mr. Hanrahan was in their lives. I thought as a former teacher myself it was very fitting that on the night of his election Mr. Hanrahan commented on how influential those students had been on his life. He acknowledged that it was through the encouragement of his students that he actually for the first time seriously considered running as a member of parliament. His lifelong advocacy of fiscal restraint and reducing the national debt provided him with a strong and obvious platform. His bid at federal politics was successful.

• (1525)

Among other duties he served on the industry committee where he developed an expertise on small and medium size business and research and development. Mr. Hanrahan worked diligently in the service of his constituents until ill health required his retirement from elected office.

Mr. Hanrahan was a religious man and one who found intellectual stimulation and comfort from the works of philosophy, religion, politics and history.

On behalf of the government, I am pleased to recognize the work of Mr. Hanrahan and his commitment to the public service of this country. We offer our deepest sympathy to his wife Dianne, his daughter Margaret and other family and friends.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Monique Guay (Laurentides, BQ): Mr. Speaker, today we are paying tribute to Hugh Hanrahan, who was the Reform Party member for the riding of Edmonton—Strathcona between 1993 and 1997.

Hugh Hanrahan passed away on May 19. He was only 52.

Mr. Hanrahan was considered a thoughtful man with a penetrating mind and a great ability to deepen the issues he believed in.

He had a BA and a bachelor's degree in education from St. Francis Xavier University and a master's degree in education from the University of Ottawa.

He taught economics at a Catholic school in Edmonton, where he was known as a wonderful teacher. This was perfectly natural, since teaching was a real passion for Hugh. His curiosity was great and he never stopped learning, always wanting to think more about things.

He won his election in 1993 in the riding of Edmonton—Strathcona. He got involved in politics through, among other things, the encouragement of his students who knew how their teacher's

interest in and concerns about tax administration and problem of the national debt.

When he won, Mr. Hanrahan took time to warmly thank his students for their encouragement.

He even mentioned at an event that for him one of the nicest compliments he got as a teacher was that his students had influenced the direction of his life. That shows just how much he cared for and respected his students.

My colleagues in the Bloc Québécois and I offer our most sincere condolences to his wife Dianne, his daughter Margaret Ann, and to all his family and friends.

The loss of someone dear is always very difficult to accept. The only consolation lies in knowing that now he will be watching over those he loves.

[*English*]

Mr. John Solomon (Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre, NDP): Madam Speaker, I rise on behalf of my leader, the member for Halifax, and the New Democratic Party caucus to pay tribute to Hugh Hanrahan, the former member of parliament for Edmonton—Strathcona. I was very saddened to learn that Hugh had passed away at such a young age, the age of 52.

We were both elected to the House of Commons in 1993. On occasion we had the opportunity to talk about certain issues and certain values that we shared. As a matter of fact we had the opportunity because we sat at the far end of the House of Commons where the Speaker could not keep track of us. We were able to share our common experiences.

Mr. Hanrahan was a teacher for 18 years in the Catholic school system in Edmonton. He taught social studies, economics and psychology. He was such a good teacher and such a fine gentleman. I could see why in his previous life before elected politics he was honoured with the teacher of the year award in 1987-88 by the Alberta Foundation for Economic Education.

Mr. Hanrahan not only loved Canada and Alberta, he loved Nova Scotia where he was born and educated. He often visited Nova Scotia and would talk about his visits there.

• (1530)

One of the things I wanted to raise with the House and his family is the fact that we would talk about why we came to the House of Commons. We also shared our various hopes and aspirations about Canada, in particular western Canada.

It is my view that Mr. Hanrahan sought elected office because he felt strongly about the good fiscal management that was necessary for our country. He was concerned about the problems of the national debt. He was also very concerned that we should be focusing our energies on building Canada as opposed to tearing it apart.

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He was encouraged by young people to seek elected office. They energized him in his job throughout his duties and career as a member of parliament. He was somewhat discouraged and saddened by the fact that he could not seek elected office for a second term because of his illness. I shared his very serious thoughts in that regard.

On behalf of the New Democratic Party caucus and my leader, I wish to offer my very deepest sympathies to Mrs. Dianne Hanrahan, their daughter Margaret Ann, his brothers and other family members and friends.

Mr. Peter MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, PC): Madam Speaker, on behalf of the Progressive Conservative caucus I join in sending our sympathy to Mrs. Hanrahan and their daughter Margaret on the loss they have suffered in the passing of Hugh Hanrahan.

From what others have said, particularly the Leader of the Opposition and the Minister of Justice, it is very clear that the community in Edmonton is poorer for the tragic early death of Mr. Hanrahan. Yet it is very clear that in his short life he achieved much.

As an educator, orator and member of the House of Commons, Mr. Hanrahan served his constituents and his country proudly. He received the accolades and the respect of his peers in each capacity, and he served with dignity. This is not surprising for he was a son of Antigonish and the product of St. Francis Xavier University. His attachment to his Scottish and Irish ancestries was worn with pride. He has now returned to the welcoming arms of his beloved Nova Scotia.

We are grateful that Hugh Hanrahan was prepared to serve his community and the House. The country is richer because he did so. He served the public in a noble and dignified way. The loss to his family and his country is immense. With all members of his family, his party and this place, we mourn his loss.

Mr. Paul Bonwick: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I believe you would find unanimous consent of the House to allow me to present a petition.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault): The hon. member is seeking unanimous consent to present a petition. Is there consent?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

PETITIONS

CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

Mr. Paul Bonwick (Simcoe—Grey, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I rise, pursuant to Standing Order 36, to present a petition signed by my constituents of Simcoe—Grey.

The petitioners call upon parliament to uphold and reinforce section 163.4 of the Criminal Code making it illegal to possess child pornography.

They also request that parliament use all resources available to counteract the ruling of the Supreme Court of British Columbia and once again to assure children all over Canada that the Canadian government supports their right to be free from abuse and exploitation.

I pay thanks and congratulations to Lisa Mooij, an energetic 14 year old who did all the research, organization and work on this petition.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

SUPPLY

ALLOTTED DAY—MARRIAGE

The House resumed consideration of the motion and of the amendment.

Mr. John Bryden (Wentworth—Burlington, Lib.): Madam Speaker, this motion arises out of the controversy that followed various supreme court decisions and various other court decisions that were intended to extend various benefits to same sex couples.

I really believe that the controversy is an empty controversy if we as legislators apply ourselves to a few relatively easy changes.

• (1535)

I believe that the majority of Canadians believe in the principle, in the rightness as described in our charter of rights, of making sure all Canadians have equal access to benefits and that they should not be discriminated against because of sexual orientation.

I believe that over the last 20 years Canadians have come to more and more recognize that homosexuality is something that is given to us at birth, that it is not really an alternative lifestyle. It is something that nature or God gives us. It is a flaw, perhaps, or an abnormality. I should say there is nothing unnatural about an abnormality because every one of us is born with differences, weaknesses or strengths.

I think all of us as Canadians believe that we should not discriminate against people merely because they are different from the norm. Indeed homosexual couples and homosexual individuals

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I think are generally acknowledged to have contributed mightily to the creative life in any country or any community to which they belong.

That having been said, I think we can fix this situation by a few simple legislated definitions. The first should be to legislate a definition of marriage that means legally that marriage is a union between opposite sex couples. Second, we should legislate a definition of spouse.

We have no choice but to connect spouse with the idea of marriage because the dictionary defines spouse as husband and wife, and only the courts can play Samuel Johnson at their whim and redefine language whenever they please. We as legislators have to respect language in both English and French and make sure that we are using current language and using words as they are intended to be used.

Then what we should do is create a new definition and call it dependent partner. We define dependent partner as an adult who is in an emotionally dependent relationship with another person leading to material dependency. We can extend that definition to say that it involves siblings, that it involves parent and child, or that it involves people of the same sex who are in a physical relationship with one another.

Once we do that then the rest should fall in place. As long as we set aside the fear associated with defining same sex couples as being married, as having the right to adopt children or as eroding the sanctity of marriage, I think the vast majority of Canadians, whether they are very religious or not very religious, will join with this parliament in agreeing that we should make sure all people who are in an emotionally dependent relationship should have equal access to benefits. The advantage to this is that we take, for the most part, sex out of the definition.

I certainly believe, as a former Liberal prime minister once said, that parliament has no business in the bedrooms of the nation. I believe that is so. We should be talking about dependent relationships, not sexual relationships.

I think this is an easy solution. We should think about it over the summer. I am glad the Reform Party put this motion forward today because we are coming to the end of this sitting and we need to reflect on this issue so we can easily resolve it when the fall comes.

Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP): Madam Speaker, I listened to the hon. member's comments in support of the Reform motion. The more I hear of this debate and the more I hear some members speak and where they are coming from, I actually get very scared about what is an obsession with the issue.

Now we hear from the hon. member that he wants not only to define marriage as he sees it but also to define spouse as it relates to marriage. I have to question what right do I, or does the member or anyone else, have to do that.

People who live together may define themselves as or may self-identify as spouses. They may be in a common law relationship as man and woman. They may be of the same sex.

• (1540)

I find quite frightening the way this debate is going in terms of hearing on one hand that the state has no business in the bedrooms of the nation, which the member has so eloquently called forward from the past. Yet the very motion and debate that is taking place would do exactly that. It would enforce the state into people's private lives and define people's relationships.

For what reason do we need to do that? Who is this threatening? Who is being threatened by people's choice and decision about how they live if it is not causing harm to other people?

I am genuinely asking that question because I have difficulty understanding for what reason the member believes the state should be making this enforcement in terms of a definition not only of marriage but now of spouse. What will be next? Will we define the family?

Mr. John Bryden: Madam Speaker, we have just heard an example of the rhetoric of intolerance. It is the proper place of this place to define things in law. That is our job. That is what we are here to do. It is my right. I was elected by my constituents to do exactly that.

If the member had been here when I spoke earlier, she would have heard me say that the danger, and why we have to intervene and make these definitions, is that if we do not the courts are likely to extinguish the rights of children.

I am not sure in my conscience that, all things being equal, a child should have a homosexual couple as parents. I am willing to acknowledge that homosexual parents can be good parents. I am willing to give the officials the discretion to make them parents. However I am not willing to give them the right of being parents because, in doing so, we extinguish the rights of children. I cannot do that. It is my place to define the law to make sure that the rights of children are protected.

Mr. Jason Kenney (Calgary Southeast, Ref.): Madam Speaker, I commend the member for Wentworth—Burlington on his eloquent remarks.

I point to the comments of the attorney general this morning who asked in this place why we should be using the already limited time of the House to debate a motion on which there will be no fundamental disagreement inside or outside the House. I raise this point because the member indicated he thought this was a worthwhile motion, as do I.

Will he not agree with me that we have heard members of the House disagree fundamentally with the principle stated in the motion? I do not raise this as a partisan point but rather to

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demonstrate that the governing party of Canada, and not the government, strongly urges the federal government to recognize same sex marriages in the same way as opposite marriages in its distribution of benefits.

Will the hon. member recognize that this is a live issue, that there is, contrary to what the attorney general said, fundamental disagreement about it?

Mr. John Bryden: Madam Speaker, I believe the vast majority of us agree that benefits should be extended to same sex couples. The issue here is simply the danger of allowing marriage to be defined as a same sex relationship. Not only does that go against a thousand years of tradition in law, the church, language and every other thing, but there is a serious danger to the rights of children.

That being said, on this side there is great diversity of opinion and great freedom to express opinion. If an attorney general somewhere or the solicitor general or the justice minister expresses himself or herself in the House, I still have the privilege of expressing myself in my way.

Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island, Ref.): Madam Speaker, I am very honoured to enter into debate on the very important question of the definition of marriage, the definition of spouse, and the upholding of the family.

I will bring a perspective to the debate which is just a little different from most of those that have been expressed, although there has been a current of what I will say through many of the speeches we have heard so far today.

I think of marriage and family in a very special way. I made reference in a member's statement today to the fact that this summer my wife and I will be married for 38 years. I think that one of our friends had it right when she said at our 37th anniversary "Betty deserves a medal". That was probably true. I try to be a loving and caring husband. However, as do all husbands and all spouses, we sometimes fall just a little short of the mark, even the one we would set for ourselves and our spouses.

• (1545)

We have a very solid family relationship based on marriage. To me it goes somewhat beyond the verbal definition.

One of the reasons I am so supportive of this motion is because we are talking about words. We are talking about language. Unless we use words which we understand to have a common meaning it makes communication very difficult. We all know that over time language changes. All one has to do is read a bit of Shakespeare to realize that the English usage a scant 150 or 200 years ago was

somewhat different in many areas from what it is now. Even in my own lifetime I have seen some changes in the language.

When I was a young man "do not speed" meant not to go faster than the prescribed limit on the highway. The word speed had quite a different connotation when I was a young man in the hippie era. I remember in my day when "keep off the grass" meant not to go on the neighbour's lawn. Now keep off the grass may have something to do with something quite different.

I suppose I should hesitate to use this spectacular example, yet it is a real example so I will use it. We had a motto in grade eight. I still remember it well. Our teacher and the school principal were trying to teach us to make sure that we were diligent in our work. The reward for doing good work was to have enjoyment for it afterward. Our school motto was "First we work and then we play because that is the way to be happy and gay". In my generation the word simply meant carefree, happy and without worry. Now the word gay has a fairly different connotation because it has been pre-empted by the homosexual community. Quite often when I visit high schools and I talk about that grade eight school motto it evokes a good chuckle because of the change in the meaning of the word. That happens in the English language.

What we are concerned about is not only the legality of it but the deeper meaning. The reason for this motion today is that we want to be able to give the courts a very clear message of what our meaning of the word marriage is and what the definition is in terms of what the legal implications are. As I said in my preamble, to me the meaning of marriage is very deep.

On July 15, 1961 my wife and I stood in front of a minister at a church. We expressed our vows to each other. I still remember most of them. I do not know if I could still quote them verbatim; however, they had to do with being true to each other, to cling to each other and to no other until death do us part. That was the vow that we made. It was made not only to each other in the presence of witnesses, it was also made very profoundly in the presence of God.

I am here today to share this aspect of a definition of marriage. For many years of time it has meant the union of a man and a woman. To me it is not only a relationship or that my wife and I are living under the same roof and sharing expenses, it is much more than that. It is a deeply meaningful, spiritual relationship under God, with an oath that we gave to him as well as to each other.

I remember my grandparents. They passed away a number of years ago. We celebrated their 25th when I was a little kid. I do not even remember that. However, I do remember celebrating their 50th, their 60th and their 65th. Grandfather died when he was 88, in their 67th year of marriage. That is when this part of the vow came into play for them: "Till death do us part".

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• (1550)

My own parents have celebrated their anniversaries over the years and I certainly remember their 25th, 50th and 60th. Lord willing, they will be celebrating their 65th next year in the millennium year. That is their millennium project. They are still very healthy and we are very grateful for that. They too have had a lifelong, deep, monogamous, faithful relationship with each other. There is a deeply held meaning in the word marriage, a union between a man and a woman for life. As I have said, my wife and I share that same meaning.

I do not know whether we are ready in this country to start fooling around with a definition that is so deeply meaningful to so many Canadians. I am quite convinced that the definition I hold, which adds that further dimension to marriage, is one that is held by the majority of Canadians; not only by those of the Christian faith, but also by those of other faiths. I think of the Sikhs, the Muslims, the Hindus. They all have a relationship of marriage which they clearly understand to be the union of a man and a woman. We err terribly by even suggesting that possibly some court could change that definition.

I am here today to declare that I am going to very solidly, proudly and out of a deep sense of duty and obligation vote in favour of the motion, and not because it is immediately a threat. The Minister of Justice has told us that. Some of my colleagues have already quoted words which she has used both verbally and in response to letters from constituents and in response to petitions. The Liberals have no intention of changing the definition of marriage from that which is currently in use, it being the union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others. That is the current definition. I believe that they have no intention of changing it.

Why do we bring this motion? It is very simple. We want to send a loud and extremely clear message, not only to the Canadian people but also to the courts of this country, that the will of the people as expressed in this democracy is that the definition should remain unaltered.

Think of the word "spouse". What can spouse mean other than the wife of a husband or the husband of a wife? The courts are starting to change the word "spouse". Even in this House we have had some bills like Bill C-78, which in its obscure parts refers to anybody in a conjugal relationship.

Marriage keeps the government out of our bedrooms because it is a valid relationship which stands on its own without inspectors. We err when we go in the direction of changing the definition of spouse, the definition of marriage and, indeed, the very definition of love and lifelong commitment.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Maud Debieu (Laval East, BQ): Madam Speaker, I have listened to our colleague from the Reform Party giving examples

of the changing meaning of words throughout history, and he is absolutely right. His examples were very pertinent. He also said it was the role of parliament to give a legal value to words and to their profound meaning.

• (1555)

Listening to the hon. member, it would appear that only married heterosexual spouses forming a family with children are worthy and capable of fidelity, love, mutual support and sharing.

I have a question for him: Does he believe that words are not the only things that can evolve over time, but that attitudes could as well?

[*English*]

Mr. Ken Epp: Madam Speaker, we are really not talking about other kinds of relationships today. There is no doubt that they exist. There is no doubt that people have remained close friends and, as some would say, conjugal friends. I do not like the word in that context, but there it is. Obviously that happens. That is not what we are talking about.

I am talking about the preservation of the language, of the use of the term, what it means as a deep meaning, and this one is the union of a man and a woman in marriage. I do not really think that we are talking about the other one. That may occur and that is a subject for another day.

Ms. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West—Nepean, Lib.): Madam Speaker, this is the day on which we are having our last debate on the expenditure of over \$150 billion that we will have to vote on later tonight, much later tonight probably. I am totally mystified as to why we have a motion that is a real bogeyman before us today.

The motion makes specific reference to court decisions and is seeking to have parliament confirm the idea of marriage. I would ask the member opposite if he is aware of one court decision that has anything to do with changing, modifying, even questioning the definition of marriage, which is well established in common law, or if he is aware of any court decision that has anything to do with changing the definition of family. The only one I am aware of is a decision at the trial court level which says very specifically that section 15 of the charter cannot be used to redefine marriage.

Mr. Ken Epp: Madam Speaker, in answering the question of why we are using one of the last days of parliament on this issue, it is because of the fact that things roll on when parliament is not in session. I believe that it is timely for us to give a very, very strong and clear message to the courts.

It is true that many of these decisions have been coming down at lower court levels and so far the upper court has upheld them. However, all of the courts are saying to us that they want our

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guidance. They have said “unless the court speaks”. Even in the most recent M and H decision I believe there was an indication that the court wanted a clear indication from parliament as to the direction it should be taking.

Reform members today are using this as our opportunity to do what the government should have done a long time ago, and that is to have a debate and a vote and establish beyond all shadow of a doubt what actually is required.

We have some instances where the courts have actually asked for this. I have several examples here. They indicate, for example in the Rosenberg decision, that the words referring to the spouse, at any time, of a taxpayer, include the person of the opposite sex or the same sex. They are changing the definition of spouse. As I said in my speech, what can spouse in the context of marriage possibly mean other than the husband of the wife or the wife of the husband?

Mrs. Diane Ablonczy (Calgary—Nose Hill, Ref.): Madam Speaker, I must say that I share the mystification of the deputy whip of the government when she said it is a mystery why we have to talk about this. I never imagined when I was elected six years ago that I would ever be in the House of Commons debating this issue, the fact that we need to affirm the meaning and the cornerstone policy of marriage in our country. I think most hon. members have the same feeling yet here we are.

• (1600)

The Prime Minister in October 1996 said that marriage is a contract between two individuals according to the Canadian tradition of different sexes to share a life together. A spokesman for the justice department in January this year said common law says that marriage is a union between a man and a woman and that is the way it will stay.

I think a lot of us had thought, hoped and believed that this kind of a debate about the meaning of marriage in Canada would be totally unnecessary. Yet as many of my colleagues and others have stated here today, there is a growing uncertainty and concern on the part of citizens of our country about this seeming bedrock concept of Canadian society.

The recent redefinition of spouse by the supreme court is one of the things causing this unease. Of course a spouse is a part of a marriage. Now the courts have said that a spouse is a part of other kinds of relationships as well. In its decision the court said that this ruling that redefines spouse “has nothing to do with marriage per se”. It also said “this appeal does not challenge traditional conceptions of marriage”.

There have been moves in other parts of the world to re-examine this issue. In 1996 the American Congress passed what is called the

defence of marriage act. As the House knows, issues are very closely linked in our two countries and in other countries as well.

That act did two things. First, it allowed states not to honour same sex marriages even if such marriages were allowed in other states. Second, the law defined for the federal code that marriage “means only a legal union between one man and one woman as husband and wife”. Interestingly enough, shortly after the act was passed, the state of Hawaii had a court decision which ruled that forbidding same sex marriages violated Hawaii’s constitution.

There are reasons for Canadians to feel some unease about this issue. In the interventions by some members of the New Democratic Party today there is some hostility toward this cornerstone definition of public policy.

The unease of Canadian citizens has been demonstrated in some of the petitions filed in the House. I would like to read the wording of the petitions that have been filed. Eighty-four members of parliament have stood up to present this petition:

Whereas the majority of Canadians understand the concept of marriage as only the voluntary union of a single (that is, unmarried) male and a single (that is, unmarried), female;

And whereas it is the duty of parliament to ensure that marriage, as it has always been known and understood in Canada, be preserved and protected;

Therefore your petitioners pray that parliament enact legislation . . . so as to define in statute that a marriage can only be entered into between a single male and a single female.

In this petition we see the anxiety of thousands of Canadians who took the time to sign and submit petitions to parliament.

We also see that the courts are requesting leadership by lawmakers on key public policy issues such as this. There is a clear precedent that the courts are prepared to fill in any blanks in respect of these kinds of issues, and sometimes even to rewrite our laws.

• (1605)

We have for example a quote from an article in the *Financial Post* where a financial planner observes:

—the law, whether by statute or judiciary, is slowly but surely transforming the notion of “family”. . . the Egan case said. . . the definition of spouse in the Old Age Security Act, which requires couples to be of the opposite sex, contravenes the Charter of Rights. But the contravention was saved by the holding. . . that the discrimination is acceptable in a free and democratic society.

There was one dissenting judge even on that exception. The commentator went on to say:

We don’t believe that such a change is likely in the foreseeable future and we are certainly not about to embark upon a campaign for change. On the other hand, we do recognize that societal norms are changing and that even if the politicians are super cautious, a goodly part of the judiciary does not seem to be intimidated.

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When there is commentary like that, our citizens are concerned. They wonder what is going to happen.

There is also the matter of Bill C-78 wherein the provisions of the public service pension act were extended to same sex couples. This provision of the bill caused real anxiety not only in the public but there was some strong reaction by members of the House.

There was the perception that the government was changing some of the notions and the definitions of relationships in our society by stealth. I do not want to be unkind but I think that was the impression a lot of members of the House got, that buried deep in these big bills were going to be the kind of changes to the whole notions and constructs of our society that would not be acceptable to many Canadians.

When we see that courts have said that a couple is a couple is a couple and that spouse is not limited to marriage partner, in the long run people ask themselves, will the distinction between a union to procreate and nurture children and all other types of relationships be lost?

This leads me to the purpose of bringing forward this motion today is to give us as members of parliament the opportunity to say that we are determined to be vigilant in regard to these very key elements of our social make-up and that we mean business about ensuring the stability of this key social construct. If there is doubt, let us clear it up. If it takes a day of debate to do that, then I think it is a very worthwhile day of debate.

There are a number of reasons the institution of marriage is important. In the book *It Takes Two: The Family in Law and Finance* by Allen and Richards it is stated:

Marriage is an efficient institution. Were there a more efficient means to raise children, marriage would not have lasted over the millennia as the primary form of organization for procreation and social structure. Raising children, not just providing for them physically but embodying them with what is good and productive, is a complicated business. Historically, the family has been a type of "firm" that has provided parents with proper incentives to see the job through.

Traditionally, marriage has been viewed as a relationship in which there are many stakeholders: children, parents, the church and the state. Ours may be a more secular (society) but that does not absolve us from collectively caring about the success of marriage as an institution.

I appreciate that all members of the House are prepared to show leadership on this important issue.

Mr. John Cannis (Scarborough Centre, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I want to take a few moments to add my voice to this debate, seeing that there is not time for me to participate in the debate because everyone wishes to speak to the motion.

• (1610)

The hon. member in her opening statement indicated how she thought we would never be here discussing this issue. I empathize

with what she is saying, but I say to the member how fortunate we are to be able to have this debate so that we can alleviate some of this anxiety and the perceptions she also referred to.

When we are elected, constituents from our respective ridings say to us that we are here in Ottawa to be their voice. I firmly believe this and I am sure every hon. member in the House believes this.

Here we are today in this most unique situation to speak on behalf of people like Dolina and Bruce Smith from my riding, Mr. and Mrs. Guest, Roxanne James and so many others who have sent us their comments. In today's debate and the vote we can express what our constituents are saying. I thank the members who have participated.

Mrs. Diane Ablonczy: Madam Speaker, I agree with the member. The intent of the motion is not to be partisan. The intent of the motion is to give all of us an opportunity to make it crystal clear what parliament means when we refer to marriage. It is to provide a means for parliamentarians from all parties to remove any doubt about our position on the value and meaning of marriage to this country and to this state. We appreciate the fact that lawmakers from all parties are participating and are making affirmations on this very important point.

Mr. Jason Kenney (Calgary Southeast, Ref.): Madam Speaker, I commend my colleague from Calgary—Nose Hill for her remarks and the remarks of members opposite on this subject.

I agree with the hon. member that this is not a motion brought forward in the spirit of partisanship but as the attorney general suggested, hopefully, everybody would be able to support it. I think we have seen today at least from one party and perhaps from some government members that is not the case, but it really does raise a question in my mind.

I read the motion and it simply says that parliament affirm that marriage is and should remain the union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others, precisely the government's stated and ongoing policy. Then I looked at the talking points distributed to members of the Liberal caucus, prepared I think by Kevin Bosch at their research unit which among other things characterizes this motion as being "fearmongering, extremist, malicious, divisive, intolerant, meanspirited, singling out and demeaning groups" et cetera.

Could the hon. member for Calgary—Nose Hill comment on what she feels about partisan, hot button, extremist politics like this being employed on what should be a non-partisan issue of importance to all Canadian families?

Mrs. Diane Ablonczy: Madam Speaker, I would hope that the injudicious characterization of this debate is confined to one researcher for the Liberals.

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I have heard from many of my colleagues opposite that they feel this is an important debate. It is a debate that is meaningful and positive for Canadians. It gives an opportunity to show true leadership as we ought to as the elected representatives of the people and, as one of my colleagues just said, as the voice of the people of Canada.

It saddens me to see that grubby partisan politics have to intrude even in such a deep-seated and meaningful issue in our country, but I suppose that is the nature of politics. I do appreciate the fact that although some researchers may get carried away members of the House show more judiciousness and more good sense than that.

Mr. Steve Mahoney (Mississauga West, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to speak to this issue.

I should say to the member for Calgary Southeast that what he wrote out is generally a stamp that we reserve for all the Reform Party motions that come across the floor. Usually they would fit into that category. We were always writing it out in longhand and figured it was probably more appropriate that we just get a stamp to use. Today is an exception because the motion that is before us will find a lot of support on this side of the House. It will certainly find support from me, and I am sure that many of my colleagues who have already spoken and who will finish out this debate will also support it.

• (1615)

I take the opposite view. I do not regret or bemoan the fact that we are taking what amounts to an expensive legislative day in keeping the House going to debate this. I thank the Reform Party for giving us the opportunity to tell our constituents exactly how we feel about the issue of marriage, family and what makes the country strong. It is a great opportunity for us to do that and I truly do thank the members opposite.

I will be splitting my time with the member for Charleswood St. James—Assiniboia.

I want to add that the information is clear. While I believe that we have been given the opportunity to get our message across, the Reform Party knows that the government remains committed and has given no signal and no indication that there will be a change in its support of Canadian families. There are no plans to legislate a change in the definition of the term marriage.

Let us go back to where that comes from. The definition of marriage in federal law is not in a statute passed by parliament but is found in what is called the federal common law dating from an 1866 British case of *Hyde and Hyde v Woodmansee*, a case dealing with the legal invalidity of polygamy. This case has been applied consistently in Canada with the result that no marriage can exist between two persons of the same sex. It would be void ab initio,

which means from the beginning. This is clear. No jurisdiction worldwide differs in that particular area, even though there may be some European or Scandinavian countries that do allow same sex partners to register their relationships.

I would be very interested to hear the position of the Reform Party when the province of Alberta, which seems to be leading the charge on this, comes out with a plan—and many of these members of course are from that province—that would allow same sex partners to register an interdependency on one another and thereby have access to certain benefit plans such as survivor rights or pension rights. It is actually an interesting solution to the problem for those of us who recognize marriage as a union between a man and a woman and no one else.

It is a solution because I was in the province of Ontario when we had the debate over whether or not we would extend rights to same sex couples for benefits. Many major corporations in the country have already done that and are way ahead of government. We had a very acrimonious debate on the floor of the legislature in Ontario. The galleries were filled with people who were extremely upset. When the debate was over and we voted against extending same sex benefits, the place was literally taken over by a mob.

An hon. member: How did you vote?

Mr. Steve Mahoney: I voted against it. It was an extremely emotional, high strung atmosphere and a very unsatisfactory resolution to the particular problem.

The fact remains that time moves on and what people are really concerned about is the protection of the family. We do not lose rights based on our sexuality or who we are having sex with. We also, in my view, should not gain rights in that regard. It should not be a defining principle.

As Prime Minister Trudeau said, we have no business in the bedrooms of the nation, so why would we be using that as some kind of measuring stick to determine whether or not someone has access to some particular right? What I like about the Alberta solution, although I do not know the cost of it and I am sure that is being looked at, is that it de-sexualizes the whole issue.

• (1620)

I heard a gay rights lawyer say that if we simply adopt this without looking at the nuances and the difficulties, we could have a grandmother declare that a three year old grandson is now economically dependent and therefore subject to the survivor benefits. The three year old would then get the survivor benefit when the grandmother passes on. This would throw pension plans so dramatically out of whack that no one would be able to afford them. We would be unable to determine the level of premium we should set. I understand that there are some problems.

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I believe we should recognize that this is not about homophobia. This is about recognizing the strength of what makes the country good and what makes the country strong. It is the family. I would doubt that there are very many people, even gay members of parliament, who would disagree that family is the key to the strength of the future of the nation. My colleague for Mississauga South used the term “a line in the sand”. I would use “thin edge of the wedge”. This is ultimately what the debate is all about.

I have a quote by David Corbett of the Foundation for Equal Families. He said:

Nobody has proposed a solution that would have marriage as an institution available to same sex couples. It is not constructive contribution to the debate and it is certainly premature.

What does that tell us? It tells me that we are not going to do it at this time because it will upset the apple cart. We will move along an inch at a time until we can make more ground. Let us call it for what it is. The gay rights activists absolutely want to have same sex marriages recognized. They may say they do not, but I honestly believe they do.

Does that mean we have to get homophobic and panicky? I do not think so. I think it means that in this country, the country over which we have the domain as parliamentarians, we will only recognize, as our common law states, that a marriage is two people of the opposite sex and excludes anyone else. This is common sense to me. I do not think we have to have a knee-jerk reaction to it.

I say to those in the gay community that I have no problem with their right to not be discriminated again in terms of housing, employment, education, equal opportunity, jobs within the government, procurement or whatever. We should not discriminate against them based on their sexuality. However, they have no right to claim that they have expanded rights based on their sexuality. As far as I am concerned, it cuts both ways.

One of the things I find most fascinating about being in this place, especially when many of my esteemed colleagues prior to arriving here made their living in pursuit of the law or defence of the law in one way or another, is when the debate indicates that we should let this particular issue go through the courts because they will adjudicate and make the decision. However, on this particular issue we cannot have the courts make that decision because we are parliament, we are the ultimate and we have the right to tell them what to do.

We have a judicial system that is one of the finest in the world and supported with a parliamentary democracy that is absolutely one of the finest in the world. What we need to do in all cases is to make sure that those two systems work in balance; where parliamentarians can say what it is they want to have happen in terms of the law, but that the judicial system must be available without interference from politicians to interpret that law, be it the charter of rights or any other individual law.

I support the family. I support men and women being married. I believe they are the only two who can be spouses. The government supports that and we will stand behind that regardless of any attempts to portray us in any other light.

• (1625)

Mr. Jack Ramsay (Crowfoot, Ref.): Madam Speaker, my colleague has touched on many of the concerns.

I have a very brief question for him. Bill C-78 provides for benefits based on a conjugal relationship. Pierre Elliott Trudeau told us that the state has no business in the bedrooms of the nation and took the state out of the bedrooms of the nation back then. I believe that Bill C-78 has put us right back into the bedrooms of the nation. In order to secure the benefits as provided for by Bill C-78, we have to prove a sexual relationship. I wonder if the hon. member would like to comment on that.

Mr. Steve Mahoney: Madam Speaker, as in many cases in this world of politics, there are issues and bills that have some difficulties.

The real value of Bill C-78 for this government was the fact that we were able access some \$30 billion in capital funds that belonged to the taxpayers. The position of the Reform Party is that we should close our eyes, draw the wheels of government to a close and not get that money back into the hands of the taxpayer. That is why we did Bill C-78. I voted for Bill C-78 and would again.

Mr. Jason Kenney (Calgary Southeast, Ref.): Madam Speaker, I do not know if the hon. member is on the MPs' hockey team, but if he is he should get the best skating award. He knew how to skate right away from that question. I am not going to let him get away with it.

We heard him announce that the great liberal libertarian principle of the state does not belong in the bedrooms of the nation, with which I concur.

The fiscal impact of Bill C-78 aside, does he not agree—and we may be dealing with legislation of this nature that is more expanded in the fall when we reconvene—that benefits provided ought not to be provided on the basis of sexual behaviour but on some other characteristics, that is, those of dependency? Can he comment on that?

Mr. Steve Mahoney: Madam Speaker, as I said during my speech, I do not believe that people should get rights or lose rights based on their sexuality.

What I have mentioned is that I like the balance that I see. I think our other deputy speaker, a member from Alberta, has put a paper

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out as well. The Alberta government is dealing with an issue that I believe we will be looking at it; that is, if they do declare dependency economically and pay a family premium. I do not think that two people can live together, declare that they want to share benefits and then continue to pay a single premium. There may be a requirement to adjust those premiums and create a third category which could be a declared an interdependency category for setting the premiums.

Clearly, pensions, survivor benefits and all of those things are based on the long range forecast by the economic professionals. They are not based on sexuality but on hard dollars and cents.

Mr. Grant Hill (Macleod, Ref.): Madam Speaker, I would like to try this question one more time.

In Bill C-78 benefits are conferred because of a conjugal relationship. The member in his speech clearly said he was against that. Would he state plainly for the record whether he was for or against that portion of Bill C-78?

Mr. Steve Mahoney: Madam Speaker, I have made it very clear that I believe that benefits, in any particular situation, should be based on the premiums that are paid. If we can adopt a situation where we can register dependency, and perhaps establish a new level premium, then perhaps we could do that.

The red herring that the members opposite continue to bring up with regard to Bill C-78 is nothing more than that, and they know that. They also know that there are numerous government bills that will be brought onto the floor of this place that are going to involve the same kind of issue. That is why the government is looking at it and we believe it is necessary.

Having said that, in spite of the attempts by the members opposite to throw me off, I actually, for the first time in my two years-plus in this place, support an idea put forward by the Reform Party and it frightens the heck out of me.

• (1630)

Mr. John Harvard (Charleswood St. James—Assiniboia, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to participate in the debate this afternoon because I take the subject matter very seriously. Ultimately we are talking about minority rights. In a pluralist society of the kind that exists in Canada we have to take the matter very seriously and we have to tread very carefully.

While I truly question the motive of the Reform Party in putting forward the motion on the parliamentary calendar for today, I have no trouble whatsoever in supporting it. I will do exactly that later tonight and perhaps I will use some of my time to explain why.

I do not have any trouble supporting the institution of marriage. I consider it an essential part of the bedrock of society. Our society is founded upon the institution of marriage, and I cannot imagine civilization being without it as we know it.

I have some experience inside the institution of marriage. I was first married more than 39 years ago. I consider myself to be one of the luckiest men on the face of the earth. I have what I think is the perfect wife and perfect mate. I thank God every day that she came into my life many years ago.

Marriage is extremely important. We as parliamentarians have a duty to nurture and to support the institution of marriage. If we can do that in some small way through this kind of debate in the House of Commons, so much the better.

With those few words in support of the institution of marriage, I am more than happy to support the motion brought forward by the Reform Party.

Why do I question the motives of the Reform Party in bringing forward the motion? I question the motives of the official opposition because on this matter, which has to do not so much with marriage but with gays and lesbians, the Reform Party established a certain fact a long time ago, that it is very good at the business of scaremongering.

When it comes to minority rights relating to gays and lesbians, the Reform Party cannot think of anything better to do than to spread fear where very little fear exists. I think it was the member for Wentworth—Burlington who described the issue as an empty controversy. It is just that, an empty controversy.

I am not aware of anyone who is rushing around, pushing and advocating for some sweeping change in the definition of marriage. Maybe the Reform Party is. Maybe it is the only one, but I certainly do not hear it from anyone whom I would consider either credible or in large numbers.

The justice minister, speaking in the House this morning on behalf of the government, said that the government was not interested at all in changing the definition of marriage. I do not know of any significant group in the country that is demanding a change in the definition of marriage. There may be a few; there may be a few gays and lesbians around but I do not think they are in large numbers.

• (1635)

At this particular time in the debate I think gays and lesbians are far more interested in other issues connected with this matter, especially when it comes to equal benefits. There may be a few but I think it is an insignificant number. It certainly is not the kind of number that would warrant scaremongering, spreading fear by the Reform Party.

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Are the courts in the country demanding that parliamentarians change the definition of marriage? I do not see that. I have read a number of judgments and, yes, they are pushing us with respect to providing certain benefits and to removing certain discriminatory practices. However I am not aware of any court that is saying that parliamentarians have to change the definition of marriage, that we have to change the law so that a man can marry a man and a woman can marry a woman. I do not see that at all.

The Reform Party is out in front leading the charge: the roof will fall in and we will face terrible changes. Nothing could be further from the truth.

It reminds me of the Reform Party on the issue of a carbon tax. What is the only party in the country that talks about a carbon tax? As far as I know it is not the Liberal Party. I do not know anybody in the Liberal Party who wants a carbon tax. I cannot speak for the Conservatives, but I do not think they are leading the way in calling for a carbon tax. I do not think the New Democrats are and I do not think the Bloc is. Nobody except the Reform Party talks about a carbon tax. The reason it talks about it is that it is in its interest to spread fear. It is called fearmongering. It is the same on this issue.

There have been decisions by judges, by courts, which in effect have said that gays and lesbians are treated with less respect than they deserve and that there are discriminatory laws, rules, and regulations in the country which ought to be removed. Slowly but surely that is where we as politicians and as institutions across the country are going. Those discriminatory practices are being stopped.

I am not aware of anyone saying that in the whole process we have to change the definition of marriage. As far as I know, the definition of marriage is a couple of opposite sex living together, the union of a man and a woman, and that is the way it will be. I do not know what it will be like 100 years from now or 300 years from now. We will all be long gone. However, for the time being I do not think there will be any change whatsoever.

When I listen to Reform Party spokespeople, the one thing I always listen for is whether they have respect for minorities, particularly minorities like gays and lesbians who perhaps face discrimination on a daily basis. We are really talking about tolerance.

Most Canadians are heterosexual. I do not know what the number is. Perhaps it is 98% or 99%. Most Canadians are married. They form a huge majority. It does not take much strength or courage to defend the majority, but it does take a bit more strength to defend the minorities, especially those who may face discrimination.

Members should go through *Hansard* tomorrow and look for the tolerance that comes from the Reform Party and look for the

respect it would afford gays and lesbians. They will find very little, if any, evidence of that, which says a lot about that party.

• (1640)

Canadians know that it is a party of intolerance, that it is a party that does not care about certain people. A party like that will never govern the country. Thank God for that.

Mr. Jason Kenney (Calgary Southeast, Ref.): Madam Speaker, I am disappointed to hear the bitter, partisan diatribe of the member from Winnipeg and to listen to his employing hot bottom, divisive politics, extremist rhetorical tactics to create partisan division on what should be an issue of some unanimity, as he indicated at the outset of his remarks.

He suggested that one could read in the remarks made by members of my party intolerant comments. I have not heard anything of that nature. The motion today is very simple. I will read it into the record. Perhaps the member has not read it:

That, in the opinion of this House, it is necessary, in light of public debate around recent court decisions, to state that marriage is and should remain the union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others, and that Parliament will take all necessary steps to preserve this definition of marriage in Canada.

If the member opposite could identify what he finds offensive in the motion, I would be edified.

He also suggests that there is unanimity on this definition, that no one disagrees with it. He is also contradicting members of his own party who have told us that this is a live issue. The member from Mississauga who just spoke quoted Mr. Corbett from the Coalition for Equal Families who said that it was premature at this time to address this issue. The member from Mississauga pointed out that its "prematurity" implies that it is an issue the foundation will be pushing, the change of the definition of marriage, at some point in the future.

The member from Winnipeg is contradicting the remarks of many of his colleagues today who have said that this is very much an important issue.

I would once more point to the policy adopted while I was there as an observer at the last policy convention of the Liberal Party of Canada, where the party strongly urged the federal government to recognize same sex marriages in the same way that it recognizes opposite marriages.

How can the hon. member from Winnipeg say that this is a red herring and not a real issue and that the opposition is fearmongering when in fact his own party has declared this as party policy?

Mr. John Harvard: Madam Speaker, I am happy to respond to those unfounded charges. There is nothing particularly wrong with

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the motion as it reads. There is nothing particularly offensive about it. It is about marriage. All of us in the House support marriage. We support the current definition of marriage. That is not a problem.

I referred to the Reform Party as an intolerant bunch and I will not back off from that. It is not so much what its members have said in today's debate. It is what they have left out. It is what is absent. It is what they have not said.

Even though the motion speaks of marriage and the definition of marriage, it is as much about gays and lesbians as anything. I noticed in their speeches a lack of respect, common garden variety respect, for a minority group, a group of people who deserve our respect and our protection, people who deserve equal treatment before the law.

If my friend from Calgary reads the resolution that was passed by the Liberal Party of Canada, he will see that it is not calling for a change in the definition of marriage. It is simply talking about equal treatment when it comes to the provision of benefits. The operative word is benefits.

The courts in many ways have already said that. The courts have simply said that when it comes to benefits we will have to treat them as well as we treat anyone else. That is all the resolution is talking about. It is as simple as that.

Mr. Jason Kenney: Madam Speaker, we are finally getting to the bottom of it with this hon. member. He says the courts have already changed the definition. I will read from the resolution:

Be it resolved that the Liberal Party of Canada strongly urge the federal government to recognize same sex marriages in the same way that it recognizes opposite marriages—

• (1645)

How can the hon. member stand in his place and deny that this is the policy of his party and it, therefore, is very much a live matter for public policy debate and for us as parliamentarians?

Mr. John Harvard: Madam Speaker, it is pretty difficult to carry on a debate with an hon. member who deliberately twists facts. He has just said that the courts were demanding a change in the definition of marriage. No such thing exists. It is the same thing with the Liberal Party motion. It does not demand a change in the definition of marriage.

Mr. Jim Pankiw (Saskatoon—Humboldt, Ref.): Madam Speaker, I find it rather unfortunate that we would even have to debate the motion that is before the House today, because it is a straightforward and common sense motion. It is rather bewildering that anyone would oppose it, yet that is the case.

I will begin by reading the motion we are debating in the House today. The Reform Party motion put forward for debate today reads as follows:

That, in the opinion of this House, it is necessary, in light of public debate around recent court decisions, to state that marriage is and should remain the union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others, and that Parliament will take all necessary steps to preserve this definition of marriage in Canada.

The motion is very clear, unambiguous and straightforward, and although one would tend to think that support for it would be a given, and that it would be unanimous, that is not the case at all. Before I explain why that is, I would like to commend the Reform member for Calgary Centre who moved this motion.

As the House knows, the hon. member is our family values and family issues critic. He has worked tirelessly on behalf, not only of the Reform Party, but on behalf of all Canadian families to defend the rights and traditional values of families.

For example, earlier this year a court decision in British Columbia ruled that possession of child pornography was legal. It was under the leadership of the hon. member for Calgary Centre that the Reform Party led a motion in the House calling on the government to invoke the notwithstanding clause and override that decision to make it very clear that the Parliament of Canada does not accept that child pornography is something that should be legally possessed. Of course, that motion was defeated by the Liberals, unfortunately.

Also earlier this year, when the issue of tax fairness for families arose in the House, it was under the guidance of the hon. member for Calgary Centre that the Reform Party led a spirited debate urging the government to remove tax unfairness against families with children. That also was unsuccessful.

I would like to commend not only the hon. member for Calgary Centre but his staff for the excellent work they do on behalf of the Reform Party in promoting our family values agenda and on behalf of all Canadian families.

The reason we have to debate a motion which simply seeks to reaffirm that marriage is the union of a man and a woman, is that last summer there was a Liberal Party convention held in Ottawa. A motion was put forward, debated, voted upon and passed which read:

Be it resolved that the Liberal Party of Canada strongly urge the federal government to recognize same sex marriages in the same way that it recognizes opposite marriages—

The official policy of the Liberal Party of Canada is that same sex marriages should be recognized in the exact same manner as opposite sex marriages.

Let us now turn to the NDP. I am looking at 1997 campaign literature with a big heading that states: "Equality for Gays, Lesbians and Bisexuals: Alexa McDonough and Canada's NDP". It goes on to say that the member for Halifax and Canada's NDP will represent the concerns of gays, lesbians and bisexuals consistently.

In fact, that is exactly what they are doing in the House today. They are siding with the Liberal government and promoting the view that the definition of marriage and spouse should be changed.

• (1650)

Again I will read directly from the official Liberal Party policy:

—to recognize same sex marriages in the same way that it recognizes opposite marriages—

That is where the NDPs and the Liberals are coming from.

I would like to read directly from the policy book of the Reform Party for the benefit of members of the House to know where the Reform Party stands on these issues. The section on equality states:

The Reform Party affirms the equality of every individual before and under the law and the right to equal protection and benefit of the law.

Under the heading of family it states:

The Reform Party believes a family should be defined as individuals related by blood, marriage or adoption. Marriage is the union of a man and a woman as recognized by the state and this definition will be used in the provision of spousal benefits for any program funded or administered by the federal government. The Reform Party supports the principle that government programs, policies and legislation should serve to strengthen and protect the Canadian family.

The NDP and Liberal policies seek to change the definition of marriage and spouse as opposed to the Reform Party position, which is strongly opposed to that. I delineate the different positions of the parties for the benefit not only of the members of the House, but for all Canadians who may be watching the deliberations today. I urge all Canadians to scrutinize not only what their MPs say in the speeches as we debate this issue, but in how they vote tonight.

I also urge Canadians from coast to coast to keep in mind at the time of the next election, albeit that will probably be about two years from now, that if they vote NDP or Liberal they will be voting for the redefinition of the terms spouse and marriage. They will be voting for the recognition of same sex marriages in the same way that opposite marriages are recognized, as cited in the Liberal policy which was approved at the convention last summer.

Not only is it important to separate the Reform Party position from those of the NDP and the Liberals for the benefit of Canadians who wish to make up their minds on how they are going to vote in the next election on this, but this debate is also very important because of growing public concern over this issue.

Recent headlines in some national newspapers serve to illustrate my point. A headline in the Ottawa *Citizen* read “Same-sex partners declared spouses: Top court ruling expected to topple hundreds of laws”. A headline in the London *Free Press* was entitled “Redefining our Partnerships: This week’s Supreme Court of Canada landmark ruling could send aftershocks into almost every sector of Canadian life”. A headline in the Montreal *Gazette*

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read “Top Court Rewriting Laws of Marriage”. A headline in the *National Post* read “Ruling Alters Way Marriage Viewed: Family Law Expert—Implications seen for adoptions, pensions, property rights”.

The source of public concern is not only recent newspaper articles and coverage, but also recent court decisions. Most notably, last year there was a decision known as the Rosenberg decision in which the Ontario Court of Appeal changed the definition of the term spouse in the Income Tax Act to include same sex relationships. The Reform Party debated this in the House of Commons and urged the government to appeal that decision, but the government refused. The reason it refused to appeal the decision is because of its official policy which was passed at the convention last summer.

The other recent court decision is that of *M. v H.*, in which Ontario’s family law act was declared unconstitutional because it violated the equality rights of homosexuals. Following that the justice minister announced that she would change the definition of spouse in federal laws in an omnibus bill to come down this fall.

• (1655)

The justice minister is telling everyone that marriage is the union of one man and one woman, but justice department bureaucrats continue to put together legislation that will render the definition of marriage useless and meaningless. It is typical Liberal arrogance and deception, saying one thing and doing another.

The purpose of this Reform motion is to pre-empt future supreme court decisions by providing leadership and guidance. The Reform motion instructs the court that the legal definition of marriage shall remain unchanged.

Ms. Eleni Bakopanos (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the hon. member made reference to the Liberal Party convention. As far as I know, what happens at Liberal Party conventions among the members is not what is government policy.

He seems to be continuously confusing what was a recommendation made by the membership of the party, which illustrates, in my opinion, that in the Liberal Party there can be various opinions expressed by the membership. We have an open party and an open process where members of the Liberal Party can express their opinions on any issue, but that is not government policy. I would like to make sure the hon. member makes the distinction between what was discussed at a convention and what is government policy.

This government has no intention of changing the definition of marriage, as the Minister of Justice said in the House earlier in her speech and in answer to questions by hon. members.

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The member talked about the Reform Party convention and the definition of equality. I would like him to elaborate a little more on what is considered equality in terms of the Reform Party's policy.

Mr. Jim Pankiw: Madam Speaker, I do not know what kind of animosity or dissension this is going to cause within the ranks of the Liberal Party. Clearly its membership voted on and approved a policy which stated that the Liberal Party of Canada strongly urge the federal government to recognize same sex marriages in the same way that it recognizes opposite marriages. If cabinet decides to ignore the official party policy, that is not something I would understand.

The way the Reform Party works is that every two years we have an assembly. The membership brings forward policies and principles which are debated and voted upon. The majority will of the party membership determines what those policies are. The policies do not come from the leadership or the MPs down; they come from the grassroots membership upward.

I do not believe the hon. member was listening very closely, so I will restate the official Reform Party policy which was formulated by the grassroots membership, upon which it is incumbent for Reform members of parliament to advocate:

The Reform Party believes a family should be defined as individuals related by blood, marriage or adoption. Marriage is the union of a man and a woman as recognized by the state and this definition will be used in the provision of spousal benefits for any program funded or administered by the federal government. The Reform Party supports the principle that government programs, policies and legislation should serve to strengthen and protect the Canadian family.

Mr. John Cannis (Scarborough Centre, Lib.): Madam Speaker, this is exactly what my Liberal colleague, the member for Charleswood St. James—Assiniboia, was referring to. It seems the members of the Reform Party who spoke earlier must be blind. We are sitting here supporting this issue. Indeed we are saying that we believe in the traditional family of a man and a woman. Never in *M. v H.* was there any reference to marriage.

I have listened with greatest to the debate throughout the day. Instead of standing and saying that it is great the Liberal members are supporting it and that everybody is behind this, Reformers are exploiting the situation, saying "don't forget when the election comes". They are going to see tonight. I think they are using the wrong approach. It is fearmongering, which the member referred to earlier.

I am speaking with a loud voice because I am one of the members supporting this excellent initiative, yet here we are playing partisan politics. No wonder they are at 6% and dropping. It is sad to say that they cannot read the pulse of the community.

• (1700)

Mr. Jim Pankiw: Madam Speaker, I would correct the hon. member on one thing. He stated "We believe in the traditional

family". In fact, last summer at the Liberal Party convention here in Ottawa, the Liberal Party adopted an official policy that the federal government should recognize same sex marriages in the same way that it recognizes opposite sex marriages. That is in stark contrast to the position of the Reform Party which believes that marriage should remain the union of a man and a woman.

I thank the hon. member for raising the point about the next election because I strongly encourage all Canadians to keep this in mind at that time.

Mr. Werner Schmidt (Kelowna, Ref.): Madam Speaker, this is indeed one of those debates where emotions run high, feelings run deep and the understandings are also very much in a state of flux.

I commend a number of members from all parties who have said they understand what the meaning of marriage is and that they want to support and affirm that marriage is that of one woman and one man to the exclusion of all others. That is our motion.

I want to do three things. I want to deal with the need for definition. I want to deal with the business of choices. And I want to deal with the matter of leadership.

The issue is rather significant. On the one hand it seems to be absolutely clear that everybody understands what marriage is, yet the judges want a clear definition and direction. All kinds of acrimonious statements have been made as to what might the motivation be, of why the Reform Party would enter this kind of debate. Is it simply for partisan advantage? Is it strictly crass politics and things of that sort? It is nothing of the kind.

When we get into the question of leadership, and that is really what we are into here, we want to recognize that one of the most important things in leadership is to influence others. In particular parliament influences all the people of Canada. The people of Canada will either be affected positively, negatively or they may simply turn off, but influenced they are nevertheless. We influence each other here in the House.

Through the reassertion of the definition we want to influence the judges of the land. We want to make sure that the courts and the decisions they render are indeed consistent with the definition that is being proposed here. We want to make it abundantly clear as well to all members of the House that we agree together on what it is we understand by the term marriage.

Why is it that we need to have these definitions? Marriage is one of those words that needs a definition but it also has all kinds of emotional connotations. It has spiritual connotations. It has the experiential knowledge of each of us.

I admit that I am a married man. As of March of this year my good wife and I have shared our lives together for 43 years. It has been a wonderful time. We have had our ups, we have had our downs, we have had our disagreements and confrontations, but we

have lived together in a very happy relationship. I am very proud of it and very thankful for the wife who is mine.

The important thing here is to recognize that we have the need to define exactly what it is. I want to go back in history as to how important definitions really are. It comes to me from the field of science. In science we have a very significant suggestion.

When Mendeleev first put together the periodic table of the elements, he defined very clearly the order of the elements by arranging them in order by atomic number. He discovered there was a systematic recurrence of those elements which had similar characteristics even though their atomic number increased. It was the definition of the periodic table and how it worked with the various elements that became very significant not only in understanding how the elements work and interact with one another, but in order to communicate with others so that they could understand what was being talked about.

• (1705)

We can use another example of the need for definition. I like this one even better. It comes from the field of biology and botany, medicine if you will. The botanist clearly defines each of the parts of a plant and distinguishes one plant from another. It is in this definition where it clearly indicates what a particular plant is or what a particular thing is in distinction to the exclusion of all others.

That is what we are talking about here today. We are not saying what marriage is not; we are simply saying what marriage is. By saying what marriage is means it is absolutely nothing else. That seems to be lost in this debate somewhere. We are focusing very clearly and very definitely on a particular institution which is marriage and which is said very clearly to be the union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others. That is what this is all about.

Within that definition we need to be absolutely clear as to exactly what we want the courts and judges of this land to interpret when they have before them cases dealing with this matter. That this is a live issue has become abundantly clear with the kind of statements that have come forward from various members on both sides of the House.

We simply want to assure and affirm to the people of Canada and to all of us here assembled that marriage shall continue to mean today and in the future the union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others.

There was an amendment put forward this morning “within the jurisdiction of parliament”. Of course, what else would it be but within the jurisdiction of parliament? That is the most important

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part. This parliament creates the law. This parliament determines the wishes of the people. It bases the law on the determination of the wishes of the people. Sometimes parliament can be wrong and if the government misinterprets what the people think, then it gets thrown out as happened recently in New Brunswick. We want it to be clear and if all parties agree on what the definition of marriage is, then we can recognize that all parties in future will recognize that this is what it is. We are parliament. We create the law of the land.

What is the choice that we have here today? If that is the clear definition we are working on, the choice before us is whether we will or will not affirm that. That is the clear choice we have today. That is the motivation behind what the Reform Party is doing. We can talk about crass politics and partisan politics, but all of that is totally beside the point. The choice is very simple: do we or do we not affirm marriage as the union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others?

Why is it so important that parliament make that choice and that decision? It comes from a number of judges. Here is what they have said:

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, there is the long-established principle that in a constitutional democracy it is the legislature, as the elected branch of government, which should assume the major responsibility for law reform. Considerations such as these suggest that major revisions of the law are best left to the legislature.

The affirmations also apply to the legislature. The issues here—

—are of such magnitude, consequence, and difficulty in policy terms that they exceed the proper incremental lawmaking powers of the courts. These are the sort of changes which should be left to the legislature.

The interpretation should be left to the legislature is exactly what is meant.

If anything is to be done, the legislature is in a much better position to weigh the competing interests and to arrive at a solution that is principled and minimally intrusive.

• (1710)

Why is it so important that we make a choice? I want to read this because it is very important to recognize why choices are so significant: “I believe every person is created as the steward of his or her own destiny with great power for a specific purpose: to share with others through service a reverence for life in a spirit of love”. No matter what our age, our experience or our position, we can dream a dream that will make a difference. We can have a mission that matters, the choices we make end up controlling the chooser.

Mr. Rick Casson (Lethbridge, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to compliment the member for his comments and the delivery of his thoughts on this issue. We are coming to the end of the debate.

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It was interesting to see the support coming forward from almost all sides of the House.

It has also been interesting to see that some people in the House have tried to turn this into something that it is not. This is strictly, as the motion says, to reaffirm the definition of marriage and to debate it in the House to let Canadians know how parliamentarians feel about this.

I have been fortunate. I was married in 1967 and I am still married to the same person. I am fortunate, but possibly she is not so fortunate, but we have managed to stay together all these years.

The commitment that is made to marriage goes beyond trying to seek out a partner to get as many benefits as one can from the government. It is what we are talking about today. It is the basis for strong families.

I would like the member to comment on the aspect of families and society and how the definition of marriage is the basis for all that and what strong families can mean to a better Canada.

Mr. Werner Schmidt: Mr. Speaker, to me the family is the fundamental unit in society. History shows very clearly that it is the single most effective way of transmitting values from one generation to another.

It is also the place where people learn the first elements of communication. It is where they learn the first loving relationships that can be developed. It is where caring can be established and recognition of the need to have compassion for others who are less fortunate, recognition of the importance of sharing what one has with others and recognition that indeed this business of getting along with others is not automatic. When parents have a debate or an argument the children can see that. They can recognize it. They see that ways can be found to resolve that.

There is a tremendous learning experience. The family is absolutely critical for doing that. What does marriage have to do with the family? That is the initial position of the family. That creates the family in the first instance. Are there other definitions of family that can be brought into play? Of course there are. But marriage is absolutely central at the first instance. At the first level it is central. That is my belief.

Mr. Rick Casson: Mr. Speaker, I would like to go to another part of the member's presentation.

I know how passionately the member feels about being a member of the House of Commons and how much pride he has in being here. I would like him to comment on how he feels about the ability to stand in this place today and air this issue on all sides. How important is that to the debate that will take place across the land?

Mr. Werner Schmidt: Mr. Speaker, you would almost think the hon. member has had a chance to look inside my brain and my heart. I thank the hon. member for that question.

Indeed it is an honour and a privilege to be here. How important is it for what is going to happen in the rest of this land? It is fundamental and it is setting the direction. This place leads the land, but sometimes we wonder in what direction it is taking the land. When we look at the debt situation and various other things we ask ourselves that question.

• (1715)

As Reformers, we are here for one thing and that is to give voice to the people who elected us and to recognize the principles that they put together, not the principles that we, as elected members of the Reform Party, can ignore, which, as the members opposite said, they can do to their convention. I am proud that we cannot do that because I do not want to that.

Our job here is to honestly reflect the wishes of the people who elected us. I am proud to be able to do that.

Mr. John Maloney (Erie—Lincoln, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I wish to share my time tonight with the member for Thornhill.

I am very happy and pleased to be able to rise tonight on this debate. The hon. member for Calgary Centre has put forth a motion for the consideration of the House that the institution of marriage is and should remain the union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others and that parliament will take all necessary steps to preserve this definition of marriage.

Let me clearly state to the House, to the people of Canada and most especially to the people of my riding of Erie—Lincoln that I support the motion without hesitation.

The institution of marriage is clearly and unequivocally the union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others. This definition has been appropriate and has served us well in the past. It is appropriate and serves us well now. It will continue to be appropriate and serve us well in the future. There are no exceptions, no qualifications and no limitations. The statement is clear and concise. It is the union of two persons of the opposite sex.

Indeed, this position of the federal common law goes back to the 1866 British case of *Hyde and Hyde v Woodmansee*. This case has been consistently applied in Canada. This long-standing case simply states that no marriage can exist between two persons of the same sex or between multiple wives or husbands. This is the definition that has been acknowledged and accepted by the citizens of the country and by the courts. Yes, Mr. Speaker, by the courts.

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Let us consider the Ontario case of Layland and Beaulne where the applicants sought to use section 15 of the charter of rights to bring a change in the commonly accepted definition of marriage. The court soundly and firmly rejected their arguments and re-affirmed the long-standing definition of marriage as the union of one man and one woman.

The government has no intention now or ever of changing the legal and long-standing definition of marriage, or of legislating same sex marriages. Those who would suggest otherwise only serve to foment unwarranted fear and divisiveness.

Canada faces no social problem more important than the strengthening of a family, reducing the number of births outside marriage, cutting the rates of divorce and coming to the aid of children disadvantaged by broken homes. Every measure must be taken to reinforce and revitalize the institution of marriage, real marriage between men and women, mothers and fathers, lasting for life. The hon. member's motion is one step in this process and he has my support.

Same sex marriages do nothing to advance the position of family. Same sex marriages are the antithesis of family. The same sex marriage issue has come before the House previously and I and the House have unequivocally rejected the concept. It is unacceptable and will not and cannot be tolerated.

Hopefully the motion before the House today will clarify the position of the House once and for all. I encourage all members to support it.

Ms. Elinor Caplan (Thornhill, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to participate in the debate.

I was talking to a constituent earlier who wanted to know what we were debating today. She was wondering if we were changing the definition of marriage in the statutes of the Government of Canada. I told her that we were not changing the definition of marriage in the statutes of Canada and that the Reform Party, the official opposition, was bringing forward a motion to clarify that we would not do that. She then wanted to know why the motion was before the House if we were not doing that. I told her that there had been some recent court cases which suggested that some of the laws that are presently on the books in Canada are unconstitutional and discriminate against same sex partners on the basis of the receiving of benefits. She then wanted to know what that had to do with marriage. I told her that it had nothing to do with marriage.

• (1720)

As I begin my remarks, I want to reiterate that the decisions of the courts of the land have done nothing to change the definition of marriage. I believe that the results of today's vote will clearly state to the people of Canada that the courts have not changed the

definition of marriage nor is it the intention of the government to change the definition of marriage. However, we will address those issues which the courts have rightly pointed out to us, those issues which may, in the courts' views, be treating some citizens of the country in a discriminatory manner. That is the role of the courts.

As part of my remarks, I will focus on the role of the courts in these important discussions on public policy issues. When the courts signal to parliament that the charter of rights is not being protected for all Canadians, elected legislatures, whether it is the federal or provincial government that has passed a law that the court has ruled on, are free to choose how to respond. However, the solution must be constitutional.

We have a constitution and a charter of rights and freedoms in Canada that we, as parliamentarians and all elected officials across the land, have an obligation to live up to. We must live up to the values and principles that are enshrined in that charter of rights and freedoms. I believe I have a responsibility, as the member for Thornhill, to do that not only on behalf of my constituents but on behalf of all constituents in Canada who expect legislators and parliamentarians to protect their freedoms.

While we may not always like the decisions of the courts, we must take heed when they say we are not protecting the rights of all individuals, that we are discriminating against some. We must update our laws to bring them into compliance with our constitutional responsibility.

In the government's view, the courts have demonstrated an appreciation for their role in a democratic society. I believe, and the government believes, that courts must continue to be independent and free to make difficult decisions in accordance with the principles set down in our charter of rights and freedoms. That is the role that we Canadians have given to our courts.

While there is much room for debate on how exactly that role should be carried out, in my view it serves no constructive purpose to attack the courts for what Canadians have asked them to do.

On the contrary, some of the comments that we have heard in the House and elsewhere have suggested that the courts have no business making decisions that declare unconstitutional laws that have been passed in parliament. In doing so, some would suggest they are usurping the public interest and the public policy functions of parliament.

This term is often described as judicial activism. Critics of judicial activism, in my view, are deliberately creating an impression that the courts are usurping to themselves a role that is not contemplated in our democratic constitutional structure, an impression which causes people to question the legitimacy of the role of the courts in the development of law.

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I think that has a negative impact on the pride we have in our institutions and on the important role that we play. There is clearly a difference between the role of parliament and the role of the courts. We need both of those institutions to hold the respect of the public if we are to succeed in the kind of public policy making that is in the interests of Canadians.

The impression that is being left as to the inappropriateness of the courts having this role is not only misleading, but it raises the potential for serious harm to the credibility of an important institution, the Canadian court, and the public perception of our whole justice system.

I give this cautionary note not only to the people who are in this House today listening to this debate but also those who are watching. When concerns are expressed about the extent to which the courts are now prepared to use the power of judicial review under the charter, it is helpful to bear in mind not only that the power of judicial review has always existed under Canada's constitution but also, quite apart from the power of judicial review, Canada's courts have always had a significant role to play in relation to the law making function of government, particularly through the development of Canadian common law.

• (1725)

It is the courts in their interpretation that have given us the body of court cases and common law that is the foundation of our judicial system. I would say to the House that if we tear that down, we tear down not only a fundamental institution in our society but we tear down the freedom and the right of Canadians to expect fairness in the judicial system.

There is no question that the courts have a more high profile role since we have the charter, a charter, I might say, that was brought to us by our now prime minister. I know it is something he is particularly proud of after 36 years in this wonderful House. His pride in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms is something that I think all Canadians can share. It is their charter of rights and freedoms, and it is their supreme court that makes the interpretations of that charter that guards the rights and freedoms of all Canadians.

I think that is one of the reasons that the United Nations, for the sixth year in a row, has declared Canada the number one country in the world. There are many things for us to be proud of, but the important role of our judiciary in safeguarding our rights and freedoms, and sometimes pushing parliamentarians and legislators to do the right thing, is a very important function.

The present debate about the role of the courts is not surprising because of how young our charter is. When we look around the world we see that wherever there is a constitution it is constantly

being defined and refined according to community values and standards in the courts in the free world.

The truth of the matter is that the Supreme Court of Canada has shown itself to be very sensitive to the concerns about judicial review, but that critics of judicial activism over the years have done a great disservice to our court. We are not only talking about a judiciary that holds legislation unconstitutional with great abandon. They do not do that. They are a very conservative court. If we look at the record of their judgments, they have acted appropriately in the interest of Canadians.

We should keep in mind the observations of Peter Hogg, one of Canada's pre-eminent constitutional scholars, who said:

Judicial review is not a veto over the politics of a nation, but rather, the beginning of a dialogue as to how best to reconcile the individualistic values of the charter with the accomplishments of social policies for the benefit of the community as a whole.

I hope today's debate will not confuse anyone. I hope today's debate will not send out a message to anyone that is different from the facts.

The fact is that the decisions of the court have been consistent with protecting the rights and privileges of every Canadian. The decisions of the courts have said to the governments that they cannot and must not discriminate against individuals. Those decisions have done nothing to change the definition of marriage in the country and it is not the policy of the Liberal government to change the definition of marriage. What makes the debate today very important is that it gives us a chance to state that clearly.

As I wind up the debate, I say to the House that it has been a privilege to have the opportunity to clarify and state on behalf of the people of Thornhill that I believe that the courts play an important role in protecting our rights and freedoms in Canada.

Mr. Jason Kenney (Calgary Southeast, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Thornhill once again, as some of her colleagues have done, expresses curiosity at why we should be discussing this motion here today, as though no one in the country, as the attorney general suggested earlier, is even discussing the question of the redefinition of marriage. We have plainly had it proposed right here in the House today by members of this place.

The hon. member went on to say at the end of her remarks that it was not the policy of the Government of Canada to change the legal definition of marriage, but eight or nine minutes of her ten minute talk was a lecture on the importance of judicial review.

• (1730)

No member of the opposition or nobody who understands the constitution would disagree with the necessity of judicial review,

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that is to say, the appropriate interpretation of statutes in light of our charter and constitutional framework. Objections are raised by us and others when the courts go beyond interpretation to legislate from the bench without an appropriate authority in the charter.

I see nowhere in the charter a basis for changing the legal definition of marriage. Yet we have recently seen a change in the legal definition of spouse, so this is a reasonable question. The hon. member said that the government does not have a policy on this. Her party does. I was at the Liberal Party convention last summer where a policy was passed that said:

Be it resolved that the Liberal Party of Canada strongly urge the federal government to recognize same sex marriages in the same way that it recognizes opposite marriages—

I simply ask the hon. member for Thornhill how this question is not relevant. How is it not a question of public debate when her own party introduced it as a matter of public debate and urged her government to change this policy?

Ms. Elinor Caplan: Madam Speaker, I am pleased to reiterate once again that the facts before us today are very clear. We have not had a court decision which changes the definition of marriage. It is not the stated policy of the government to change the definition of marriage. It is only the Reform Party, in its own mind, that is suggesting that any of those things are occurring.

That is why Reformers brought forward the motion today. That is why it has been referred to as a red herring. That is why it is frankly confusing Canadians. I say that again to the member opposite who clearly does not want to hear the facts because they do not fit with his agenda.

I have served in opposition. It is clear what Reformers are doing. This is opposition for opposition sake. With all the important things on the public policy agenda, these folks today come in with a motion clearly designed to confuse Canadians.

The courts have not changed the definition of marriage. The government has no intention of changing the definition of marriage. What we are intent on doing is ensuring that Canadians are not discriminated against.

When the court points that out to us, we are prepared to update our laws to ensure that all Canadians live in a society free from discrimination wherever possible.

Mr. Eric Lowther (Calgary Centre, Ref.): Madam Speaker, the hon. member across the way keeps saying that the courts have not changed the definition of marriage. The Liberal approach seems to be to wait until the courts change it and then draft some legislation around it. In that way the people are shut out of the process. The courts have changed the definition of spouse and the government is now intending to change the legislation around that.

Why can we not take a proactive approach, as we are doing today, to pre-empt a court ruling? The government would hide behind the robes of supreme court judges to put forward legislation along the lines of a redefined definition of marriage. That is what this is about today.

If tomorrow the courts were to rule that the opposite sex definition of marriage is unconstitutional, what would the hon. member across the way do about that?

Ms. Elinor Caplan: Madam Speaker, I heard the member opposite say that he would like to change the definition of marriage. The government does not want to do that. The Liberal Party, as reflected in its policies in the House and during the previous election campaign, does not want to do that.

We do not expect it is an issue that will be before the House. I am quite surprised that the member would say that he wants to move ahead with a debate and discussion that would change the definition of marriage. We do not believe Canadians want that at this time, and I am surprised that he would suggest it.

Mr. Grant Hill (Macleod, Ref.): Madam Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the hon. member for Calgary Southeast.

It has been quite fascinating to sit in the House and watch this debate. Normally we would think an opposition motion supported by the government would be cause for celebration. Normally I would expect to say to my colleagues across the way that we are on the same wavelength.

• (1735)

I have listened to those who have tried to impugn the motive of the motion. I do not quite understand how anyone can look into the heart of someone making a motion and tell what the motives are. I wish the motion could stand as it is, because it is an affirmation of marriage as most Canadians understand it.

I will explain again to my colleagues why I think the motion is worth while and necessary. It is because there are signs that marriage is under some stress in terms of definition. I will list for my colleagues some of the signs I see. I come to this as a clinician who counselled about marriage for 25 years of my life. I have watched marriage decrease in terms of its importance in Canada as well as some definitional changes.

Do we need clarification? I say we do. Do we need reaffirmation of the definition of marriage? I say we do. One of the things I have watched is a redefinition of spouse. It happened so recently that I am surprised my colleagues across the way would not reflect upon it. There has been a recent redefinition of spouse in the courts of Canada. That is an indication that there is a very definite need to take a specific stand.

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What do my own constituents say about it? I live in southwest Alberta and I took the opportunity to poll my constituents in relation to what they think about marriage. They have some concerns and are worried. They are very firm on the issue of no redefinition of marriage. They say that marriage must be as they have traditionally understood it.

Are the courts gradually changing the institution of marriage and the long term future of marriage? My answer is a resounding yes. Parliament should be, 100%, the last bastion for marriage when it comes to definition. There should be no social or judicial activism when it relates to marriage.

Let us look outside Canada for evidence on whether marriage is being redefined elsewhere. There was a recent attempt to redefine marriage in the states of Alaska and Hawaii. I had one of my colleagues make light of it and jokingly say that in one spot their brains were frozen. It was not light at all.

In those areas they tried to redefine marriage in a very specific legislative way. They handled it a different way from judicial activism. Both states went to the public with referendums at election time. It was fascinating to see what happened in both Alaska and Hawaii as they tried to openly and vigorously redefine marriage. In both cases the public rejected the redefinition of marriage. That tells me where the public is, along with my constituents who say that a redefinition of marriage is not on. The redefinition was renounced.

It concerns me that many of my colleagues seem to ignore what the social activists say. We have heard two or three times in the House that the redefinition of marriage according to social activists is premature. That tells me whether or not the issue is on the table.

I had an opportunity in the last parliament to debate Bill C-33 respecting sexual orientation and non-discrimination. I stated in the House publicly that I felt it was part of an ongoing campaign to redefine marriage.

I also stated that there were four steps. The first step was what Bill C-33 was trying to do. The second step was a redefinition of spouse. The third step was adoption. The fourth step would be a redefinition of marriage. I was roundly condemned by my colleagues across the way for saying that, but not five minutes after that bill passed a social activist in the House stood outside in the lobby and said that was exactly what was going on, that was exactly the intent.

• (1740)

To my Liberal colleagues who say there is nothing in the Liberal Party of Canada government-wise, I cannot imagine how a resolution passed at its last convention can be so quickly ignored. It says:

—the Liberal Party of Canada strongly urged the federal government to recognize same sex marriages in the same way that it recognizes opposite marriages in its distribution of benefits.

This was not done in isolation. This was not done in a vacuum. This was done actively.

I am delighted that my Liberal colleagues will support the motion. The statement we are making today is not so much for those of us in the House as it is profoundly important to the courts. The vote on the importance of the definition of marriage is probably the most important vote we will take in the House during my time here. I am delighted that my colleagues across the way will be supporting it. For those who cannot, I will be interested in listening to their rationale.

It would normally be a cause of celebration for me to say that we are on the same wavelength, that we are on the same path. I have difficulty understanding the issue of trying to find bad motives because I think the motives are very plain: affirmation of the strongest institution in Canada, affirmation of marriage.

Mr. Tom Wappel (Scarborough Southwest, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am informed there are so many people on this side of the House who wish to speak that I will not have an opportunity to deliver a full speech. However, I will take the opportunity to ask a question or make a comment in respect of the very important debate we are having today.

I unequivocally congratulate the hon. member for bringing forward the motion. I agree with everything the previous speaker just said. It is absolutely critical that the House speak to this issue.

I have a couple of questions for the hon. member as I have heard a few incorrect statements made in the House. Would the hon. member agree there is no statute with respect to marriage that deals with the capacity to marry?

Would he agree that the only statute the Parliament of Canada has is chapter M-2 of the Revised Statutes of Canada which contains three sections and is called the Marriage Act? None of those three sections deal with the fundamental issue that a marriage can only be between a male and a female and only of a single male and a single female.

Would he agree with me that no statute in fact deals with this, that it is judge-made law, and that the problem is that if it is judge-made law judges can change it?

I have a second question about whether he would agree, for those who have been bandying about supreme court cases and in particular the case of *M. v H.*, that the majority in this case said the following:

We emphasize that the definition of “spouse” found in s. 1(1) of the FLA, and which applies to other parts of the FLA, includes only married persons and is not at issue in this appeal.

In other words, *M. v H.* does not deal with the issue of marriage and should not be used to cloud this debate. Would the hon. member agree with these two statements?

Mr. Grant Hill: Madam Speaker, I am not a solicitor or a lawyer so when it comes to the nuances of law I have some difficulty.

I do know that the two statements of the hon. gentleman across the way are true. They are accurate statements. From my own perspective I simply want to reaffirm the importance of marriage as an institution in Canada.

I am delighted to hear that the member opposite will be voting for the motion as will many of his colleagues across the way.

• (1745)

Ms. Eleni Bakopanos (Ahuntsic, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the hon. member made reference to debate that occurred in the House on Bill C-33. I would like to quote one of his members in terms of what he said during a debate we had which was to expand human rights protection to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.

The member for Yorkton—Melville said:

I believe this legislation will lead to redefinition of the family, marriage and spouse in Canadian law which in turn will permit gay marriages, spousal benefits to gay couples, gay adoption, restriction of religious freedom and expression, and open the door for sex perverts and pedophiles to seek Charter protection by claiming that their criminal sexual preferences are just another sexual orientation.

That was said on May 2, 1996. Despite the member's gloom and doom scenario, no Liberal policy has left the door wide open for "sex perverts and pedophiles" as the hon. member predicted in his fearmongering.

Since the hon. member made reference to Bill C-33, does he agree with the comments made by the other member of his party?

Mr. Grant Hill: Madam Speaker, of course history will prove or disprove any comments made in the House.

I of course have paid some attention to what has happened in British Columbia with a recent judicial decision that has made the possession of child pornography quite acceptable. My constituents disagree vigorously with that.

The most important thing I am saying today, and I will say it as plainly as I can to the member, is that this is about affirming the importance of the institution of marriage. If the member opposite is not comfortable with that I am interested as to why. If we want to go off on a tangent in other areas, she may, but I will not.

Mr. Jason Kenney (Calgary Southeast, Ref.): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise in debate on the motion brought before us by the official opposition, which reads:

That, in the opinion of this House, it is necessary, in light of public debate around recent court decisions, to state that marriage is and should remain the union of one man

Supply

and one woman to the exclusion of all others, and that Parliament will take all necessary steps to preserve this definition of marriage in Canada.

The definition included in the motion before us is the standard common law definition which the government affirms, for instance, in its response to the many tens of thousands of petitions brought before this place.

We are simply seeking to reaffirm what has been the legal common law understanding of the past 150 years or more in Canada and the Commonwealth and, more importantly, to reaffirm the normative understanding of an essential social institution, the basic institution of civil society as it has been understood for millennia, through all of human civilization.

Some members opposite, including the member for Thornhill, the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health, have indicated that this is a moot point and a redundant motion insofar as no one is proposing any changes.

I find this quite unbelievable because I have several times today quoted from what I think is a relatively important authority which has proposed a change to the law in this respect and that institution just so happens to be the Liberal Party of Canada.

First, I want to commend members opposite for supporting this motion, and I commend the many members who have stood in the House to indicate that they share our view, that this is an important debate to have so that we can place on the official parliamentary record the importance of reaffirming the common law understanding of marriage. Yet we have heard from certain members opposite, such as the member for Thornhill, the member for Charleswood St. James—Assiniboia, the parliamentary secretary to the attorney general, and the attorney general herself, who said this morning: "Why use the already limited time of the House to debate a motion, on which, I suspect, there will be no fundamental disagreement inside or outside the House?"

Just as I was standing, the hon. member for Thornhill said that no one is proposing any changes to the definition of marriage. Then why is it that I have in my hand a resolution passed by the duly elected delegates of the Liberal Party of Canada at their policy convention last summer, where I stood as an observer, which reads:

Be it resolved that the Liberal Party of Canada strongly urge the federal government to recognize same sex marriages in the same way it recognizes opposite marriages—

• (1750)

Just a moment ago the member from Thornhill said that no one is proposing a change. The Liberal Party of Canada is proposing a change. The Government of Canada may not be responding to its party members. That is its own business. It can govern its own affairs as it wishes.

Supply

I think it is absolutely incumbent upon us to point out that people are proposing change in an institution no less than the Liberal Party of Canada. Hon. members say that we should let the courts tend to their business of judicial review, that we have the charter and the charter will be interpreted fairly by the courts and members of this parliament can sit by as passive observers and watch that process unfold.

If one were to have suggested at the time of the introduction of the charter of rights that the legal definition of spouse would be fundamentally changed, people would have said that is unbelievable. That is fearmongering, they would have said.

One of the major decisions in the charter era was the Morgentaler decision striking down section 251 of the Criminal Code in 1988. Yet back in 1981, when the charter was debated in this place, the then attorney general, the current Right Hon. Prime Minister, was asked at committee whether any section of the charter could possibly be used to strike down the criminal provisions with respect to abortion and the then attorney general, the now Prime Minister, said, "Oh, no". He said it in *Hansard*. We can reference it. The point is that we cannot predict with any degree of certitude what the courts are likely to do in their increasingly expanded understanding of judicial review.

That is why it is incumbent upon us to accept the invitation of the judges, of the courts, to enter into a dialogue. A dialogue is a two way conversation. It is not a monologue. To date we have merely had a monologue from the courts on issues of this nature. It is now time for parliament to speak so that we are on the record as asserting the current legal common law definition of marriage as a union between one man and one woman, to the exclusion of all others.

I cannot imagine why this would be a controversial motion. I cannot imagine why the Liberal Party would propose to scrap this definition. I cannot imagine for my own purposes why the courts of Canada would choose to change substantively the nature of marriage in law as they have essentially done through the M and H and other related decisions regarding spousal relations.

Let us be clear. The Liberal member from Mississauga quoted Mr. Corbett from the Foundation for Equal Families as saying that at this point the question of the definition of marriage is premature, from which a reasonable person could infer that his organization and like-minded individuals will use their democratic right to go to the courts to seek a redefinition of marriage; not at this time, because they do have an incremental legal agenda, and that is quite understandable, but at some point in the future. I do not think any reasonable person can have any doubt that a litigant will come before our courts seeking to strike down the current exclusionary definition of marriage, the common law definition, using as a basis the charter of rights. The government's posture, as articulated today, would be to sit back passively and allow the courts possibly to redefine the meaning of marriage at that time.

That is why we have come before the House today in 1999. That litigation might not occur this year. It might not occur for three or four years, but sooner or later it surely will occur. If we pass this motion tonight the Parliament of Canada, the supreme lawmaking body of this country, will have spoken and will be on the record affirming the age old common law understanding of the institution of marriage, which is absolutely central to a healthy civil society.

• (1755)

Mr. John Herron (Fundy—Royal, PC): Madam Speaker, I would like to applaud the Reform Party for the motion that it has brought forward today and the dialogue that has taken place.

There has been a lot of unease over the last while with respect to some of the decisions taken by the courts. I do not believe that those recent decisions apply to today's debate, but I applaud the merits of the debate.

The hon. member for Calgary Southeast said that he could not imagine why anybody would have a problem with the motion which has been put forward. He pointed out quite clearly that because of the charter a lot of decisions have started to take place. If it was proclaimed that the definition of spouse and marriage could be changed when the charter was brought in in 1982, I guarantee members that the artificial support we had for the charter would not have been there.

The definition of marriage has always been that of a union between a man and a woman. In his opinion, does he agree that it always should be?

Mr. Jason Kenney: Madam Speaker, absolutely, and I appreciate the intervention.

Politicians seem to think that we can change the ontological meaning of words, of concepts. Marriage has enormous meaning. It has a certain objective meaning. It is tautological to say that marriage is a committed relationship between a man and a woman. It is tautological. Of course marriage means that. Not even the Parliament of Canada, not even a bunch of judges can change a metaphysical reality. That is what a marriage is.

People will come before the courts seeking to change the legal privileges given to married people and to expand them. However, there is a certain reality. Marriage is marriage. It is between a man and a woman and it can be between no others. We are simply affirming that basic metaphysical reality through this motion.

Mr. Jack Ramsay (Crowfoot, Ref.): Madam Speaker, I have listened to the debate today and I want to thank the hon. member for his comments.

When the charter of rights was introduced I do not think that anyone would have believed that prisoners would receive the right to vote based upon the charter. I do not believe that anyone in Canada would have believed that bogus refugees, as soon as they land in Canada, would have all of the protections of the charter of rights and freedoms. I do not believe that the people of this country, at the time the charter was brought in, would have believed it if someone would have said that it would be used to strike down the abortion laws of the Criminal Code of Canada. I do not think the people of Canada back in those days would have believed that this government would bring in a bill that would allow for benefits to be transferred to Canadians based upon a sexual relationship, and Bill C-78 has done exactly that.

When we look at the whole institution of marriage and its definition, when we listen to people who scorn or attack the motion, saying that it is a moot question or a waste of time, and when we look at the history of what the charter has done to society in this country, we have reason to be concerned. I would like the member to comment on that.

Mr. Jason Kenney: Madam Speaker, the member for Crowfoot makes the point very well. We all support appropriate judicial review where the courts narrowly use their appropriate constitutional authority to interpret and define the laws. But for the courts to invent rights in the charter which are not explicit, which were not enshrined in it by the framers in 1982 is illegitimate in our view. That is why we must speak, to make it clear and plain to the courts that no jurisprudence can change the common law understanding of marriage. This parliament will take whatever action is necessary to uphold marriage contra any decision by the courts.

• (1800)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Réal Ménard (Hochelaga—Maisonneuve, BQ): Madam Speaker, I do not hesitate in supporting your calling the House to order at such a solemn moment, not just because I am rising to speak, but also because I believe the matter raised by the Reform Party is an important one.

I agree with the Reform Party that we need to discuss these matters. I am not of course in agreement with the position proposed. We need to discuss these matters because marriage is not a reality of divine right. It is not something that exists in itself, but something set out in legislation, and therefore something important for us to discuss.

Since I have about 20 minutes, I will take the time to read the wording of the motion in order to clearly set today's debate in context. The Reform Party motion reads as follows:

That, in the opinion of this House, it is necessary, in light of public debate around recent court decisions, to state that marriage is and should remain—

We can see the imperative nature of this motion.

Supply

—the union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others, and that Parliament will take all necessary steps to preserve this definition of marriage in Canada.

In fact, some people have asked whether the wording “all necessary steps” means going so far as to use the notwithstanding clause. The question can be asked, and I think that members of the Reform Party will have to answer it.

I do not believe that marriage should be limited to one man and one woman. I am among those who believe—and I will give my reasons later—that we should consider opening up the institution of marriage because marriage is not a divine right. It is an institution that required lawmakers to step in, and that is why conventional marriage as we know it is a prerogative of this parliament. The solemnization of marriage is a prerogative of various legislatures, but the definition of marriage has required that lawmakers step in, or we would not be looking at a motion such as this.

If marriage were limited strictly to canonical law, it would not concern us as parliamentarians. But canonical law is not the issue here.

I know that throughout their history, our Reform Party colleagues have made a number of attempts, some of them more adroit than others, to limit or refuse to recognize the right of two men or two women to form a conjugal union. I say again that I believe strongly that two men or two women can form conjugal unions and that lawmakers must recognize this reality, much as the supreme court has done in its recent decisions.

Before exploring this topic any further, I want to ask to what the motion is referring when it mentions various court decisions. Since 1992 a number of decisions both of administrative tribunals and of superior courts, such as the Ontario Court of Appeal and the supreme court, have progressively recognized and established case law and have handed down decisions recognizing same sex couples.

I will give a bit of background here. I know that I have the House's full attention and I am delighted. In 1992, when Kim Campbell was the minister of justice—I do not want to dredge up bad memories in the House—a decision was handed down by the Ontario Court of Appeal. This decision was the start of abundant jurisprudence.

• (1805)

In 1992, in the Haig case, the Ontario Court of Appeal overturned the Canadian human rights legislation saying that it was unconstitutional because it did not recognize sexual orientation as a prohibited grounds of discrimination. The government amended the law and we are grateful to it for doing so. This was at the time the current Minister of Health was the minister of justice.

Supply

Following the Haig decision, there was increasing recognition in legal annals that continued to grow in strength. Real case law was therefore born giving recognition to the fact that there could be common law conjugal unions between two men and two women, that is, partners of the same sex.

There was the decision in Haig. Recently there was the decision in Rosenberg where once again the Ontario Court of Appeal overturned certain provisions of the Income Tax Act saying that they were not compatible with section 15 of the Canadian charter of human rights by not according same sex partners survivor benefits.

Treasury Board amended this legislation. We would have preferred an omnibus bill. I have been tirelessly proposing year after year since 1994 in private member's bills that parliament acknowledge same sex spouses and permit passage of a single piece of legislation amending all existing laws. There are some 70 laws. All heterosexual definitions according benefits and requirements would include a homosexual definition of spouses.

I do not despair because increasingly persistent rumours—and I ask the parliamentary secretary to nod if she believes these rumours have some basis—are intimating that in October the government will table, in an unprecedented act of generosity, a bill recognizing same sex spouses. I can tell him in advance that he can count on my support and, more widely, that of the Bloc Québécois, I believe.

When addressing these issues, we are speaking of the recognition of spouses of the same sex. That is what the Reform Party members are against. They have in fact introduced a motion against the Rosenberg decision.

Canadians, Quebecers and all those who support human rights must know that the Reform Party does not recognize that two women or two men can love each other and be protected by the legislator. That is the starting point of a debate such as the one we are having here today.

Since they do not acknowledge the existence of such a reality, hon. members will realize that anything even remotely connected to this is also disapproved of by the Reform Party.

It is their right as parliamentarians to discuss these matters and to hold that position, but, in my opinion, their position is archaic and dated. It is rooted in another century. Canadians and Quebecers are far more generous in spirit than the Reform Party would have us believe. All those who agree with me applaud now.

That having been said, we agree that Canadians and Quebecers are far more generous, tolerant and open-minded than the Reform Party would have us believe.

Ms. Eleni Bakopanos: Long live Canada.

Mr. Réal Ménard: I would ask the hon. parliamentary secretary to keep her cool. I sense this may be going somewhere I do not wish to go.

• (1810)

There is no one in the House who can say how many people of homosexual orientation there are. Why is that so? Because it is not part of our tax returns. When people file tax returns they do not declare whether they are heterosexual or homosexual. When there is a census we do not declare whether we are heterosexual or homosexual. So no one can say how many in the population are gay.

What we do know, however, is that gays are taxpaying members of society, members of the workforce. Often they are involved in their communities. There is no reason that would justify our not recognizing that reality, as parliamentarians.

The recognition of marriage, as you yourself have experienced it, Madam Speaker, is not something the gay community is calling for. In the last five years I do not think I have met ten people in the community who have told me they thought I should take up this battle. It is not a big issue in the gay community, which is not to say that it is not discriminatory to prevent homosexuals from marrying.

It may not be a big issue in the gay community, but last year an application was made to the Quebec superior court for a declaratory judgment nonetheless. If Reform Party members wish to read this application I am prepared to table a copy.

This would bring home to parliamentarians that although this is not a major issue in the community and although there is a stronger body of opinion calling for recognition of same sex spouses, there are in fact a few cases pending before the courts.

Last year two Quebecers, Michael Hendricks and René Leboeuf, made an application for a declaratory judgment to strike down article 365 of the Civil Code. A number of arguments were advanced that I think it would be useful to share with the House.

I would like to digress at this point to say that if someone offered to marry me tomorrow morning it is not a course I would take, although someone does have his eye on me and any desire I may have had to remain unattached is flagging. After three years, perhaps my colleagues have noticed that I am a different man when I am in love. I say that even if marriage were legalized I would not commit to it.

However, in all logic, in all fairness, I think we must recognize that homosexual men and women are similar to people who have married.

I will share with members some arguments that were made in the brief tabled by Mr. Hendricks and Mr. Leboeuf in an application for a declaratory judgment. I dedicate these arguments to the Reform members and hope they will listen carefully. They wrote:

They are considered to have the same rights and the same obligations in their union. Together they have acquired matrimonial property and therefore have a common heritage.

There is no doubt that when we live together for five, six, eight or ten years we build a common heritage. This is undeniable.

They wrote further:

They vowed respect, fidelity, help and assistance to each other.

If fidelity, respect and mutual assistance are attributes of a heterosexual union, there is no reason to think that they are not also attributes of homosexual unions.

They also said:

They lived together without interruption from the start of their union. Although there were no children, they have formed a family unit since the start of their relationship, just like childless married couples.

• (1815)

I will conclude this part of my remarks by saying that the co-applicants, just like heterosexual married couples, established and maintained from the start of their shared life a permanent family residence.

Why am I doing this? Because, in strict civil and legal terms, there is no argument against the fact that two men or two women may live in extremely similar unions that have the same characteristics of heterosexual unions characterized by ties of marriage.

Naturally what make the difference—and I respect that—are religious convictions. It is obvious that in the official line of the church, in its official doctrine, there is no recognition of homosexual marriages just as there is no recognition of divorce. Does this mean that if the Reform Party insists on sticking to strictly religious arguments it will have to have an opposition day before the end of the present session in order to have it acknowledged that divorce also cannot be recognized? If one sticks to official church doctrine, divorce is something reprehensible.

Hon. members can see where this type of argument, which seeks to limit the debate to religious considerations, can lead. My point is that if men and women make a commitment to a union, provide each other with support, are together and are happy together in a free-will arrangement, if they share assets, if they have a family home and define themselves as a family—what is termed common repute—then in my opinion there is no reason whatsoever not to recognize a marriage between two men or two women.

If the principal spokespersons of the gay community were here right now—which, as hon. members may know, means the gays in three major centres, Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal—I believe they would agree with me that this is not an important debate among them, that it is not a demand being made by the gay community. The fact remains that it is discriminatory to deny people access to the institution of marriage and to recognize it as the sole prerogative of the heterosexual community.

Routine Proceedings

I hope that along the way we will understand and once and for all the Reform Party members will rise in the House and admit that their arguments are based on religious beliefs, which I respect. However, religious beliefs cannot be included in a bill because any reference to God has to be in the plural. Religion is a system of symbols that help us to understand the world.

As parliamentarians, we are well aware that the days of religious monolithism are gone. The God of the member for Hochelaga—Maisonneuve is not the God the Reform Party member might invoke. It is not the God that certain of our Muslim colleagues or some of our colleagues from other religious denominations might call on.

It is therefore not our place, as parliamentarians, to try to limit debates to religious considerations given that religion is a question of pluralism. If we set this argument aside there is no reason not to recognize marriage and not to open this institution up to same sex couples.

The solemnization of marriage remains a provincial jurisdiction. The basic conditions are the prerogative of the federal government.

If the Reform Party had wanted to make a useful contribution, it should have asked the House to vote on a motion to put marriage back under the jurisdiction of the provinces, which are much closer to any matters related to the family and family policy. I think that would have been as useful a debate as the one moved today.

• (1820)

[*English*]

Mr. Peter Adams: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. There has been consultation among the parties, including a meeting of the House leaders, and I think you would find unanimous consent for some travel motions.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault): Is there agreement in the House?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*English*]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

Mr. Peter Adams (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I move:

That eight members of the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food be authorized to travel to Paris, Brussels and Strasbourg from October 9 to October 16, 1999, in order to conduct some pre-World Trade Organization (WTO) consultations on

Supply

agriculture with their European counterparts and that two staff members do accompany the committee.

(Motion agreed to)

ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Peter Adams (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I move:

That Monique Hébert, Research Officer of the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development, be authorized to travel to Toronto, Ontario from June 21 to June 23, 1999, for the purpose of participating in the Conference on: "A Tactical Briefing on the New Canadian Environmental Protection Act (C-32)".

(Motion agreed to)

FINANCE

Mr. Peter Adams (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I move:

That, pursuant to Standing Order 83.1, in relation to the prebudget consultations, the members of the Standing Committee on Finance be authorized to travel to Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto, Halifax and Quebec City during the fall of 1999 to hold regional conferences and that the necessary staff do accompany the committee.

(Motion agreed to)

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Mr. Peter Adams (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I move:

That five members of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts and three staff persons travel to Quebec City to attend the Twentieth Annual Conference of the Canadian Council of Public Accounts Committees from August 29 to August 31, 1999.

(Motion agreed to)

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

SUPPLY

ALLOTTED DAY—MARRIAGE

The House resumed consideration of the motion and of the amendment.

Mr. Jason Kenney (Calgary Southeast, Ref.): Madam Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for Hochelaga—Maisonneuve for having made an important intervention in this debate and for the passion of his convictions. He has made a special contribution by demonstrating disagreement, contrary to the assertion of the hon. attorney general who said this morning that there will be no disagreement inside this House on this point.

Could the hon. member clarify for me that he does intend to oppose this motion because he supports the idea of changing the current legal definition of marriage to make it possible for those other than heterosexual relations? Will he be opposing this motion and will his party be supporting or opposing the motion? I would like to understand what they intend to do.

Does he not agree as he started with his remarks that this is a subject worth debating? Although he and I may disagree on the conclusion, would he agree this is a subject appropriate for public debate in this parliament?

[Translation]

Mr. Réal Ménard: Madam Speaker, I began by saying that I was very happy to have this debate. The credit goes to the Reform Party for proposing it.

However, I believe fundamentally that there are no reasons beyond religious considerations that may not be included in a bill. I believe that there are no reasons why the institution of marriage, a social construction existing in laws and in the civil code, should not now be open to homosexual couples.

• (1825)

I do not believe that it exists as a divine right. I believe it is also an intervention of the lawmaker. If it were not the case it would make no sense for the Reform Party to be proposing a motion such the one before us now.

We are indeed happy to have this debate and we do believe this should be discussed among parliamentarians. However, I hope that, with vigour, parliamentarians will reject this motion.

[English]

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, Ref.): Madam Speaker, I have been waiting all day for a chance to make a few comments. I realize a lot of other people would like to do that. Perhaps we will have to extend the debate.

Some of the criticism we have received as Reformers is that there are more important things to talk about. We are talking about the family, the fundamental building block of society. It is necessary that we discuss this and send a clear signal to the courts.

I want to read from an article written by Lorne Gunter in the *Edmonton Journal*. The title is "Cohabitation costly for the taxpayer". He wrote:

—studies consistently find that 80 to 85 per cent of couples who start out by living together fail to make it through life together. Among couples who never lived together before wedding one another, the failure rate is under 20 per cent. Still, what gives anyone else the right to suggest common-law marriages are wrong? Just one thing: the cost of cleaning up the wreckage. Children whose parents' relationship breaks down are much more likely to underachieve at school and in life. They are nearly twice as likely to drop out, and girls are nearly three times as likely to get pregnant before leaving their teens and far more likely to have abortions. Suicides are higher, illegal drug use is greater and the incidence of 'getting into trouble with the law' is nearly six times more. Simple marital breakdown is the leading cause of social problems, perhaps the leading cause. So because common-law relationships

are so prone to breakdown they contribute disproportionately to the social ills that everyone must live with and subsidize.

In other words, we are talking about the family. We are talking about children. We are talking about the fundamental building block of society, not all the other things that people are trying to bring into this discussion.

[Translation]

Mr. Réal Ménard: Madam Speaker, I would first like to reassure the member that I was not born on the planet Mars, but rather in a family I visit frequently, that loves me and that I love and with whom I have a growth and affectionate relationship that is very important.

I do not see the rationality of his remarks. I think that whether a person is homosexual or heterosexual we are all born in a family. When the member comes out without much warning and says that marriage is the main cause of divorce, I think there would be broad consensus in the House for accepting that.

I think there is a problem with his definition of family. I would be grateful if he allowed our colleague from Scarborough Southwest to ask me a question. I know he has a lot of expertise, not on gay issues but on the question of marriage.

[English]

Mr. Tom Wappel (Scarborough Southwest, Lib.): Madam Speaker, despite the hon. member's previous comment which of course was unnecessary, I do want to compliment him for his passion on this issue. I know that he has very serious concerns in this matter.

I want to compliment him in particular because he has been consistent throughout his entire career here in the House of Commons in his position that this is the place to decide these issues. He has consistently indicated that it is the House of Commons that is to decide these issues, not the courts of Canada. I want to applaud him for that because he has been very consistent on it and I agree with him completely on that issue.

I want to ask him very clearly because he did not give an answer to the hon. member for Calgary Southeast. The official government position is that the term marriage is defined as the union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others. I would say that his speech was the perfect reason that we have to vote on this motion this evening.

I ask him very clearly, if the government's position is that the definition of marriage is clear in law, does he accept that law?

• (1830)

[Translation]

Mr. Réal Ménard (Hochelaga—Maisonneuve, BQ): Madam Speaker, I do not believe that one can say that just because a

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definition exists in the text of a law that definition is permanent and the fact that it is in the legislation prevents any contemplation of doing otherwise. That is what is called evolution.

There were no employment insurance benefits in the law 115 years ago. Now, however, there are. The right to divorce did not exist 90 years ago. Now it does.

What I am saying is that I agree with my colleague that this is a debate we need to engage in, but I do not agree with him that the institution of marriage must be exclusive to the heterosexual community. I think it must also—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault): I regret to interrupt the hon. member.

It being 6.30 p.m., it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the motion.

[English]

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Amendment agreed to)

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault): The next question is on the main motion as amended.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion as amended?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault): In my opinion the yeas have it.

And more than five members having risen:

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault): Pursuant to Standing Order 81(18), the recorded division stands deferred until 10 p.m.

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. When we were discussing the amendment, I heard two or three no votes.

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The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault): I am afraid I really did not hear any noes at that time.

* * *

MAIN ESTIMATES, 1999-2000

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 1—PARLIAMENT

Hon. Don Boudria (for the President of the Treasury Board) moved:

Motion No. 1

That Vote 1, in the amount of \$30,051,000, under PARLIAMENT—Senate—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2000 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

● (1835)

He said: Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to respond to the motion before the House and the objection raised by some hon. members in connection with the vote for the Senate program expenditures for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2000.

I would like to use the time I have been given to try to expand the debate and to describe the context surrounding this initiative by the government.

First, I think we need to draw a distinction between two aspects of the debate: On the one hand, the place of the Senate within our parliamentary system and, on the other, the financial requirement in connection with the exercise of that role. It is one thing to promote the improvement or even the abolition of the Senate, but the issue before us today is rather whether the Senate ought to obtain the moneys it needs to fulfill its mandate under the constitution.

In other words, I think it would be wrong to block this vote simply because one favours improving or, even for those who want that, abolishing the Canadian Senate. Let us all agree on one thing. The current Senate is an institution which has its foundations set down in the constitution and is therefore fundamental to the functioning of the Parliament of Canada. It has a constitutionally mandated role to play. Therefore, it must have the resources it needs to fulfil that role.

The Senate, in its current form, may not be the most popular there is within our system of government in the eyes of some. It is easy for members to sidetrack the debate with knee-jerk speeches about its usefulness and its legitimacy. It may be that changes could be made to the current Senate so as to enhance its legitimacy and make it more representative. My party has advocated such changes in the recent past.

Nevertheless, there is now, and I do not think it is any secret, no consensus as to what those changes should be and how they should

be made neither among Canadians nor within parliament. In the meantime, the Senate must continue to fulfil the role it has been assigned, and it is the government's role to ensure that it has the means to do so and that includes an adequate supply process.

I am not surprised by the criticism that has been made by some hon. members who have opposed this vote. For those who feel that the current Senate is ineffective, any vote for the Senate expenditures, no matter what the amount, will always be for them too much. It is easy to question the relevance of a vote for the Senate program expenditures, but it must be emphasized that these votes are essential for our parliamentary system to function and that the members of the House have a responsibility to concur in them.

Our government has made modernizing our federation one of its top priorities. We have made our system of government more efficient in many areas and have ensured that government programs and co-operation agreements concluded with our provincial partners better serve the interests of the community. Indeed, co-operation between the two orders of government is an inherent part of our system of government.

I am dwelling on this aspect of the debate because the reason the hon. members have opposed this vote is because they believe the Senate ought to be reformed or abolished. We all know that there is no consensus on this issue among Canadians, as I have already stated. Furthermore, the issue can be resolved only through a constitutional amendment. You don't amend the Senate by cutting the supply. Few members of the House can seriously claim that the current context lends itself to such an initiative of amending the constitution.

More specifically, under section 42 of the Constitution Act, 1982, reforming the Senate would require the consent of at least seven provinces representing no less than 50% of Canada's population. That is the prerequisite. It is not cutting supply.

● (1840)

To then abolish the Senate, for those who think that is a proper course of action, the government would likely have to comply with section 41 of the Constitution Act, which requires the consent of the House of Commons, the 10 provincial legislative assemblies and the Senate itself which would have to vote itself out of existence. That is the prerequisite for doing that under our constitution.

I do not think I am going out on a limb in saying that the constitutional debate is not a priority for Canadians today. I was in my riding all last weekend and amending the constitution was not the favourite issue raised by my constituents. They had many other topics in mind. A grand total of zero people have raised it with me in the last several months. I think we can all agree that this is not a scenario that could be really taken seriously in the short term.

Our government is not opposed to Senate improvement, but we have to be realistic and operate in the context of how things really

are. In terms of constitutional amendments, when the population has asked for those we have provided and have accommodated that, be it the issue of schools in Quebec, the issue of amending the Constitution to recognize the linguistic duality of New Brunswick, even the school situation in Newfoundland and several other such changes that had to be made.

[*Translation*]

The program expenditures in the main estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2000 total \$30,051,000. This may perhaps strike the members with objections to the allocation of credits as a lot, but I would ask them what other choice does the government have under the circumstances?

If the Senate seems to them to be an inefficient institution, and they have every right to think so, how does restricting the credits it needs to operate render it any more efficient? Of course, the answer is obvious.

I will go still further. This debate provides me with the opportunity to rectify certain points. The Senate, in its current form, already fills an important role, which too many of our citizens are unaware of. The Senate committees perform an important function in our legislative process by clarifying and improving legislation from the House of Commons.

We need only think of Bill C-49, which was before the House on Friday last and which will come back in a few days. The Senate has made some constructive amendments, and we all realize it, if we are prepared to admit it.

The changes proposed by the senators to these bills have frequently improved them. I have just given one example. Our Senate colleagues' contribution in clarifying certain laws means time saved for the courts. This too must not be forgotten.

All too often parliamentarians say that it is the role of this House to legislate not that of the courts. We have a House that helps us legislate and clarify the law and some people want to abolish it. The effect of this would probably be to transfer even more powers to the courts, which we say every day that we do not want.

A number of senators have vast experience in varied fields, such as law, the world of business, public administration and so on. I am thinking of people such as Senator Eugene Whelan who will retire in a few days. He is an eminent Canadian who served as minister of agriculture for many years. He is a parliamentarian with three or four decades of experience. This is the calibre of people they are. There is also Frank Mahovlich, a world famous personality and a member of the Senate. Senator Wilbert Keon is a doctor with a worldwide reputation.

I have named only a few. This is the sort of person who represents us in the other place. We must not forget it either.

Supply

• (1845)

The experience of these senators becomes very important for all Canadians when it comes to crafting legislation that is a faithful reflection of Canadians' needs and aspirations. Obviously this cannot be readily measured, but one thing is certain and that is that it is part of the legislative process and part of our reality in Canada.

Furthermore, on several occasions senators have been called upon to look specifically at such problems as poverty, unemployment, inflation, the status of the elderly and science policy. There is even a Senate committee that is studying monetary issues right now, and the list goes on. The reports these studies produce have had an impact on the resulting legislation.

Since we are now debating the granting of supplies to the Senate, I would even go so far as to say that these studies have enabled Canadians to realize important savings since they have made it unnecessary to establish royal commissions of inquiry. God knows how expensive these commissions can be, I remember some. The senators are already being paid, already have staff and, most important of all, they have an extensive institutional memory. They have contributed much to this process and will continue to do so.

[*English*]

In conclusion, I would like to ask the House to support the estimates of the other place.

[*Translation*]

The government's position on Senate reform is simple. We support the idea of such reform but when the circumstances are right, when there is first of all a consensus to that effect among Canadians and when all partners in our federation are resolved to move ahead with such a project.

We also believe that such a reform must be carried out in a comprehensive and considered manner, not piecemeal and certainly not on the fly as certain opposition parties too often suggest in the House.

In the meantime, our government is pursuing the same policy, one of common sense. It appoints as senators people recognized for their competence, people wishing to contribute with us to the well-being of Canadian society.

[*English*]

Hon. Lorne Nystrom (Regina—Qu'Appelle, NDP): Madam Speaker, I have a couple of questions for the government House leader who appears to be running for a position in the Senate with the speech he made today.

He says that there is no consensus on the Senate issue. I want to say that he is right in one way but I think he is wrong in the other way. I want him to concede that tonight.

Supply

There is a division in the country as to whether the Senate should be reformed or abolished. According to the polling it is roughly 50:50. According to the polling, only about 5% of the people support the existing Senate. About 95% think the existing Senate is not the proper institution for a democracy. I want to know whether or not the minister recognizes the reality that about 5% of the people support the existing Senate.

The minister also talked about giving the Senate supply. The Senate got an extra 10% last year. This year it wants another 6.1%. That is 16.1% over two years.

I look across at the minister in charge of homelessness and ask her whether or not her budget was raised 16.1% over two years for the homeless in the country. I know it has not. I know she is struggling in cabinet for money for the homeless.

Let us look at the health budget, the education budget, the agricultural budget or any other budget. None of them have been raised by 16.1% over two years. My friend from Sarnia tells me that the budget of the House of Commons is going up by around 2% this year. The Senate wants three times as much as what is going to the House of Commons.

Since the minister is responding tonight on behalf of the government on the very important issue of the other place, how can he possibly justify an increase of 16.1% over two years?

• (1850)

I want him to answer that question and to admit today that there is a consensus in the country that the other place is not working and is a blight on democracy. It is not elected. It is not accountable. It is not democratic. Over 90% of the Canadian people do not support the existing Senate. The debate is what to do with it. However they do not support the existing Senate. There is a consensus on that.

Hon. Don Boudria: Madam Speaker, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. member to two points. The second point he raised was about the issue of supply, the amount that we are voting tonight. The hon. member talked about the increases this year and last year. He forgot about the decrease the year prior because it is not convenient for his argument.

When the hon. member talks about increases perhaps he should remember that there were decreases in the past. He made a comparison between the two houses of parliament. If he goes back over the last number of years he will find that his argument is inaccurate.

He raised a question on another facet of supply with respect to what this money will be used for. I remind the hon. member across the way that a portion of it is the increase that we voted on in the House regarding the compensation for parliamentarians in both houses. I will not reflect upon that vote. We voted and that is done.

Once we vote for something we have to furnish the funds to accommodate that on which we voted. It sounds like a rather elementary proposition.

The next part of that component is the one involving the collective agreements of the employees. I know that the NDP is not always together with the unions. Sometimes they have differences. In this case there is one.

Perhaps the hon. member thinks that the employees of the Senate, having duly signed a collective agreement, should not get their paycheques. He can take it up with the union people. That is his privilege. Meanwhile he will know that those two expenditures, one that we voted on in the House and the other being the collective agreement of the employees, form the majority of the increase. He knows that. I have told him that in answers in the House on several occasions.

His first proposition was about reforming the Senate. He said that many Canadians would prefer if senators were chosen differently than the way they are now. Me too. What is the point? The point is not whether the hon. member and I want to choose senators differently. The point is that he wants to abolish the Senate and I would like to see it elected.

Some provinces want the Senate abolished. Some want it elected. Some want to change the number of senators a jurisdiction has and so on. Some members across the way say they want a triple E Senate. They want the same number of senators for P.E.I. as for British Columbia. They have a right to think that way. I do not happen to think that is proper and equitable.

There has to be some other mechanism of arriving at that. Every province in Canada has a different definition of what that should be. The provincial premiers cannot agree among themselves on a proposition, and the hon. member knows it.

Yes, I agree with him. I would prefer to see senators chosen by another system when the constitution is amended. That is not the point. The point is until it is amended there is only one way of naming senators, and that is by the Prime Minister choosing them and choosing high calibre people, which he does all the time.

Mr. Rob Anders (Calgary West, Ref.): Madam Speaker, since 1993 there have been 34 appointments by our current Prime Minister to the Senate and there are currently four vacancies. That makes for a total of 38 seats. If there were an election in 2001, another 14 seats would be available for a total of 52, the majority of seats in the Senate since the Prime Minister has taken office.

• (1855)

What has changed since some of these quotes were made? The first one reads:

I...support Senate reform. If it is done properly, a restructured and revitalized upper chamber can give Albertans a voice in the governance of Canada. If elected Liberal

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leader, I pledge to work for a Senate that is elected, that has legislative powers of its own, and contains strong representation from all regions of Canada.

That was at the Liberal leadership on June 23, 1990. The next one reads in part:

—a reformed Senate is essential. It must be a Senate that is elected, effective and equitable.

That appeared in *Hansard* of September 24, 1991. The next one reads:

The Liberal government in two years will make it (Senate) elected. As Prime Minister I can take steps to make it happen.

This was in a speech to 400 delegates at the annual general meeting of the Alberta branch of the federal Liberal Party in 1990. The next one reads:

You want the triple E Senate and I want one too.

That was a statement on February 2, 1990 to the *Toronto Star*. The next one reads:

As I said before, and repeat, reform of the Senate is extremely important. I believe in it.

That can be found in *Hansard* of May 14, 1991. On February 1, 1997, the next one is:

If he names him (Senator Stan Waters) that's the end of appointed senators who are not elected.

The last one reads:

I know that in western Canada they were disappointed that there was not, there's the Senate, because they wanted to have an equal Senate and an elected Senate and I thought it was a good thing to do.

That was on *CBC Prime Time News* on December 29, 1992. Those are all quotes from our current Prime Minister. What has changed?

Hon. Don Boudria: Madam Speaker, I agree with everything the hon. member has just said. He has quoted the Prime Minister so obviously I agree with what he just said.

The Prime Minister has been quite forthright. He says that he favours Senate reform. The hon. member across the way has just told us what the Prime Minister said in 1991 about an equitable Senate.

I campaigned on that in 1992, door to door in the rain, trying to get people to vote for the Charlottetown accord. In my riding we won it by almost 65%, the largest majority outside Quebec from Ontario all the way to the west coast of Canada.

Where was the hon. member and his colleagues? They were working against trying to get that Senate reform at the same time as I working for it.

Mr. John Solomon: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order to ask for unanimous consent to allow the government House leader to accept one more question, if possible.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault): Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. John Solomon (Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre, NDP): Madam Speaker, I appreciate the co-operation of the government House leader in this regard.

When I was a candidate in the 1993 election I went door to door with a petition calling for the abolition of the Senate. At that time I received about 39% of the vote. Some 99% of the people to whom I spoke on doorsteps over a six month period signed the petition, even though most of them did not vote for the NDP at that time.

I want the government House leader to understand that this is a very serious issue with respect to the Senate and the supply of money to the Senate.

Part of this supply will go toward the pay expenses, travel expenses and benefits of two senators, Senator Bernston and Senator Cogger who are convicted felons. How long will the government support paying salaries and expenses to these two convicted felons?

Will it allow this happen for two years as in Mr. Cogger's case, or three, four or five more years? Or, will the government take some action to at least suspend them and suspend all pay and benefits until such time as the long appeals which could drag out for years and years take place?

• (1900)

Hon. Don Boudria: Madam Speaker, the first question the hon. member raised was the issue of abolishing the Senate. I fundamentally disagree with the proposition of abolishing the Senate. As far as I am concerned, improving the Senate, electing it and all of these things, once we can get that consensus in Canada, is the right approach. Abolishing it outright is a different story. Personally I do not favour that. We would be the only federated country on earth without a bicameral legislature and that is wrong.

The hon. member across the way has just suggested a proper comparison is Russia. Let the facts speak for themselves.

On the other issue the member raised of whether it is the position of the government to protect, or whatever words he used, two Conservative senators, and I will leave out the other expletives, that is not for me to say. The courts, the appeal process and so on will deal with that. As to whether I support Conservative senators, I do not support Conservative anything, let alone Conservative senators so that should be quite clear.

If the hon. member wants to ask the leader of the Conservative Party if he thinks the members of his caucus should no longer be members of his caucus, he is quite free to do that. Of course he will have to do that outside the House because the leader of the Conservative Party does not sit in the House at the present time and

Supply

perhaps never will, I do not know. That is a matter to be taken up in another forum, in the lobby or some other place, but obviously not in the House of Commons at the present time.

To repeat, I do not favour abolishing the Senate. I favour improving it. That is what I believe Canadians want. Do I favour Conservative senators, MPs, Conservative period? No.

Mr. Rob Anders: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

I would like to ask unanimous consent to extend questions and comments for 10 minutes since we have the rare privilege of debating with such a respected and knowledgeable minister in the House.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault): Is there unanimous consent to proceed in this way?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

Mr. John Williams (St. Albert, Ref.): Madam Speaker, I will get this speech under way.

I would like to acknowledge the eloquent defence of the Senate by the government House leader, but unfortunately it was not just a defence of the Senate, it was a defence of the status quo, do nothing Liberal government. We already heard in speeches by the Prime Minister how he was going to do something about the Senate. Now that the Liberals are in power, they do nothing about the Senate.

We have to go all the way back to 1867, to the time the constitution of Canada was written and which we are unable to change because of circumstances that seem to be beyond our control. There are two things about the Senate. It is not elected and every Canadian knows that. The other thing the constitution has required of senators since 1867 is that they be able to demonstrate a net worth in excess of \$4,000. That is nothing today, but in 1867 \$4,000 was a heck of a lot of money. If candidates could not come up with \$4,000, they could not sit in the Senate. That was the magic dividing line between the commons, which is everybody, and the elite, the powerful, the moneyed who could sit in the other place.

When the constitution was written in 1867 it was modelled on the example of Westminster in London, England. It had the House of Lords, the aristocracy, the rich, the powerful, the people who inherited the money from generation to generation and the House of Commons, the plebes who had to struggle to survive under the leadership of the aristocracy.

The aristocracy said they did not mind giving most of the power to the House of Commons, but they wanted the sober second thought. They were basically saying "If they stomp on us too hard, we are going to slow them right down, if not put a stop to it. We do not mind the House of Commons thinking it has all the power, but

sober second thought means if it is going to trample on us too much, we will shut it down".

● (1905)

The Senate is this age old tradition of the aristocracy, the rich and the powerful keeping a short leash on the rest of the country. That is the reason we in the Reform Party say things have got to change.

I was glad to hear the government House leader say that he is all for an elected Senate. This has got to be called progress. We now have an admission by someone on the government side right here in the House on the record saying that he favours an elected Senate. I can see by the smiles on the other side that perhaps they do not all agree. We know where the NDP comes from. Progress may be glacial in its speed, but progress is being made.

The Senate needs reform. The government could provide the impetus for reform if it wanted to. Obviously, while the rhetoric of the Prime Minister says he would like reform, he has no intention of instituting reform, hence the impasse. The Reform Party has said let us move on Senate reform. The government talks about Senate reform. The NDP says to abolish the Senate. Maybe one day we will make progress.

The Senate is one area where a lot of money is wasted, but there are other areas where money is wasted. I can think of no finer example of waste than the National Film Board. The National Film Board makes all kinds of films, some about the Senate, some about other things.

I published a waste report today. It is available on the Internet. I do not have my website address here, but the report is available on the Internet and if anybody wants to get a copy of it they can find it.

I brought out some interesting little things on how the National Film Board spends taxpayers' money. We are talking about taxpayers' money today as this is the business of supply. In the House of Commons later on this evening we are going to vote on about \$160 billion worth of spending. We started the debate at 6:30 p.m. and we will be wrapping it up at 10:00 p.m. In three and a half hours we are going to get the job done, all \$160 billion. There will be close, analytical inspection. Every dime is going to be checked over in three and a half hours, if you can believe that, Mr. Speaker. I do not.

Let us look at a couple of things at the National Film Board. *Democracy à la Maude*, a profile of Maude Barlow and her crusade for social justice and economic sovereignty as the head of the 100,000 member Council of Canadians. We spent \$288,336.52, do not forget the cents, on a profile of Maude Barlow.

The 100,000 Canadians who belong to the Council of Canadians are going to say this is great stuff. But for every member of that organization, I am quite sure I could find 10 others who would say it is a waste of money, which is why I put it in my waste report

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because I let Canadians judge. It is their money that is being spent. When I ask them if this is good value for money, or is it a waste of money, they say it is a waste of money.

What else do we have in here? *And So To Bed*. We spend a lot of time in our beds, not all of it sleeping, but I am not going to get into that debate. We spent \$249,007.75, do not forget the \$7.75, on a delightful look at the evolution and the history of the bed. I have to admit that I have not seen the movie, but if we are going to take a delightful look at the evolution and the history of the bed without talking about what people do in the bed, I do not know what is in this movie, but my imagination starts to go on a little bit, especially when we have been talking about same sex benefits and everything else recently in the last few weeks. There has been Bill C-78, same sex benefits and conjugal relationships, and now we have beds. When we bring it all together our imaginations can run riot.

An hon. member: Tell us more.

Mr. John Williams: He wants to hear more. Perhaps I should not. You will shut me down for being unparliamentary.

How about *Frank the Wrabbit*. This is interesting. We must not let our imagination run off here. This is a film about how humans and rabbits formulate and justify beliefs. How much? \$194,855.30.

• (1910)

How about rats. We will go from rabbits on to rats. *Rats*, a film about people who in some capacity are linked together by rats. The film explores the netherworld of the sewers in Toronto seen as a metaphor for the unconscious. Great stuff. The National Film Board was so enthusiastic that it threw \$140,000 behind this effort.

I have not found a Canadian yet who agreed with the National Film Board, but that is how the money is being spent and it goes on.

Strange Invaders, a portrayal of a happy couple who feel blessed by the sudden arrival of a small child—is that not wonderful—until they realize the child is an alien from outer space. Trash. Absolute, unadulterated trash which cost us \$71,135.

Then we are back into pornography. A few weeks ago we had *Bubbles Galore* which cost us \$55,000. The movie did win an award. It won the best film award at the Freakzone International Festival of Trash Cinema. It is right up there as the worst of trash or the best of trash, whichever way one wants it.

Now there is *Stolen Moments*, a film which combines the hidden aspects of lesbian history and of contemporary lesbian life and culture featuring well known lesbians for \$40,000 hard-earned Canadian taxpayers' dollars down the drain.

My waste report goes on.

In 1997 the auditor general published a report about the Small Business Loans Act. He said this was going to cost us big time. The reason it was going to cost us big time was that the Liberal government increased the amount of money a person could borrow to 100% of the cost of what the person was trying to buy. For example, if someone wanted to buy a large piece of equipment costing \$100,000, every prudent lender not just in the country but in the world would say "Put your money down and maybe we will help you to finance the rest". But no, the government said the lender would give the person 100% of the cash and he or she would not have to put in a nickel. It was that simple. Is this good business? It is going to cost the taxpayer a bundle.

In the province of Quebec a franchisor had this great idea about selling hot dogs. To set up a hot dog franchise, between \$25,000 and \$50,000 had to be paid for the privilege of getting the franchise right to sell hot dogs. The franchisor put this money in his pocket. He collected \$2.15 million, thank you very much, and he is gone. But the money he got had been borrowed from the bank and secured by the Small Business Loans Act. The taxpayer ended up paying over \$3 million. One has to wonder if this thing was even legitimate.

Prudent lending? We have to question the competence of the bank manager. Obviously the franchisor had got the measure of this bank manager and convinced him it was a hot deal for hot dogs. One branch alone gave out 30 of these franchises and they all went bad. We picked up the tab. The auditor general told us about it in 1997 and the fruits are coming home.

It goes on. There are computers with legs on them. In my last waste report I talked about computers with legs. Now we find that even if the computers disappear, even if we know that they are stolen, nothing happens. It is not even reported to the police. They only report it to the police when they have the criminal by the neck. When they know who the criminal is, they tell the cops to arrest the fellow. If they do not know who it is, they say "Well, we guess we do not know who it is". They do not want any disruption in the office by bringing in the police to say they are losing their computers.

We are paying for that. The taxpayers are paying for that. We are paying for the Senate. We are paying for this. We are paying for waste. We are paying for mismanagement. We are paying through the nose. The House leader gave a great and eloquent defence of the status quo, but we also have a great and eloquent defence of the status quo of mismanagement and waste when it could so easily be tackled.

Supply

• (1915)

This very afternoon in the public accounts committee, which I chair, we had officials of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development appear before us. The auditor general had pointed out some serious problems in that department, about how we are spending \$6 billion a year through the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Health Canada and so on, which is going right into the pockets of the first nations people. I have no problem helping them, but I would like to help them get up on their own feet.

When I read in the paper that some chiefs are collecting a salary in excess of \$167,000 a year, tax free, and the people they are supposed to govern have absolutely nothing, and DIAND does not seem to care about it, and they admitted as much in committee this afternoon, I get a little upset. That taxpayer money is going straight into the coffers of the people who are supposed to administer it on behalf of the people they govern. They are robbing them blind and taking it for themselves. It is criminal. It cannot be allowed to continue. Yet the Liberals continue to allow it. We wonder why we keep having to pay more and more money in that direction. We need accountability.

In democracy two fundamental things are openness and transparency, where the books and the records are open for public inspection. We have had the situation in the last few weeks with the Prime Minister and whatever has been going on with the grants and so on in his riding. Openness and transparency are absolutely fundamental to a healthy democracy.

I asked the departmental officials this afternoon why it is that the financial statements of these first nations reserves are not made public. I got the answer. It is because they may have a small proprietorship or business, or whatever, and when they prepare consolidated financial statements that contain, built in there somewhere, buried in the numbers, revenues and expenditures pertaining to private business, then the whole thing has to be kept under wraps. The Privacy Act prevails, which says it cannot be made public.

Yet when I asked them if they could not separate government from private business, as we do in the rest of Canada, as we do in the rest of the world, they said "Perhaps we could think about it so that we would be able to publish the financial statements of first nations which consider themselves to be government". DIAND considers them to be government, and yet DIAND tolerates a situation where their financial statements and records and mismanagement are kept under wraps because of one little quirk that could be fixed any time the government wanted. The status quo is disgusting on Senate reform, in the way the Liberals handle first nations, in the way they tolerate waste and mismanagement and in the way that the whole government conducts its business.

Back in 1995 when we were voting on supply, as we will be voting on supply later this evening, we had about 150 votes to go. We thought we were going to be here all night and well into the next morning. We reached a compromise with the government that we would form a committee to address the situation, to bring some

sanity and modern thinking, some accountability and governance into the management of the estimates.

The deputy whip, who was the chair of the committee, myself, a member of the Bloc and others worked on a committee and produced a report on the business of supply. It called for three fundamental things. First, that we as parliamentarians be given the right to move money from within a department from initiative *a* to initiative *b* if we felt that was appropriate because we are parliamentarians and we should have that kind of authority. We oversee government. Second, that we create an estimates committee to review on an ongoing, year round basis the estimates and the proposed spending of government. Third, that we introduce what is called program evaluation to look at the \$100 billion in spending that will not be voted on this evening.

• (1920)

Program evaluation asks four fundamental questions of all program spending. It asks what is the public policy that the program is trying to achieve, which is fairly simple and yet it does not exist. Canadians say they cannot believe that the public policy of programs is not articulated.

Second, it goes on to ask how well this public policy is being addressed. Once that is articulated we can measure it. However, the government does not want to measure it. It just thinks that as long as it blithely spends the money and throws money at the wall some will stick. Waste and mismanagement is everywhere. Surely we could make progress.

It goes on to say that we should look at the efficiency of program delivery. Can we achieve the same results in a different way?

After two years of hard work we finally got the government response to the committee's all-party suggestions and recommendations, which it dismissed out of hand and said "No, we cannot change. It is too much of an effort to change. We do not want to bring accountability into government. We do not want to have to answer to Canadians about how their money is being spent".

That is about the same response we had from the government House leader on his defence of the Senate. It was a defence of the status quo. The response to the business of supply was a defence of the status quo. "We do not want to change, even though we know how to change. We can change and we know that change will save billions of taxpayer dollars. It will give a more focused program delivery". The government says it does not even want to hear about it. It reminds us of the three monkeys: hear no evil, see no evil and speak no evil.

The government has the responsibility to manage the country. It has the responsibility to govern the country and it is abdicating that responsibility every day.

Supply

Hon. Lorne Nystrom (Regina—Qu'Appelle, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the hon. member who I know is very interested in making sure that the books are frugal, that they are well kept, that we do not waste money and so on.

I know that many in his party advocate the idea of a triple E Senate: elected, equal and effective. Prior to the Charlottetown accord a lot of us took a very serious look at that idea. Theoretically it is an interesting idea.

There was a compromise by the three parties in the House of Commons at that time that we advocate an elected Senate based on proportional representation. That went to the first ministers, who changed what we had recommended. They came up with a different formula for an elected Senate, which would have had some powers, but it would not have been very effective, and there was some equality in it. Of course, that was turned down in the referendum. It would have taken the unanimous consent of the provinces, in any event, to implement it.

The hon. member is a frugal man and wants to look after the public purse. We spend roughly \$60 million a year on the existing Senate. In all these years, try as we might, we have never had a solution and a consensus as to how we would reform the other place, which has to be done through the amending formula.

How long do we go on trying? It is a bit like the dog chasing its tail. When does it stop? It goes around and around in a circle, and every time it goes around we spend another \$60 million on a House that is not elected, not democratic and not accountable. In fact, the chairman of its internal economy committee would not even appear before the industry committee of the House of Commons to be accountable for the expenditures of the Senate.

With great respect to the ideas he has espoused in the past about a triple E Senate, how long would he suggest we keep on waiting before we try the other alternative of just abolishing it altogether and saving that \$60 million?

• (1925)

I think we may be stuck in the end with either the status quo, which we have had for over 130 years, or building a national consensus, which is growing toward abolition.

I remember during Meech Lake and even the Charlottetown accord that support for abolition, according to the polls, was around 21% or 23%. The hon. member from Sarnia is confirming that. About a year ago, it was about 45%. About 45% want to reform it but, again, people who want to reform it have all kinds of different formulae. Bert Brown wants triple E. Somebody else wants one E, which is elected. Somebody else wants the house of the provinces or the house of the federation. One may want more powers. One may want fewer powers. The hon. member from Calgary may want a mixture of powers. We could never find consensus.

How long do we let this dog chase its tail before we say "Let us put a stop to it"? The hon. member is a watchdog on finances and I anticipate his response.

Mr. John Williams: How long do we wait, Mr. Speaker? In the greater scheme of things, the Reform Party is a very young party, having been around for only 12 years.

The idea of Senate reform, by and large, started with the Reform Party, which brought it to the national stage and to the national agenda. In 12 years we have moved it from the idea that a few people agreed with to the national agenda.

As the House knows, our party has gone from being strictly an idea to today when it is sitting in the House as the official opposition. I know they are trembling over there because the day will come when we will trade places. At that time the hon. member from Qu'Appelle may find that he does not have to wait any more and that the time will have arrived for Senate reform.

Mr. John Herron (Fundy—Royal, PC): Mr. Speaker, I must say that I enjoyed, for the most part, the comments of my hon. colleague from the Reform Party in terms of what he was espousing, the concept of a triple E Senate.

With respect to having the upper chamber elected, for me that is a non-starter. If we asked, most Canadians would say that if there is going to be an upper chamber then it should be an elected chamber.

Mr. John Williams: He is a Tory.

Mr. John Herron: That is not exactly a unifying kind of comment that I am hearing from my hon. colleague. I am sure he actually shares some of the sentiments I am trying to express, so I would hope that he would give me the courtesy to be able to express those very concerns.

The hon. member believes that the origin of Senate reform started in 1987, out of the blue, and that nobody was even concerned with the fact that the Senate was not elected until 1987 when the Reform Party started. Would he think in his heart of hearts that there were possibly other individuals in this country who espoused an elected Senate prior to 1987? I would like to tell him that when I was in university I was one individual who espoused that.

Mr. John Williams: Mr. Speaker, we have to think about these non-starters. The Reform Party, as I said, coalesced opinion in the country to bring the idea of Senate reform to the public agenda.

The hon. member talks about the fact that he was on to Senate reform a long time ago, but his leader sat in the prime minister's chair in the House and did nothing about Senate reform. His party was in power numerous times in the past and did nothing about Senate reform.

Supply

The current Prime Minister is on record on numerous occasions before he became Prime Minister as saying that he advocated Senate reform, but he blithely forgets about it now.

As I said, we are making progress because now we have the government House leader also saying that he favours an elected Senate.

I know the hon. member for Regina—Qu'Appelle thinks that co-opting one government member every five years is pretty slow progress, and I have to agree, but if we change places I can see it moving a lot faster.

In response to the hon. member's comment, he has to be serious and recognize that the Reform Party raised the agenda of Senate reform.

Mr. Rob Anders (Calgary West, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to pose a challenge to my hon. colleague. I am going to cite two quotes and I am going to ask the hon. member to tell me who made these statements. A certain individual who sits in the House said on February 2, 1990 in front of a reporter with the *Windsor Star* and 600 people in Edmonton: "I am not interested in patronage because I am a Liberal". This same individual, on page 196 of a book entitled *Straight from the Heart*, published in 1985, said:

I didn't want to be trapped in making decisions on patronage, local contracts, and appointments that cause so much friction and bad blood.

• (1930)

I do not want to be too vague on this. I also want to say that this individual who sits in the House has appointed a former Liberal member of Parliament, William Rompkey; has appointed a former Liberal premier of Prince Edward Island, Catherine Callbeck; has appointed another former MP, Jean Robert Gauthier; has appointed former Liberal candidates in New Brunswick for the Liberal leadership race there; and, has appoint prominent people in the Trudeau cabinet. The list goes on to include prominent B.C. Liberal organizers who are golfing and business buddies of this individual who sits right across the House.

Now that I have given this information, I would like to see if the hon. member can guess who that individual is.

Mr. John Williams: Mr. Speaker, when one is on national television it is very hard to be posed with these very tough questions without any preparation whatsoever. However, I will make a stab at it. As members know, I did not grow up in this country so I do not know my history, but I think I know who the hon. member is referring to. Am I correct in saying that it is the member for Saint-Maurice, the Right Hon. the Prime Minister?

Mr. Rob Anders: It was that obvious.

Mr. John Williams: I got it right. Hallelujah, one for me.

Mr. Roger Gallaway (Sarnia—Lambton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, from the beginning of this evening we were told that this is not a debate about Senate reform or Senate abolition, and I agree. This is a debate about the supply motion. In about two and a half hours we are going to start voting on those supply motions. The first item we are going to vote on is the \$30,051,000 which is the allocation for the Senate of Canada.

We are being told that the Senate is a legitimate body. Legally, that is absolute correct. The Senate of Canada today is legally a legitimate body. It is half of the Parliament of Canada. The Senate of Canada today is politically an illegitimate body, and that is what is creating the clash here. There is a clash in a sense between the two solitudes, one at this end of the building called the House of Commons, and the other at the red chamber, the other place.

What we are being asked to pass judgment on today by voting for these estimates is, in my opinion, what is reasonable and what is correct. If we flash back 132 years, we will know that when the Senate was created it was created by the British parliament after negotiations with our Fathers of Confederation who were beholden to the British House of Commons.

Out of that process came two chambers, the Senate and the House of Commons, the Senate being the mirror image, or the clone of the House of Lords and being populated with the elite of this country, and that was true in 1867. The Senate was better educated, more worldly and more outward looking. By and large, senators were better off. That was very acceptable. They were socially and educationally legitimate and they were, in a sense, politically legitimate having regard to 1867. We were, by and large, a society which was trying to emulate in its governance the British system which had a House of Lords and a House of Commons. Let us consider that in 1867 the House of Commons, this very place, was populated by people who were less educated, were perhaps a little rough around the edges, were less outward looking and were in fact what we would call today very provincial people.

• (1935)

If we flash ahead 132 years, much has changed in the country. In 1867 it was thought that the Senate would be a check. It would be the brakes on the House of Commons. It would be the brakes on the excesses of the House of Commons. It would be the constitutional arbiter of the House of Commons because at that time, being a new country, we were beginning to explore what were the divisions of powers and what were the rights of the federal government versus the rights of the provincial governments. The Senate was there to be a constitutional court, a constitutional check on this place called the House of Commons.

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We had no supreme court in 1867. That would not come until the days of Alexander Mackenzie in the 1870s. We had very little in the way of checks on the House, and hence it was the Senate's job to do that.

We move ahead 132 years and what do we have? We have the Supreme Court of Canada which came into existence in 1949. Until that point, we still sent our appeals to the Privy Council in Great Britain.

We have a number of agreements which are checks on the House of Commons, such as agreements on federal-provincial relations in trade, NAFTA and the WTO. They are all checks on the House of Commons. For those who doubt that, I would invite them to look at Bill C-29 that was passed by the House and the Senate. It was thrown out because it was deemed to not be within the powers of the Parliament of Canada, in particular the House of Commons, because it offended federal-provincial agreements.

There are many checks today on the House of Commons, but I would suggest that the Senate is not one of them. As we know, the Senate today is less educated than the House of Commons. The Senate only works about 66 half days a year. Just this past week a local newspaper stated that the attendance record for senators at committee meetings versus members of the House of Commons were quite dismal. We have a rather dispirited group of people where history has passed them by. Political legitimacy has passed them by. However, they are still in a place where they have legal legitimacy. They are there and they have "a job" to do.

If we look at the history of the Senate of Canada, we will know that there has been but one change in that place in 132 years. That change was made by former Prime Minister Pearson in 1968 when it was deemed that senators who had originally been appointed for life would only be appointed to age 75.

If we compare that to what occurred in Great Britain in 1919, the British government moved to cut in half, some would say, the powers of the House of Lords. The House of Lords today is under full attack by the government of that country. There is massive change and it looks like they are going to disappear with time.

We have had this institutional stagnation in Canada, in particular in the other place, to the point where it is still legally correct and legally legitimate, but politically no one believes it.

We have heard reference to polls today. My colleague from Regina—Qu'Appelle referred to an Angus Reid poll earlier that says that about 90 to 95% of Canadians recognize that the other place is politically and totally illegitimate. Five per cent of people either do not know or are willing to accept it. I understand that.

If we go to the one big difference between the House of Commons and the other place, we will know that although the other

place has powers tantamount to this place, when it comes to the appropriation of dollars we have the exclusive domain. We know that last year the Senate year had a budget increase of a little more than 10%. We also know that the chair of the internal economy board in the other place has tabled a budget which calls for an increase this year of 6.1%. If members look at the actual document they will see that it shows \$30 million.

● (1940)

To follow up on a speech made by the government House leader earlier, he pointed out that we cannot do anything about some of this because we already voted for it. That is correct. That was the salary increase for senators, which was passed earlier this year, but that does not appear in the estimates and has nothing to do with the estimates. It is statutory requirements. The \$30 million we are talking about is the \$9,000 housing allowance that was voted on by senators for themselves for this year. That is \$9,000 to live in Ottawa, when they are only here for 65 or 66 days in total, and for the operation of the Senate.

We heard from the government House leader that the Senate had to raise the salaries for its staff, and we understand that.

If one looks at the estimates and at the speech, the only speech made in the Senate with respect to its budget—there was but one speech made in that place—we would see that it is not \$3 million going toward salary increases but about half of that. It is about \$1.5 million in salary increases. The other \$1.5 million is going into that black hole called services in the Senate.

The Senate estimates have eight headings, such as information and rentals. What does this all mean? I have no idea what it means. However, the fact is the House of Commons is the place that has to approve appropriations. Tonight we are being asked to blindly approve a 6.1% increase for the other place.

It is easy to say that senators are doing their job. I have no disagreement with that. They have a job to do and it is in our constitutional framework. It was set in stone in 1867. However, I think we can have a legitimate debate in the country on whether we are going to abolish the Senate, have a triple E Senate, or have a single E Senate. I totally agree with that and I think my position is well known.

However, are we to blindly approve a 6.1% increase because the other place has said that it needs the money? We must not put this into the context that because they have requested it we, in the House of Commons, must blindly give it to them. Let us put it in the context of what is reasonable, reasonable under current economic circumstances, reasonable in making a comparison to other sectors of the economy and reasonable in terms of what the Canadian public, who will ultimately pay for this, would say is the case.

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If we clearly look, we will see that nobody in the country is getting 6.1%. There is nobody in the country getting 6.1% save and except the Senate of Canada.

We should not talk about this being an all or nothing proposition. It is clearly not that. What the government House leader failed to point out is that there are three motions for amendment on the Order Paper. One of the motions calls for zero dollars for the Senate. The second one calls for zero dollars to the Senate. I understand both of these motions, but the third motion states that we should limit the Senate's increase to 2%, which would represent an increase of about \$1.5 million.

What are we looking at in the Senate? According to the chair of the Senate's internal economy board, the Senate needs about \$1.5 million to meet its budgetary increases in terms of employees. I think we can all understand and agree with that. People in the public service have certainly not had raises for a number of years. I do not think it is unreasonable to give them a 2% increase? I also do not think it is an issue that the Canadian public would feel offended by.

• (1945)

By and large I do not think anyone in the Canadian public will react to a 2% raise for employees whether they work on Parliament Hill or for someone else in the country, especially having regard to the history of limited increases for some time now.

However there is a big but that I want to emphasize and underline. Is 6% reasonable having regard to the fact that in the past year they had 10%? Is 6% reasonable, knowing full well that the chair of the internal economy board of the Senate has said that they are asking for 6.1% today but do not think it will be enough and will have to get more before the fiscal year is out?

Although I have said that the Senate is legally legitimate I think it is politically illegitimate. That is my opinion. If we cannot debate parliamentary reform in this place, I do not know where we can do it. If this is a body which is legally legitimate, which it is, should it not act in a reasonable fashion?

All Canadians ask is that their political institutions be reasonable. Should that place, which has a very limited function today, not send a signal? Should it not be a symbol? Should it not send a message to all Canadians that it understands money is hard to come by, that it has a constitutional obligation or duty to fulfil, and that it will do it in a fashion which does not increase the demands upon the public purse in an unacceptable fashion?

In many cases we get back to what I term as the test of reasonableness which comes from making comparisons with other sectors of the economy. I have noted that no one is getting this kind of increase whatsoever.

The Senate says it is doing its job. I think to a certain extent it has a function to perform. I learned earlier today that it has found strange ways of spending the \$30,051,000 that it requested and has already started to spend.

Earlier today I was pleased to participate in a demonstration in front of this building with colleagues from other parties in the House. I learned from certain media representatives that the Senate was concerned about the demonstration. In fact it was so concerned that it hired two public relations gurus to spin its story. Today the Senate of Canada used public money to spin its side of the story.

One would think that a legislative body which is under attack from all directions would try to be prudent, would try to be circumspect, and would change its behaviour in some way. I do not know. To find out today that questions being posed by reporters to those who participated came from media gurus or public relations and media relations agents which were hired by the Senate is an interesting, bizarre and pathetic set of circumstances. If that is the way that place uses its money, let us pull it back, recognizing that it needs some money to fulfil its constitutional obligation but not 6.1%.

We have the right in this place to pass judgment on appropriation. As noted earlier, the chair of the internal economy board of the other place refused point blank to appear before a House of Commons standing committee to answer some simple questions. His comment as reported in the press was "I account to the public" That is very easy to say but the public knows that is not the case in any way.

• (1950)

The same member of the other place has been quoted as saying that they do legitimate work and that they clarify and improve legislation from the House of Commons. Is it not interesting that when the Senate makes an amendment to a bill it is deemed to be a clarification issue or an improvement issue? Is it not interesting that we would allow a group of people who apparently are now a house of distinguished Canadians the right to pass judgment on what the elected officials have decided?

Is it not interesting that after 132 years we have all corners of the country crying out for change to this legally legitimate body? We can argue that change at another time. Yet it uses that institutional shield to protect itself from change.

I am not talking about profound change in the sense of downsizing. We cannot change its constitutional mandate. I am talking about change in terms of consumption of money, change in terms of being open to the public, change in terms of working with the House of Commons when it comes to its budget, and change in terms of answering the questions that the elected people will be asked to pass judgment on tonight. We are being told by the Senate

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that we have no choice. The appointed body will say that we will pass it or else. We will pass it or it will have a work stoppage.

It is a sad commentary that 132 years after Confederation we are still living in a society where the elected representatives of the people are being held hostage by a group of 104 people who have no political legitimacy. Therefore I ask members tonight, especially those in the Conservative Party, to seriously consider what they are doing when they vote for Senate appropriation.

Mr. John Solomon (Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to ask my Liberal colleague a question about the Senate. As he knows, the New Democratic Party supports the abolition of the Senate because it is unelected. As a matter of fact the people who occupy the Senate are friends of former prime ministers and the current Prime Minister.

Senators are appointed to age 75, and 104 of them and their staff spend about \$55 million a year. They have no accountability to anyone. They do not have to go to constituencies to report on what they have been doing on their behalf. They do not do much of behalf of people unless it is a very wealthy family or a very large corporation.

Has my Liberal colleague ever heard of someone by the name of Jim Balfour? Perhaps he could nod his head yes or no.

He has never heard of Mr. Balfour. We have a senator by the name of James Balfour who was appointed 20 years ago by Joe Clark. He was a friend of the then prime minister. He is a Conservative who comes from my home town in Regina.

I have been involved in the public community of Regina for 26 years and I have never met this person. Nor have any of the 6,000 people to whom I have talked. They have never heard of this guy who is a senator representing Saskatchewan, let alone Regina. Over the years Mr. Balfour has an attendance record of maybe 18% or 23% depending on the year we are looking at.

Does the Liberal member opposite, who also supports the abolition of the Senate, believe that there should be more accountability for the people who are there now? Perhaps they should go back to their cities and provinces on occasion to meet one or two people, at least once or twice a year, so that people know they are alive and maybe doing something progressive for the country.

Would the Liberal member comment on Mr. Balfour, the phantom senator from Regina?

Mr. Roger Gallaway: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from the NDP for his question. I must say that I have never heard of this individual. It is not my habit to comment on individuals from the other place.

• (1955)

I want to respond in general to his question. Let us look to other places, other parliaments that have had senates, houses of lords or like bodies. We are the only country in a parliamentary democracy which has an appointed body, save and except Malaysia, a great democracy, which has a strictly appointed upper chamber.

If we look at other parliamentary democracies we find that they are tied to performance. If one gets to the upper chamber by some appointment route or by the election route, it is tied to one's presence.

The House of Lords is identical to our Senate in terms of accountability. It has imposed that its members have to show up to get paid. Here they get paid and if they do not show up a little bit is taken off. In Britain, one who by accident of birth is in the House of Lords has to show up to get paid. It is tied to performance.

I recognize there are people in the other place who believe they represent their regions. I come from southwestern Ontario. For the last two years we have had a senator from southwestern Ontario. Southwestern Ontario is a very densely populated area. We have a senator who lives maybe 100 miles from me. He is a fine man. He is a nice gentleman. I like him and all that. It is nothing to do with him, but he no more represents the region than Senator Balfour does the region of southwestern Ontario.

Senators are today representative of what I believe to be special interest groups. It is nothing more, nothing less.

Mr. Rob Anders (Calgary West, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I had the honour today to participate in a rally on Parliament Hill with several of my colleagues, including the hon. member across the way.

I would like to pose a question to my hon. colleague. I remember having taken part in committee meetings with regard to the whole idea of accountability. I remember very well refusals by representatives from the Senate to speak to the accountability of that body.

Let us analyse it. Is the Senate accountable to the taxpayer? I do not happen to think so because I do not think taxpayers would approve a 16% budget increase over two years when the House of Commons gets 2% and generally government operations get 3%. I cannot think of anyone who would make such demands, especially under the circumstances when the Senate works 66 half days a year.

I then look at it in terms of whether or not the Senate is accountable to the House of Commons. According to the Senate it is not accountable to the House of Commons. That is one of the reasons it is willing to raise its budgets, not be accountable to anybody else, and say that it will go ahead and hold hostage the

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House of Commons and push for work stoppages in this place if we try to call it into question.

The Senate always likes to say that it is not accountable to the Prime Minister either. I could go through all the appointments various prime ministers including this current one have made, but once they are appointed they say they are no longer accountable to the Prime Minister.

I do not believe that the Senate is accountable to taxpayers. I do not believe the Senate is accountable to the House of Commons. I do not believe the Senate is accountable to the Prime Minister. To whom is it accountable?

Mr. Roger Gallaway: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Calgary West for that most interesting question.

I agree the Senate is not accountable to taxpayers. There is absolutely no question about that whatsoever. Is it accountable to the House of Commons? The senators have sent a message through the chair of the internal economy board of the other place that that individual would not appear before a standing committee of the House of Commons to explain the Senate budget, to in some way answer some very rudimentary questions about the budget tabled in the other place.

• (2000)

Are they accountable to the Prime Minister? I think the answer is no but we could argue about that. If we go back in time and look at the list of appointments, there are people who were appointed in the seventies. I do not know if there are any left from the sixties but certainly there are some from the seventies, the eighties and into the early nineties. Of course they were accountable to other prime ministers but they have come and gone.

The open ended question is are we going to put up with a body that is unaccountable and that continues to demand relatively large sums of money for rather obtuse purposes? I think my position on it is well known.

Mr. Rob Anders: Mr. Speaker, I pose another question to my hon. colleague. Can he think of another job, any job, where one would be able to work 66 half days a year and get a salary in excess of \$64,000 plus \$12,000 in an expense account and then over \$10,000 in a non-receiptable expense account, which basically amounts to a payout because no receipts have to be given for it? I would like my hon. colleague to let us know if he can think of any other job where somebody could enjoy for 66 half days a year those types of benefits, and more than that that someone could serve for one day—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): I am sorry, but the hon. member for Sarnia—Lambton is only going to have 30 seconds to think of that.

Mr. Roger Gallaway: Mr. Speaker, I know what the hon. member is saying in his question. The total benefit package for a senator in terms of cost to the public is about \$100,000 plus travel which includes 64 return trips and a VIA Rail pass. It is quite a large number of dollars. The answer is that the only other person in this country who probably has an equivalent lifestyle is someone who has won a very large lottery. That is the only person I can think of.

Hon. Lorne Nystrom (Regina—Qu'Appelle, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I will say a word or two about the motion before the House. We are being asked to vote tonight on a motion by the government to reinstate the spending estimates for the Senate of Canada for \$30,051,000. That is roughly half of what the Senate spends in a year. The other roughly \$30 million is in other votes that will be taken later on tonight. The Senate costs about \$60 million a year.

Mr. John Solomon: Over 10 years.

Hon. Lorne Nystrom: A year, and it goes up almost every year. Last year it went up by some 10%. The year before it went up by some 6%. That makes 16% over two years.

Mr. John Solomon: That is a lot.

Hon. Lorne Nystrom: That seems like a lot of money for the member for Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre.

It might be better if there were some system of accountability but what kind of accountability is there? Can the members for Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre, Calgary West or Sarnia—Lambton know how we are accountable for this money?

Tonight maybe a lot of people are channel flipping between hockey games and baseball games and are watching this debate. Sixty million dollars is being spent. The Liberal member across the way laughs, but tonight there is going to be a vote and he has to be accountable to his constituents on how he votes. Is he going to vote for spending \$60 million a year for that unelected undemocratic house?

• (2005)

There was a request by a lot of MPs to have Senator Rompkey, who is the chair of the internal board of economy for the Senate, to appear before the relevant committee of the House of Commons. He would not appear. He refused to appear to justify the estimates and the expenditures of the Senate of Canada.

Every department has to appear before the relevant committee of the House. The Ministry of Transport, the Ministry of Agriculture and Agri-Food, the CRTC, the Canadian Wheat Board, they all have to be there, except the Senate of Canada. Senator Rompkey said no that he was not accountable to the House of Commons, yet the House of Commons has to sign this blank cheque for the Senate of Canada.

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Even the member for Brandon—Souris, that famous Tory who supported David Orchard for the leadership, must be hanging his head in shame on this one. I can hear him rattling his head from this far away. Is he going to get up and say he is going to sign this blank cheque for the Senate of Canada? His constituents are watching as they flip channels tonight. They are watching.

Senator Rompkey refused to appear before any committee of the House of Commons. No senator has justified the expenditures. No senator has been willing to sit there and be cross-examined by members of parliament asking why they want to spend so much money on the salary for Senator Balfour, or on a restaurant, or on a tunnel, or on a fancy committee room, or for travelling the world to study boreal forests and so on. They are not doing that.

What Canadians should do is take out their pencils and paper because the Senate unlike the House of Commons has a toll free number. We do not have a toll free number but it has one. They should call a senator. The member for Sarnia—Lambton did not know who Senator James Balfour was. Phone him tonight. Give him a call. They can call a senator at 1-800-267-7362. Does the member for Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre remember that number? Can the member from Calgary remember that number?

That is what the Canadian people should be doing tonight and tomorrow. Pick up a phone and call their favourite senator. Ask why senators had a 10% increase last year, a 6% increase this year, a 16% increase over two years more than any government department received, more than the Department of Health for medicare, more than the educational system in this country, more than the salary increase the member for Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre was lobbying for. People should do that.

I am anxious to see how the House will vote tonight on this particular motion, including our Conservative Party friend from Brandon.

We had a little demonstration outside the Senate today. A member from the Reform Party, the Liberal Party, the New Democratic Party and the Bloc Quebecois organized a little rally. No one from the Conservatives was there. They did not show up. Their caucus is dominated by senators. They were not there. They have a lot of senators in that caucus. They could have been there protesting this huge cash grab by the Senate of Canada.

The time has come for members of parliament to reflect what their constituents are saying when it comes to the Senate. About 5% of the people support the existing Senate. The rest either want to abolish it or reform it, change it in some way. Members of parliament should be listening to what their constituents are saying and reflecting what their constituents are saying.

I challenge every member of parliament, including the member for Brandon—Souris, to go out and knock on doors in their ridings.

Ask the first 10 people on the street whether or not they support the existing Senate. Unless they run into a senator from Manitoba, the answer will be a resounding no. We should start reflecting that in the House of Commons and actually do in this place what the people of this country want us to do.

I also believe along with many others in the House that the Senate should be abolished. I also know there are members of the federal cabinet who would be on the record for talking about abolishing the Senate. The external affairs, constitutional affairs and industry ministers among others have spoken out at various times in the past about the abolition of the Senate.

● (2010)

The reason I am saying that is I have given up on the idea that we are going to reform the Senate. It has been tried ad nauseam year in and year out. We have had 132 years of the existing Senate. As the member for Sarnia—Lambton said, 132 years ago it was set up as part of our constitutional framework because we copied the model in Great Britain.

In 1867 the people elected the house of commoners. The people here were commoners. The aristocracy in those days thought there should be someone looking down on the commoners and keeping them in line. That was the House of Lords or the Senate in this country.

We have long evolved through that system where the commoners have to be looked upon and controlled by the aristocracy or the elite. We have come to the position now where there is no place for an unelected, undemocratic, unaccountable house. I believe we are never going to reform the Senate. There are many people in the Reform Party, some Liberals and some Tories who think we can still reform that place.

We can still have the equality of the provinces, with Prince Edward Island with as many senators as Ontario or as many senators as Quebec. Quebec has seven million people and Ontario has ten million. Prince Edward Island has 130,000 people. But we are never going to get an agreement that will call for the equality of all those provinces in terms of the configuration of a new Senate. I believe it is never going to happen.

We should go out across the country and campaign among the people of Canada. Between now and the next federal election we should campaign on the issue of abolishing the other place. Make it an issue in the next campaign. Force the people in all political parties to take a position on what they want to do with the Senate.

If we do that and we get rid of the other place we then have to reform the House of Commons and bring into this place many of the things the Senate was supposed to do. It was supposed to be a place for checks and balances. It was supposed to be a place to

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review legislation. That is obviously not happening in the other place.

We can do it here by strengthening parliamentary committees, by having fewer confidence votes, by having more free votes. We can do it by giving the committees of the House of Commons the power to initiate legislation, initiate studies and reviews. There can be better budgets for committees so they can set their own timetables, and they can actually timetable when legislation must come to the House of Commons.

It is also time to take away power from the executive, namely the Prime Minister. This is no criticism of any particular Prime Minister; it is a criticism of our system. The Prime Minister's office in Canada has immense power to appoint cabinet ministers, parliamentary secretaries, parliamentary committees, even though there is a so-called election in the committees. A lot of that power should be taken away.

We should also take away a lot of the power that the Prime Minister has in making major appointments to crown agencies. I think of the CRTC, the Canadian Wheat Board and many other agencies, boards and commissions. I also think of the Supreme Court of Canada and federal judges. I do not think the federal government should have the unilateral power to appoint federal judges to the Supreme Court of Canada.

In most of these cases the federal government should have the right to nominate someone it wants to nominate but it should go to the relevant committee of the House to have hearings and ratify or reject the nomination of the Government of Canada.

I came to that conclusion in about 1978 or 1979 when I saw the then Prime Minister, who happened to be Pierre Trudeau but it could have been anyone else including the member for Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre, appoint Bryce Mackasey as the head of Air Canada. Bryce Mackasey knew as much about Air Canada and aviation as I know about the Atlantic fishery, which is very little.

I did not meet a single Liberal backbencher in those days who supported the nomination of Bryce Mackasey, who by the way was and is a friend of mine and a very honourable gentleman. He is a very wonderful person. I am not criticizing him. But that was not the position he should have been appointed to.

I did not meet a single Liberal backbencher in those days who supported the nomination of Bryce Mackasey as the president of Air Canada. Of course it was a crown corporation in those days. But because of our parliamentary system, they were handcuffed. Their hands were tied. They could do nothing about it because it was the prerogative of the Prime Minister to appoint the president of Air Canada, just like the Prime Minister now appoints the president of the CBC who last time around happened to be another good friend, Perrin Beatty, who was a minister in the cabinet of Brian Mulroney.

In any event if we had had serious parliamentary reform in those days and the Prime Minister could have only made the nomination but the relevant committee, transport at that time, would have the right to have hearings and ratify or reject, Mr. Mackasey would never have been nominated by the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister would have known that Mr. Mackasey would never have survived those review and ratification hearings. There would have been a nomination by the Prime Minister of someone who would have been more able and capable to be president of Air Canada.

That is why we need some serious parliamentary reform. When we vote in the House of Commons to reject the estimates of the Senate, we do so knowing that we just cannot get rid of the other place and leave a vacuum and a vacancy but it is important to also reform the House of Commons. Bring the process of review and the process of checks and balances into the House of Commons itself.

• (2015)

I also believe that other powers should be taken away from the prime minister. There are many countries in the world, for example, where the prime minister or the president cannot set the election date unilaterally. I think we should look at that as well. Many countries do not give the right to their prime minister to set the election date. If we took that right away and had elections every three, four or five years, that would take a lot of power away from the prime minister.

I also think that we should have in statute set times for throne speeches and budgets so that we could have a timetable for those items as well, not in accordance with the wishes or the agenda of the prime minister, but in accordance with what is best for the country as a whole. We pretty well have the practice of setting the budget date in the month of February, but it is not in statute and we do not have set throne speech dates. If we did there would be a better planning process for the provinces, the municipalities, the school boards, the hospitals and so on.

I believe that these are some of the things we should be looking at as parliamentarians.

I want to make one final comment this evening, which is a bit more radical.

Mr. John Williams: Radical, from the NDP?

Hon. Lorne Nystrom: A bit more radical. I know the hon. member for Calgary West will support this, but I am not sure about the more frugal member for St. Albert.

I believe we should also be looking at incorporating the idea of at least some proportional representation into our electoral system so that we give a voice to all Canadians in the country, regardless of

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whom they want to vote for and where they come from. I have presented a private member's bill to this effect. This would give some regional representation to the central institution of parliament.

As a matter of fact, when Tony Blair reforms the British parliament the election after next, we will be the only parliamentary system in the world that does not have at least some PR mixed into our system. I am not talking about advocating a totally pure PR system like there is in Israel. I think we should have a mixed number proportional, where we have some members, maybe half or two-thirds, representing constituents. That would be topped up by members elected by PR in a very democratic way, where the party leadership does not choose the people who go on that particular list.

I say that because this House of Commons is supposed to be a reflection of the Canadian people. However, if we look at the composition of the House today, we have a majority government with the constitutional right to govern for five years. What vote did it get last time? It got 38%, with a turnout of about 67%. The turnout has been plummeting in the last 30 years. In 1968, 80% of the people voted. Last time it was 67%, largely because people asked "Why bother? Why waste my vote? Politicians do not listen. How I vote does not seem to make any difference". In many cases that is absolutely true.

Since 1921 we have only had two elections where a majority of the people voted for the government in power. They were in 1945 with Mackenzie King and in 1958 with John Diefenbaker. Brian Mulroney came close in 1984 with 49.7% or 49.8%. During that time we have had many majority governments and every one of them, except for those two, was elected by a minority. Really what we have is the tyranny of the minority in the House of Commons today.

We have other distortions in the House of Commons. The Reform Party and the Conservative Party got about 19% of the votes each. The Conservative Party got 20 seats and the Reform Party got 60 seats.

[*Translation*]

There are now 21 NDP members and 44 from the Bloc Quebecois. In the last election, the Bloc Quebecois obtained 11% of the vote and the NDP also obtained 11%.

[*English*]

We had the same vote as the Bloc Quebecois.

The votes are not reflected in the House of Commons in accordance with the way that the people of this country vote. Therefore, most people consider that their vote is wasted. Most Canadians voted for losing candidates. If we had a system of PR incorporated into the House there would not be a single lost vote in the country.

A person could, for example, vote Liberal in parts of the prairies where that party cannot win and that vote would still count. A person could vote NDP in southern Alberta and that vote would count. A person could vote Reform in Newfoundland and that vote would count. A person could even vote Conservative in Saskatchewan and that vote would count. I suppose that a person could vote for the Bloc Quebecois in British Columbia and that vote would still count, if there was a system in this country that had a measure of proportional representation built into it like every other parliamentary system in the world. Every other parliamentary system in the world has it except Canada.

I think these are some of the changes we need, some of the reforms we need. What we need in this country is big democracy. Allow the people in. Let the people's voice be heard. Let the people say what they want in this country. That is the way we should go.

● (2020)

Instead, tonight we are going to see the majority of this House vote another \$30 million for the unelected Senate, with no accountability, no election, no democracy. Does anybody agree with that? Why do they vote that way?

I want the member for Brandon—Souris to tell me why members of his party for 132 years have defended the status quo. I know they are Conservatives, but 132 years of the status quo? How in God's name can those members vote that way?

I know the member campaigned on behalf of David Orchard. It seems to me that he would be a bit of a rebel and would not be afraid to speak out and take a line that differs from Senators Balfour, Berntson, Cogger and everybody else in the Senate. I hope the member does that this evening in the House of Commons.

We need serious parliamentary and electoral change. We have to democratize our electoral system and democratize our parliamentary system. I hope that government backbenchers have the courage like the member for Sarnia—Lambton to advocate serious democratic change for the people of this country. If we do that we could make a real contribution to the new millennium and we could have a real democracy for the new millennium.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jean-Paul Marchand (Québec East, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I have a brief comment to make before asking my honourable colleague a question.

I recently mailed out in my riding 48,000 copies of a 16-page pamphlet containing a great deal of information on senators, with a breakdown of their income and benefits, and what they do in the Senate. In addition to being extremely well paid and having a multitude of benefits, they serve particular interests. Some even sit on the board of multiple corporations, as well as defending the interests of certain parties.

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The reaction in my riding was extremely virulent. Hundreds of people called up to ask “How can Canada allow an institution that is not representative, not elected and not accountable?”

In the pamphlet, I gave two phone numbers, one for the Senate, which I think is still connected, and the other for the PMO. They have been swamped with calls and the PMO line had to be disconnected. The Senate line may well follow suit before long if people keep on calling.

One of the points raised by the leader of the government in the House was that there were a great many constitutional problems relating to the Senate regulations. In this document, since we have the power to set the Senate’s budget, I propose that its budget be limited to \$1 per senator per year. This will encourage the senators to retire.

I would therefore ask my colleague if he finds that budget formula more acceptable than allocating \$30 million to the Senate.

Hon. Lorne Nystrom: Mr. Speaker, I agree with the member for Québec East. A unique way to abolish the Senate of Canada would be to reduce its budget from \$60 million a year to \$104, or \$1 per senator. With a budget of \$1 per senator, the Senate would be abolished de facto.

This would perhaps be a way of coming up with a solution that did not involve the Constitution of Canada or its amending formula.

● (2025)

I agree with him, and I think that our party does as well, if there is a way to do this without going through the lengthy process of amending our Constitution.

The problem with the Constitution is that we need unanimous consent to abolish the Senate and even to reform it. We need unanimous consent for a great many things. In other cases the section 42 formula applies. We then need the consent of two-thirds of the provinces representing 50% of the Canadian population, in addition to the support of parliament. I therefore agree with the hon. member.

[*English*]

Mr. Gerald Keddy (South Shore, PC): Mr. Speaker, I listened very closely to what the member for Regina—Qu’Appelle said. He made some excellent points. Without question, the Canadian public does not support a non-elected Senate. If a survey was sent out to 100 Canadians, I dare say that 70 of them would say they do not support a non-elected Senate.

Mr. John Solomon: It would be 99.

Mr. Gerald Keddy: No, I would not put it that high, certainly not in the riding I represent, because I sent a survey out to every

household in the riding, which came back with 70% in favour of an elected Senate, not in favour of abolishing the Senate.

Unlike both hon. members who spoke, I do not think we do such a great job in the House. I do not think we are the last line of defence for the Canadian public. I am not so full of myself that I could believe that we could put something forth in the House of Commons and have the final say for all Canadians.

I would not for a moment say that we should not have another house to keep check of the House of Commons, regardless of who sits on that side or on this side of the House. I also do not think that we are doing justice to Canadians by having four official opposition parties in the House of Commons. I would like the hon. member’s comments on that.

I fully agree that we should do something about the Senate, but stopping their budget? Let us be real. Let us have an elected Senate. Let us do something about it. I do not care if it is a triple E Senate or a double E Senate, I want the word “election” in the process.

With respect to holding back its budget, the Senate does do some good work. It has some members who should not be members of the Senate. We have some members of parliament who should not be members of parliament.

Let us do something progressive and positive. I will offer my support to reform the Senate, but not to abolish it. It is as simple as that. I would like to have the hon. member’s comments on that.

Hon. Lorne Nystrom: Mr. Speaker, I am not sure what more I could add. First, let us say that we have a consensus that the existing Senate is not supported by many people in this country. The survey which the hon. member took indicated that there was about 30% support in his riding. The Angus Reid poll indicated that around 5% of the people of this country support the existing Senate. Pollara did a poll which indicated that it was a bit higher than that. By the way, just in terms of the record, the Angus Reid poll indicated that 41% of the people wanted to abolish the Senate and 43% wanted to reform the Senate. Pollara did a poll which indicated that 36% of the people wanted to abolish the Senate and 35% wanted to reform the Senate.

I submit to the hon. member that his constituents probably think in a similar way to people right across the country. If he had a question worded as to whether his constituents wanted to reform the Senate, abolish the Senate or maintain the status quo, I am sure in his riding the opinion would be overwhelmingly to not have the status quo, but would be divided on whether we should abolish or reform it.

We should unite in terms of getting rid of the status quo. Let us listen to that 90% or 95% of the Canadian people. Liberal members feel the same way, if we could get rid of these crazy handcuffs of confidence votes on estimates.

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I am sure that if Conservative members were to reflect the interests of their constituents and forget about their friends in the Senate they too would vote in favour of reducing Senate estimates. If we could unite on that point, that the status quo is not good enough and it has to go, then we could have a real debate after the next federal election to come up with a formula either to elect it or abolish it. I would like to see that be the real debate. At that time I will obviously be continuing my support for abolition. One reason for that, and I want to throw this at my friends in the Reform Party, especially my friend from St. Albert who is so concerned about money, is that if we have an elected house it is not going to cost \$60 million. We could probably double or triple that because it will have legitimacy. We will then have an awful lot of money being spent in terms of its elections, its staff, its travel and its facilities.

• (2030)

If it is elected, it is legitimate. If it is elected, it is just as legitimate as we are and we invite gridlock and deadlock between the two legitimately elected houses. It creates a bigger bureaucracy, more red tape and a greater slowness in terms of governing. It seems to me that is something the Reform Party has always stood against.

* * *

POINTS OF ORDER

APPROPRIATION BILL

Mr. John Williams (St. Albert, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order with respect to the appropriation bill which we are about to consider at all stages tonight. In my opinion the bill is out of order since it is attempting to approve expenditure for the Department of Canadian Heritage Parks Canada Agency for the fiscal year 2000-01.

Subclause 6(2) at page 3 of the bill states:

Amounts appropriated by Schedule 2 may be spent at any time on or before March 31, 2001, so long as every expenditure is charged first against the relevant amount appropriated that is earliest in time until that amount is exhausted, next against the relevant amount appropriated that is next in time until that amount is exhausted and so on.

Schedule 2 of the bill at page 58 attempts to appropriate \$245,857,000 for the fiscal years April 1, 1999 to March 31, 2001.

Mr. Speaker, if you review the standing orders and our practices, the estimates process is designed to deal with the next fiscal year and not the fiscal year after that.

I will start with citation 933 of Beauchesne's sixth edition which states:

The purpose of the Estimates is to present to Parliament the budgetary and non-budgetary expenditure proposals of the Government for the next fiscal year.

Citation 934 states:

In accordance with Standing Order 81(4), in every session the main Estimates to cover the incoming fiscal year for every department of government shall be referred to the standing committees—

If citation 934 is read in full, it goes on to talk more about the current fiscal year. Citation 944 states:

The Estimates are limited to setting out only the sums which it is calculated will be required in the current year, and do not show the value of assets held or the liabilities outstanding from the previous financial year or to be spread over future years.

While these citations refer to the estimates, citation 968 ties the appropriation bill into this argument. It states:

The concurrence by the House in the Estimates is an Order of the House to bring in a bill, known as the appropriation bill based thereon.

If we review the standing order starting with Standing Order 81(1) and follow through to Standing Order 81(22), they all deal with the principle that the estimates are to cover the incoming fiscal year and not the year after that.

We have example after example before us from both Beauchesne's and the standing orders of the House which clearly demonstrate that the estimates and appropriation acts are intended to deal with one fiscal year at a time.

I fear that the legislation such as this before us is eroding the power of parliamentarians and the power of the House to make informed decisions on granting supply to the crown.

If this bill is allowed to remain on the order paper, it will set a dangerous precedent where the estimates will no longer be required to be published and passed on a yearly basis. Therefore, I believe that Appropriation Act No. 2, 1999-2000, Bill C-86 as it will become known, should be ruled out of order and removed from the order paper forthwith.

• (2035)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): I invite any other members who would like to speak to this specific and interesting point of order to do so.

As no one else wishes to rise on the point of order raised by the hon. member for St. Albert, we will take it under advisement and come back to the House.

* * *

MAIN ESTIMATES, 1999-2000

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 1—PARLIAMENT

The House resumed consideration of Motion No. 1.

Mr. Rick Borotsik (Brandon—Souris, PC): Mr. Speaker, I guess I must start my dissertation with what vitriolic balderdash we

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hear from members of the New Democratic Party, of the Reform Party and of the Bloc Quebecois.

I wonder if it has any bearing on the fact that all three of those parties have no representation or membership in the Senate. Quite frankly they never will have any representative in the Senate because they would have to form government.

The Bloc will never form government. The NDP is lucky to even be here and, if the New Brunswick and Ontario elections are any indication, probably will not be here in the future. As for the Reform Party, we do not know where it is. We do not know who the Reformers will be running under, what they will be running under or if they will even be in the House. It would be best for Canadians if they did not come back to the House.

Let me talk about a couple of issues. We are dealing with government appropriations for many departments. We could be standing here today debating the appropriations for the Department of Health, a huge budget and an issue that resonates across the country with every individual Canadian. Health deals with each and every one of us.

We could be dealing with appropriations for the Department of Agriculture, which has a budget of \$1.2 billion, not \$50 million. Its budget should be increased because there are some very serious issues within the Department of Agriculture such as the development of a long term policy that deals with natural disasters. The member from the NDP should have talked to that because his constituents are being directly affected by what is going on as we speak. Members of the Reform Party should be talking about it because their areas are directly impacted by what is going on right now in agriculture.

We are having a Senate bashing debate. We have a \$50 million appropriation and we are having a full debate in the House of Commons when there are issues out there that certainly should be talked about.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Rick Borotsik: Mr. Speaker, if members would listen they would learn something. We are a party unlike some other parties in the House that do not know whether they are fish or fowl at this point in time. We will not get into those debates now.

When I first came to the House, probably as uninformed as Reform Party members or perhaps not quite as uninformed because I do have a tendency to learn and listen, I too had some questions as to the viability and the responsibility of members of the Senate. I have an advantage because my party has members sitting in the Senate. I have the advantage of listening, learning and keeping an open mind, which obviously sometimes is not shared by other members of the House.

When I first came to the House I looked across the House and saw a government with a majority and a piece of legislation called Bill C-4. That piece of legislation was to revamp the Canadian Wheat Board. It was a very important piece of legislation to my constituents and to others.

• (2040)

Mr. John Solomon: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I was wondering what relevance reference to Bill C-4 has to a vote on money for the Senate. I wonder if you could rule on that.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): Is the hon. member for Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre suggesting the Chair should rule on relevancy in the debate tonight?

Mr. John Solomon: No, not at all sir.

Mr. Rick Borotsik: Mr. Speaker, if that were one of the criteria, the hon. member would never have been able to speak in the House since he was elected.

Let me tell him how Bill C-4 becomes relevant to the debate on whether the Senate has a place to play in parliamentary democracy in the country. Bill C-4 had some serious flaws when it came to the House, but a government with a majority has a tendency not to listen to members of the opposition who quite frankly have some very good ideas and thoughts about how legislation could be made better.

Unfortunately that piece of legislation was rammed through committee and through the House. The only opportunity I had to make that legislation better was to elicit the support of the Senate.

The Senate did a wonderful job. The senators went out and listened to the Canadian public. They were accountable to the Canadian public. They held Senate hearings at which they listened to the stakeholders. They made changes that made the legislation better. It is a check and balance. It is an opportunity for parliamentarians to solicit and elicit the other house to make legislation better.

With a stroke of a pen the Reform Party would abolish the Senate. Where would we be? We would have a majority government able to do anything it wanted to the citizens of the country because it has a majority. The Reform Party has no plans. It has no understanding of parliamentary democracy. There is a requirement to have that check and balance.

Should there be reconstruction of the existing Senate? Of course there should but it should be done logically and with a well thought out plan. Let us not do it with vitriolic balderdash. Let us go forward and make sure that not only Canadians agree with the new

plan but that the House and the Senate agree with the new structure and plan.

Let me give the House some ideas that were put forward in the Charlottetown accord. The Charlottetown accord came forward with restructuring of the Senate in mind. Who did not support it? The Reform Party did not support it. It did not want to restructure the Senate and make a change to the status quo. It did not want to think logically about how Canadians could be better governed.

The governance of the country was not important to that party. What was important was simply the matter of partisan politics, the hot button issues, instead of health care, agriculture and all other departments that are important to the country which we should be talking about.

Let me tell the House about the Senate. The Senate has helped me in the job that I do. I have that opportunity. When I came here I did not think that what was there was right. In fact there has to be some restructuring, but members opposite should take the time to phone the 1-800 number to talk to the senators. They are very accessible and very open.

• (2045)

Phone the 800 number that has been advertised by the NDP right now. Talk to the senators. Ask them their opinion. There are some very bright, experienced and very dedicated people in that House.

I will not mention names like the hon. member from Saskatchewan did because I do not think it is fair that we use those names in this House, but I can take members to the people who spend as much if not more time in their house than do probably the majority of members of parliament. There are good and bad in every house. I believe that the majority of the senators who sit on our side in the Senate are very good.

Let us talk about what would happen if there was not that check and balance. Simple solutions for very complex issues is where the Reform come on this one; a stroke of the pen and let us get rid of the Senate. Where would we be?

Right now we have a government that sits in power with its majority coming from Ontario. Do we want Ontario to run Canada? I think not. The Reform Party has a mantra that the west wants in. It would certainly be a heck of a lot harder for the west to have its voice heard if it was simply an Ontario or Quebec based government. Now we have the opportunity for the check and balance because we have the other house to call on when necessary.

We talked about an elected Senate. I have to honestly say that I have not got my head around this one yet. I have tried to analyse it; I have tried to look at all the pros and cons which is obviously something some of the members in the Reform Party and the NDP have not done. They simply like to push the button.

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I looked at the American system. The member from Regina said that we look at other jurisdictions and what is good and what is bad. I look at the American senate which is elected. I see an administration of one political stripe and a house and senate of another political stripe. They get nothing done. They stop each other. They block each other. That is not good for democracy either. I am not so sure that the elected side of it should be there.

Let me talk about the reform in the Charlottetown accord. We talked about term limitations, something that everybody here should talk about and discuss logically. At one point in time a senator was appointed for life. That was wrong. Now senators are appointed until age 75. That too may be wrong. But what are the solutions? Should we have term limitations? Perhaps. Personally I could support a term limitation on the appointment of a senator.

It was also mentioned there should be some gauge as to what the efficiency and the effectiveness was for an individual. I agree. There should be gauges, attendance requirements and effectiveness and efficiency standards that have to be met. There is nothing wrong with that. We do it in the House. Our gauge and our standard is obviously an election. The Senate should have gauges and standards as well.

We should also talk about the effectiveness of the Senate and how it could be more accountable to the public it represents. The example was given that the senator from Regina has not been seen in Regina. That is wrong. A senator who is appointed to a provincial responsibility and jurisdiction should represent that responsibility and jurisdiction. That is part of the restructuring that should go on within the Senate, but it should not be a stroke of a pen abolition because it is not good governance for this country.

It was also said that senators do not do anything. I just gave the House the example of Bill C-4 which was very important, although the member from the NDP decided that Bill C-4 was not a very important piece of legislation. Probably because he agreed with Bill C-4 we disagreed with it.

Members of this House were treated as fools when Bill C-55 was put through. There was an urgency because we were going to protect the Canadian heritage. We were going to make sure that we would not back down from the Americans. It was a piece of legislation that was absolutely necessary. Where is Bill C-55 now? The only people who held up Bill C-55 to have it checked by the Canadian public was the Senate.

• (2050)

This government will be accountable for that. It was the wrong way to put that legislation through, it was the wrong legislation and it will be accountable. The only one that had the opportunity to bring that out in the open was the Senate.

Supply

Bill C-78 is a piece of legislation that came through the House because the Liberals are the majority. It was to take pensions away from superannuates. Thirty billion dollars will be taken away from Canadians because the government has a majority, but the bill has not passed the Senate. There will be accountability to the government because we have that check and balance.

Do not get me wrong. I said earlier that I believe very strongly there has to be some restructuring, but to sit here and say that we will not approve a \$50 million budget for the other House is balderdash. It is not the way to do it.

I am disappointed and frustrated that we are not talking about real issues. Canadians should be able to deal with real issues. Canadians should have an opportunity to speak to real issues such as services that should be delivered by this government and that are not being delivered.

We waste our time talking about a budget of \$50 million instead of the billions of dollars being wasted by this government or the billions of dollars being taken by this government from legitimate Canadians. Why? Because Reform wants to Senate bash. That is all it wants to do. It is the hot button politics of the Reform Party. Frankly, Canadians are losing when they have representation from the Reform Party.

A member of the NDP said that if most constituents would not support the Senate. In New Brunswick, most Canadians spoke and they did not support the NDP. There is one NDP member. In Ontario the constituents listened and they did not support the NDP. It has no official party status in Ontario. I believe in the electorate. I believe the electorate does the right thing. In this case, they certainly did the right thing.

Mr. John Solomon (Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the member for Brandon—Souris just stood in this House and gave a speech. The same leader of his party appointed a senator 20 years ago, the phantom senator from Regina, a fellow by the name of James Balfour who has not been seen in the city of Regina for 20 years.

I wonder whether he was giving this speech to get himself in the Senate or whether he actually believes that taxpayers' money should be invested in someone by the name of James Balfour, a senator who has not been to Regina in the 20 years I have been around. I have never met the guy. Regina is a small city with about 200,000 people. I have been in public office off and on and have been involved in community associations for about 26 years. I had never heard of this guy. He was appointed by former Prime Minister Joe Clark, a friend of James Balfour. I guess James Balfour disappeared at the same time Joe Clark did because we have not seen Joe Clark for about 10 or 20 years either.

I wonder whether the Conservative member for Brandon—Souris continues to support the Senate when Conservatives in Sas-

katchewan, 18 former elected Conservatives were jailed because of the corruption they were involved with. One was the former deputy premier, Eric Berntson, who is now a senator. After years of gouging Saskatchewan taxpayers he was appointed to the Senate. He was found guilty on a number of fraud charges and breach of trust and now he is being paid as a senator as a result of the wonderful Conservative Party.

• (2055)

How long does the hon. member for Brandon—Souris believe the taxpayers of Canada should be supporting convicted felons such as Senator Michel Cogger and Senator Eric Berntson to the tune of about \$500,000 a year for them, their expenses and their offices each before we toss them out because of their convictions in the courts? How much longer will this member support the subsidy of these individuals who have gouged Canadians for far too long?

Mr. Rick Borotsik: Mr. Speaker, I think even the member of the NDP who obviously is a bit of a socialist would agree that individuals are in fact innocent until proven guilty and have gone through all the opportunities for appeal. I am sure that every member would defend that aspect of our judicial system and of our communities.

Again I would say that we as parliamentarians, even though the hon. member may not agree with this, do not do a very good job of keeping that side of the House in order. There are others in this parliamentary system who are required in order to have that check and balance and that control. For a \$50 million budget, I certainly have no difficulty in keeping that house.

However, and I am sure the hon. member did not listen very well when I said it, that does not mean there should not be some changes. That does not mean the status quo must stay. That does not mean there should not be some restructuring within the Senate itself. We would have done that a long time ago had those members supported the Charlottetown accord. Instead, they voted against the Charlottetown accord. That would have been in place.

Mr. Rob Anders (Calgary West, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I and other members of this place, some of whom are in the House today, went through a fairly exhaustive process of gathering petitions from across the land. Media outlets, such as the *Sun* newspaper chain and QR77 radio, put out their own forms of Senate petitions. I collected petitions on the whole idea of Senate reform and Senate election. Other members of the House collected petitions on the issue of Senate abolition. I do not think that those people felt as though they were heard. They did not get responses from senators or from the Prime Minister's office.

The hon. member talked about phoning senators and the Prime Minister's office. The member of the NDP mentioned the number. I have a note here that if somebody wants to call the Senate I believe the number is 1-800-267-7362. I ask the hon. member if—

Supply

Mr. Gerald Keddy: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. As you can obviously see, and certainly anyone watching on TV can see, the hon. member is holding up a prop. He is writing on the back of it.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): The hon. member for South Shore is quite correct. It is inappropriate to use a prop in the House and I accept the admonition. I should have stopped it immediately. I did check on my monitor and it was impossible to read, the hon. member will be unhappy to know.

Mr. Rob Anders: Mr. Speaker, I apologize. I ask the hon. member of the Progressive Conservative Party, was the number 1-800-267-7362 to call senators? There was a question about the Prime Minister as well.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): If the hon. member gets away with it once, shame on me. If he gets away with it twice, really, that is it.

Mr. Rick Borotsik: Mr. Speaker, I do not think there was anything of any substance in those comments.

Actually people do not have to call the 1-800 number. If they wish, they can call my office and I will put them in touch with the senators I know with their personal phone numbers. Those phone numbers are listed, so I am sure the hon. member could find them.

The hon. member spent a lot of time, effort and energy getting petitions to abolish the Senate.

• (2100)

I think the hon. member would have been much better suited had he gone out and spent that time and energy trying to find out from those same constituencies where the Reform was going. What was it going to do? Was it going to go to the UA, to three parties or just disappear like most Canadians would like?

Mr. Ted McWhinney (Vancouver Quadra, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise because I was fascinated by the remarks of the hon. member for Brandon—Souris.

I am looking for the right adjective. I thought it was perhaps a cathartic address, but I will settle for the notion that his remarks were fertilizing in an atmosphere where one badly demanded ideas.

May I ask if he, as a partisan of the Senate, will join the movement to give British Columbia, rightly recognized as the fifth region of Canada, 20% of the seats in a reformed, elected Senate? Would he join us in that? We would be prepared to allow Manitoba to share a third of another 20%.

Mr. Rick Borotsik: Mr. Speaker, Manitoba already has the third of the 20% of the seats. We have seven senators currently in the province of Manitoba.

An hon. member: No you don't. You only have six.

Mr. Rick Borotsik: Six senators, excuse me. I was looking for the one from Regina. I missed that one.

An hon. member: Even you don't know where he's at.

Mr. Rick Borotsik: I don't know where he's at. I was looking for the seventh senator.

I very honestly suggest to the hon. member that obviously would require a constitutional change. I am prepared to look at anything that will give better representation to the country. I will also look at making sure that there is a fair and honest distribution of those senators.

Earlier in my dissertation I said that I had not gotten my head around elections just yet. However, I feel very strongly that in part of that reform we should look at the possibility of provincial governments playing a much more active role in the appointment process, not necessarily the appointments but the appointment process of senators to the Senate of Canada.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Verchères—Les-Patriotes, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak to this fundamental question of supply for the maintenance of the Senate of Canada.

To begin with, I need hardly point out that the Bloc Québécois is against granting any such supply, in whatever amount, to the upper chamber, because our party proposes its abolition pure and simple.

This was the position we took in our 1993 election platform. It is a position that still has unanimous support among our members. The reason I am taking this position in the House today is not just because it was part of our election platform in 1993. There are obviously a number of empirical, objective arguments underlying this position.

First, let us start by pointing out that this institution, which is the Upper House of Canada's parliament, has no basis in the realities of Quebec or Canada. Let us look back at the context in which it was created.

The British Parliament in London, which is in a way, as anglophones say, the mother of the British-type parliaments, is obviously a bicameral parliament, with an upper chamber, the House of Lords, and a lower chamber, which is the House of Commons.

In the case of the House of Commons, the parallel, the link between the House of Commons in London and the House of Commons here in Ottawa, is very easy to make.

As regards the House of Lords, they wanted to create a similar House when Canada was born, when they realized, horror of horrors, that there was no nobility in Canada. So they could not create a House of Lords on the same principle and model as the one in London. They therefore created something a little bit different, drawing on the model in London.

Supply

In the United Kingdom, as we know, there is hereditary nobility, which is passed from father to son or from mother to daughter now. There are counts, viscounts, barons, dukes, duchesses and so on. There are also nobles who are given titles which are not hereditary.

• (2105)

This has been the case of a number of Canadians in history, such as Sir John A. Macdonald or Sir George-Étienne Cartier, but these people could not pass their nobility on to their descendants.

They wanted to create something similar here in Canada, since in the middle of the 19th century, in Quebec for example, the seigniorial system had been abolished. So there was, properly speaking, no more native or local nobility in Canada. Accordingly, they created a system that made it possible to basically appoint people and give them the nobility by appointing them to the Senate, not by giving them a title but by giving them the title of senator.

Hon. members will recall that initially appointment was for life, until it was realized in the 1950's and 1960's that having senators for life had, one might say, lowered the level of debate in the other place, it having become a rather—

Mr. Réal Ménard: Aging.

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron:—aging place, to say the least. At that time, the decision was made to do away with the notion of appointments for life and to drop the age to 75, which is far earlier needless to say.

The first finding is that this institution, which has absolutely no connection with our reality, is obsolete, archaic and totally devoid of any meaning to the people of Canada or Quebec, or any connection to their lives.

Second, this House ought to promote and defend the interests of the various regions of Canada. A noble objective, if ever there was one, but it became quickly apparent that far from defending the interests of the regions, the institution was far more what one might call an asset for the government by defending the interests of the party in power.

I am weighing my words carefully but that chamber has, over the years, for all intents and purposes, turned into a veritable den of patronage, in that the nominations go to friends of the party, friends of the regime. They would never have gone as far as to appoint people of other political persuasions, which has meant that the other place has representatives of only two parties despite the fact that there are five parties represented in the House of Commons. In the upper chamber only the two parties that have divided the power ever since Confederation are represented, in other words the Liberals and the Progressive Conservatives. They are surprisingly in favour of allocating supply to the upper chamber.

That chamber, which was intended to defend the regions, has finally come to defend the interests of the government far more than those of the regions. It is not representative of the full political spectrum represented here in the House of Commons.

Furthermore, I think it should be pointed out that this House, as I said, whose job it was to defend the regions, does not represent the full range of the political spectrum of the regions. For instance, there are New Democratic governments in western Canada. Are these governments represented in the upper chamber? Of course not. There is a sovereignist government in Quebec. Are the interests of the sovereignist government of the national assembly, with its sovereignist majority, represented in the other place? Of course not.

So the initial purpose for which the other chamber was created, which was to defend the interests of the regions, also no longer holds.

The other factor is that this chamber is a somewhat dusty institution that has accomplished the feat—if feat it be—of breaking the records for unpopularity and lack of credibility, even beating out lawyers and politicians according to the polls. That takes some doing.

Joking aside, we unfortunately have an image of the Senate as an institution where people go to live out their retirement years in peace, after loyal service to the party in power, and where there is really no incentive to do more than is necessary, where people can pursue their professions on the side thus building up their income.

• (2110)

There are, of course, extreme cases—former Senator Thompson comes to mind—who do serious damage to the Senate's credibility in the eyes of the public. The public, which should normally have faith in its political institutions, sees one of the Houses of Parliament as completely discredited and no longer has any faith in them at all.

This parliament, according to the advocates of federalism in this House and throughout Canada, is a model of democracy around the world. Yet one of the Houses that pass the laws of this country is appointed by the Prime Minister. What is the democratic prerogative of such an institution? Is the presence of the Senate in this parliament not a democratic disadvantage in this great country, which wants to be an example for the world as a whole?

There are few countries around the world that are real democracies and of those there are few around the world that may boast of having their Houses appointed by the Prime Minister, appointments that are basely and blatantly partisan.

We should look at the relevance of having such a House, which costs taxpayers a minimum of \$50 million annually. We need only look at the situations of manifest suffering in a number of ridings, and even in all ridings in the country to various degrees. I am

thinking of the riding of my colleague from Hochelaga—Maison-neuve, which has the highest rate of poverty in Canada.

How can his fellow citizens allow an institution that costs \$50 million annually to continue to survive while they can barely make ends meet? These people experience anger, confusion and indignation.

We could say that in any self-respecting democracy the presence of two Houses is a guarantee of balance and against the appropriation of power by a single House.

The people in this non-elected House on the other side are simply there because of service rendered to the government opposite and therefore really do not need to take the interests of the public to heart. I say that with an aside because there are, needless to say, and we all know some of them, senators who give fully of themselves and work very hard.

The problem is not so much the individuals making up the institution, although for most of them, for the reasons they were appointed, it may in fact be a problem. But the institution itself, because of its nature, is the source of the problem.

How can this institution claim to constitute a balance aimed at preventing this House, elected by the people of Canada and Quebec, from gaining the upper hand? Every single provincial legislature has got rid of their legislative councils. The last one to do so, the Quebec National Assembly, abolished its legislative council in 1968, if I am not mistaken.

Could the supporters of the Senate dare to claim here in this House that the provincial legislatures and the Quebec National Assembly are less democratic institutions because they have abolished their legislative councils? Absolutely not. There is no connection whatsoever. We are very much aware that the best guarantee of democracy is the people's choice.

• (2115)

This choice translates into the presence here in the House of Commons, as well as in each of the provincial legislative assemblies and the Quebec National Assembly, of representatives who have been duly elected by their fellow citizens. That is the true guarantor of democracy, not the presence of a phoney second chamber which does nothing but serve the partisan interests of the government.

I submit once again that this House, which is duly elected by the people, must not lend any credibility whatsoever to the other chamber by voting supplies to it, which it will spend like crazy, while in each and every one of our ridings there are people who can scarcely make ends meet.

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I therefore urge every one of my colleagues to oppose this motion aimed at granting supply to the Canadian Senate.

Mr. Ted McWhinney (Vancouver Quadra, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, would the hon. member accept the conclusions of the Pepin-Robarts commission on an elected Senate, dividing the number of its members among the five regions of Canada, but with a veto for Quebec on matters concerning linguistic rights, culture and similar elements?

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Mr. Speaker, I nearly fainted when I heard my colleague from Vancouver—Quadra candidly suggest the conclusions of the Pepin-Robarts report.

I was thinking that it was a long time ago the government opposite shelved this report, not wanting to give it any credibility or relevance.

We must realize that if this institution had really been intended to play the role of defender of Canada's regions, it would not have been created as it was, and even now we would not maintain it in its present form by simply having the senators there elected. These people would, if I could put it this way, challenge the legitimacy of this House in which we sit.

In addition, for the benefit of our colleague, I would like to mention two examples of upper houses around the world, which might originally have provided an example, had they existed, to Canada's Senate, in the spirit that its creators wanted to give it.

There is the German Bundesrat, which represents each of the assemblies of German Landers, or provinces. Accordingly, no legislation is passed by the German parliament, the Bundestag and the Bundesrat, without the support of the Landers' legislatures.

There is another example. The Russian federation council, which is the upper chamber, the equivalent of our Senate, has two representatives for what they call there the subjects of the federation, the equivalent of our provinces. Generally it is the governor of the province and the president of the legislative assembly, therefore one representative of the executive body and one representative of the legislative body of each of the subjects in the federation, who sit on the council.

In this case, once again, it is very clear that no legislation may be passed by the Russian parliament without the subjects of the federation, that is the Russian provinces, giving their approval.

Therefore, as it exists the Senate is totally incapable of meeting the initial objective set for it, that is of defending the interests of the regions.

Mr. Réal Ménard (Hochelaga—Maison-neuve, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Verchères—Les-Patriotes for his excellent speech. As a political scientist, he is obviously very up on these issues.

Supply

• (2120)

I would like him to clarify for us what else these supplies, which we are refusing to approve, could be spent on. They will very likely be approved because of this government's overwhelming majority in the House.

For the benefit of those listening today, I would like our colleague to give some concrete examples of how this \$54 million budget, which will probably be approved for what I might call purely gerontocratic purposes, could be put to better use.

Could he also give other examples of funds being used to provide relatively long term care and perhaps examples of areas where the money would be put to much better use?

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Hochelaga—Maisonneuve for his question. I think he has hit it on the head.

With all due respect, I think he would have been in a much better position than I to give excellent examples of how these supplies, which are about to be approved for the other place and the usefulness of which still seems a bit nebulous right now, could be better spent.

In Quebec, we already have the feeling we are paying for two structures. We are paying for a provincial member and for a federal member. We are even paying for a senator who represents each of our regions. Each senator in Quebec represents what is called a Senate division. I doubt there is anyone in Quebec who has the slightest idea which senator is responsible for the Senate division in which he lives, since these people are completely absent from the political scene in Quebec.

That said, as a more direct reply to the question by my colleague from Hochelaga—Maisonneuve, certainly reference could be made to a number of issues that have been addressed in this House in recent months and recent weeks, particularly employment insurance.

The government diverts billions of dollars from the employment insurance fund, supposedly to cover increased expenses, like eradicating the deficit, while it would be far easier to get it hands on some \$50 million or \$54 million in the other place, instead of dipping into the pockets of the unemployed, the workers and the employers across Canada.

Needless to say, it is unacceptable that while social transfers to the provinces are being cut forcing the provinces to make some really hard decisions on social and health services and post-secondary education, we would continue to hand over \$50 million annually to this institution that is right next to ours.

This government needs to make some societal choices. At the moment, the government seems to lean as much to the right as the whole of Canada does as far as the directions it is taking are

concerned. The choices made by this government are totally unacceptable. They leave the least advantaged in a precarious and difficult situation and continue to maintain this sort of living dinosaur.

[English]

Mr. Ted McWhinney (Vancouver Quadra, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, one understands the lateness of the hour produces that mixture of melancholy and euphoria that we have seen at various stages of the debate this evening.

It is a pity perhaps that such an interesting subject has been consigned to a late evening session. There has been an absence of concern or attention in this parliament and perhaps the one before it with fundamental questions, the large principles of government. Yet in a way I think we are seeing the creaking and groaning of parliamentary institutions that are already out of date and, in some ways in this country, lag behind the creative changes that have been made in other countries with similar systems. In a sense, it is all a consequence of the too exclusive preoccupation for the last 30 years with the Quebec question narrowly defined. The narrow definition is not the fault of all the opposite side of the House. I think the blame lies equally. One could suggest that the larger solutions for the Quebec problem would better be obtained in a larger solution of general constitutional problems, but here we come back again to this basic principle that it is very difficult, since the Constitution Act, 1982, to change the Canadian constitution, but it is not impossible.

• (2125)

The other day I encountered a very distinguished senator and former member of this House who had to retire because he had reached the term of years, 75 years. He was complaining that he was forced to retire at that age. I told him that it was possible that it was not constitutional to compel retirement for age. I asked him if he had ever considered invoking the charter of rights and freedoms.

It would certainly be possible, without going to the provinces, for the federal parliament to establish within the federal parliament, with parliamentary power alone, a term of years for the Senate. It would be possible for this House and the Senate to make a constitutional amendment limiting future senators to four years, or eight years or two renewable terms of four years. This is solely within federal power.

It would be possible to extend the age issue. The only reason I think the age issue arose is simply because people had enough sense, 100 years after 1867, to realize a life term was just unacceptable in the conditions of North America.

The biggest problem in electing a Senate is that it would be a Senate elected on a basis of regional representation that reflected the social realities of 1867, the demographic realities that are totally inequitable today. There is no way in which British Colum-

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bians for example, would vote for Charlottetown or any other agreement that perpetuated an inequitable division of the Senate, even an elected Senate.

If we want to change these things we have to go the long route unless we take the surprising step, but not so surprising in other countries, of getting a court ruling on the constitutionality of these provisions of the constitution viewed in contemporary terms. Why not? Unless we go the ultimate route of a constituent assembly.

We are, in a certain sense in our parliament at this time, engaged in a form of low level problem solving largely because people, in reaction to the failure of the Meech Lake accord and the failure of Charlottetown, have said they do not want to discuss fundamental change. There is no particular evidence of that.

Earlier in the debate, I remember one of the members citing the example of a Gallup poll that he had consulted, or the equivalent, and finding that 43% of the people wanted to abolish the Senate. I wonder if he had asked how many people wanted to abolish the House of Commons as it is presently constituted. He might well have found that there was a similar large public disillusionment with the legislative process.

I think we badly need, on the evidence of this parliament, to reform our committee structure. We badly need to re-examine the relationship of executive and legislative power. These are areas that could be changed without the necessity of going to the provinces and going through that seven out of ten or ten out of ten formula. They have largely been left to one side.

I think one of the problems we have with the proposals put forward today on Senate reform is that they do not recognize the interdependence of constitutional institutions. If we abolish the Senate, we will dramatically change the House of Commons as it is now, and it is presently staggering under its current burden of office. Something obviously is needed: a little more comprehensive thinking.

The 1960s, 1970s and 1980s were golden periods in terms of producing a consensus on constitutional change. Let me read the sort of consensus that emerged: That an elected Senate, if it were to be achieved, should have the power to ratify all international treaties; that it should have the power to confirm nominations or reject nominations to the Supreme Court of Canada; and that it have the power to confirm ambassadorial appointments and appointments as deputy ministers. Why not? It is common in other systems of government. It might have the power, if the governor general were to be a wholly Canadian appointment, to conduct the election of the governor general. An elected Senate could perform the function that we give at enormous public expense and with a term of years seemingly without limit to royal commissions of inquiry. Should a legislative body not be doing that? It is quite obvious that the House of Commons cannot do it. If we look at the

overburdening and the number of committees and the mandates of the committees today, I do not think we are able to discharge the functions that are given to us now.

• (2130)

The cause of Senate reform is I think an interesting one. It offers the most promise in terms of changes in our federal institutions, if we can get over this dilemma of constitutional change.

I noted the comments by the member for Brandon—Souris. He said that he had help with a wheat bill. I would simply say that I faced a situation in which a House committee, for some reason, produced a unanimous report last December. Then, after the unanimous report had gone to the House, some members decided to change their minds. Having accepted that a committee obviously would be well informed on the subject, I read the project and decided it was not as well informed as it could have been. Looking for an arena for change, I also went to the Senate and spoke to senators. I was able at the Senate level, because the Senate has co-ordinate constitutional powers with the House, to produce changes which I think are more in line with contemporary legal thinking.

There is a role for a second chamber, certainly if the House continues to be overburdened in the way it is with the present committee structure, which I do not think is very satisfactory unless we have this unique combination of an experienced and pragmatic committee chairperson and a good parliamentary secretary working as a team, and sufficient co-operation or acceptance of the rules of the game by government and opposition members. It does occur in some committees, but not in all, and we have noticed the difficulty in achieving a quorum in committees in the last few weeks. That is one of the realities.

I welcome the suggestions that have been made. I think the suggestions for the abolition of the Senate are simplistic. They ignore the fact that taking the Senate out will dramatically change the House too. I am not sure that we have yet learned to assume the new types of burdens that would be placed upon us.

Tackling the issue of how to make reform, as I say, electing the Senate with the present totally inequitable and unacceptable basis of regional allocation of the seats, would be a step backward in time and I do not think we can go that way. But why not?

One of the suggestions made, which was an interesting suggestion from outside, was why do we not attempt a mini-Senate reform. One of the most popular steps the present Prime Minister has taken has been to appoint senators who, in essence, will serve for a short term of years only. I think they are among the best quality senators we have had in a long time. These people, usually with two or three years to go, were never expecting an appointment

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to the Senate, but bring a surprising degree of expertise and knowledge and a very large degree of pragmatism.

One of the suggestions made, and I know it is taboo to speak of anything the former Prime Minister in the previous government introduced, was with respect to the so-called GST senators. It is a section of the constitution that was forgotten, which had been raised with me by a thoughtful correspondent. Could we not in some way correct, partly at least, the regional inequities of Senate representation by region by using that section and appointing more senators for those underrepresented areas of the country, in particular if it was done on a term of years basis, four years or something else?

I offer these simply because we are not completely in a straitjacket. To get movement in the upper House in that way might encourage the larger type of reform that so many people in all parties favour.

• (2135)

I look at the expert committees, the Lamontagne-MacGuigan committee, the Goldenberg commission, the father of the gentleman who is on the Prime Minister's staff, Pepin-Robarts that I have referred to, much the best constitutional report that has been made in Canada in the post-war period.

If we directed our attention to these matters we would see a time when parliamentarians thought in an ambitious way, looked at larger ideas, and a great deal of it came across. Except for certain egregious errors in tactics, the Pepin-Robarts report, as reflected in Meech Lake, would have gone through. It is one of those interesting things, the overconfidence of the political leaders who were directing the situation at that time.

Will we get around to these larger questions? I have raised this issue. I think the next generation of Canadians will have a rendezvous with the constitution. I am sure the imbalances, the inefficiencies that have accumulated in this inherited British system that we have not kept up to date in the way the British and other British derived systems have, will become large enough, and in a very short time from now we might get a movement toward general constitutional renewal.

If we go the constituency assembly route and we go the usual way in which constituent assemblies are adopted, we get out of the straitjacket of the chapter 5 amending sections of the constitution.

I could say more, but the hon. member opposite has pointed out to me the problem of one of his colleagues who has been waiting for four hours to speak and time is running away, so I think I will cut short my remarks.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Réal Ménard (Hochelaga—Maisonneuve, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank my colleague for his speech. I know he takes a great interest in these matters.

I will share a fond memory with him. When I was doing my MA with Professor Edmond Orban, our required reading was texts that he had written as a law professor at the university.

I am a bit surprised at the vigour with which he is defending the Senate at a time when there is, in our ridings—in any event, it is very obvious in Quebec, and I am sure that my colleagues from Quebec, whatever side of the House they sit on, will agree—a push for increased democracy and for putting citizens at the heart of that democracy.

I invite the member to read what one of our excellent focus groups had to say about citizenship and democracy, because we are engaged in a process of renewing and giving concrete form to the sovereignist discourse.

I have trouble seeing how we could be interested in reforming the voting method. Why would we want people to have increased authority in the form of petitions, with the possibility of setting in motion mechanisms leading to public consultations? We are very involved in reviewing the role of members, yet the member for Vancouver Quadra is saying that there is an advantage to keeping the Senate and that we must rediscover this chamber.

The Senate has no democratic foundation. This is well known. This does not mean that there are not individual senators who can earn our respect through their diligent efforts. I could mention senators Prud'homme and Beaudoin. There are, of course, some excellent people but it is the institution that is the problem.

I ask the member the following question: Is it not fortunate that there is a widespread push in civil society for increased democracy, and is this democratic fervour among members of the public not incompatible with maintaining an institution as outmoded as the Senate?

Mr. Ted McWhinney: Mr. Speaker, very briefly, I wish to remind the hon. member that the best idea to come out of the quiet revolution advocated by the great Jacques-Yvan Morin and a few other scholars was the recommendation for a reformed Senate on condition that it be divided 50:50 between francophone and anglophone regions, but the idea of a second chamber had the approval of intellectuals during the quiet revolution.

• (2140)

I might also refer my friend to my most recent book, *Constitution-making*.

[*English*]

Mr. Rob Anders (Calgary West, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to lead into my question with a quote, which states:

I...support Senate reform. If it is done properly, a restructured and revitalised Upper Chamber can give Albertans a voice in the governance of Canada. If elected Liberal leader, I pledge to work for a Senate that is elected, that has legislative powers of its own, and contains strong representation from all regions of Canada.

Supply

That was said on June 23, 1990 at the Liberal leadership convention. It gets better.

The same individual said on September 24, 1991, as reported in *Hansard*: "A reformed Senate is essential. It must be a Senate that is elected, effective and equitable".

The same individual, speaking to 400 delegates at the annual general meeting of the Alberta branch of the federal Liberal Party in 1990, said: "The Liberal Government in two years will make it (the Senate) elected. As Prime Minister I can take steps to make it happen".

The same individual went on to say to the *Toronto Star* on February 2, 1990: "You want the triple E Senate and I want one too".

The same individual, who I will reveal to the House, went on to say once again, as reported in *Hansard* on May 14, 1991: "As I said before, and repeat, reform of the Senate is extremely important. I believe in it".

The same individual said on February 1, 1997 to the *Calgary Herald*: "If he names him", referring to Senator Stan Waters, "that's the end of appointed senators who are not elected".

The same individual, speaking to *Prime Time News* on the CBC on December 29, 1992, said: "I know that in western Canada they were disappointed that there was not, there's the Senate, because they wanted to have an equal Senate and an elected Senate and I thought it was a good thing to do".

Only one man could make that type of speech. Only man could make that quote. It is the same individual who also said "I'm not interested in patronage because I'm a Liberal" to 600 people in Edmonton, which was reported in the *Windsor Star* on February 2, 1990.

I leave members with one last quote: "I didn't want to be trapped into making decisions on patronage, local contracts, and appointments that cause so much friction and bad blood". That is found at page 196 of a book which he wrote in 1985 called *Straight from the Heart*.

I put it to my hon. colleague: Who could that person be?

Mr. Ted McWhinney: Mr. Speaker, I think it has been already established that it was Dr. Randolph White, Jr. who is the author of these well known remarks. It may present him with some problems of explanation to his colleagues. I think honour is due where it falls.

He is known for his ways of eloquence in support of a chamber which Plato said should be reserved for those who made their mark in life, who gained the top of their professions and who are prepared to serve without salary. That is the Platonic conception

and Dr. Randolph White has made this a leitmotiv to his own career, which has brought us all waves of brilliant oratory and an example that stands out to this country in a period of cynicism and despair, leading the charge to the new world and the new world order.

• (2145)

Mr. Rob Anders (Calgary West, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Langley—Abbotsford.

The person I was talking about and those copious quotes I just read in favour of Senate reform were from none other than the one who sits across the way from us, the Right Hon. the Prime Minister.

There are substantive, clear, demonstrable reasons that once the Prime Minister won the Liberal leadership in 1990 and was elected in 1993 he changed his mind.

One reason was Lorna Milne, a former Liberal riding president and a Liberal Party worker who was appointed on September 9, 1995 and is now sitting as a senator. I think another reason was Joseph Landry, a former Liberal member of the legislative assembly who was appointed on February 26, 1996. I also think another reason was Joan Cook, a provincial Liberal candidate and loyal Liberal worker who was appointed on March 6, 1998.

Another reason was Sharon Carstairs, a former Manitoba Liberal leader and long time ally of the Prime Minister who was appointed on September 5, 1994. Another reason was Ross Fitzpatrick, a prominent B.C. Liberal organizer, golfing and business buddy who was appointed on March 6, 1998. We seem to notice a trend in recent days with golfing buddies of the Prime Minister.

Another reason was Nick Taylor, the former Alberta Liberal leader who was appointed on March 7, 1996. Another reason was Landon Pearson who is married to the son of former Liberal Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson and was appointed on September 15, 1994. The list goes on.

Another reason was William Rompkey, who refused to appear before members of the House of Commons that wanted to look at the Senate estimates. He was a former Liberal member of parliament and a Liberal cabinet minister in the Trudeau government appointed who was in 1995.

Another reason was Catherine Callbeck, former Liberal premier of Prince Edward Island who was appointed in 1997. Another reason was John Bryden, a candidate for Liberal leader in New Brunswick and someone who managed the Prime Minister's leadership campaign in New Brunswick in 1990 and was appointed in 1994. Another reason was Serge Joyal who had a prominent backroom role in the federal Liberal Party since he lost his Commons seat in 1984 and was appointed in 1997.

Supply

Since 1993 there are 34 reasons the Prime Minister has gone ahead with what he has done with the Senate and not carried forward on his 1990 promises when he was elected Liberal leader and when he was elected Prime Minister in 1993. There are currently four vacancies. If the government holds term until the year 2001, this mandate would allow it another 14 reasons, for a total of 52 reasons the Prime Minister has gone back on his word with regard to Senate elections. Senators are obsessed but the truth shall be known.

I wanted to put those reasons on the record because they are very important. I ask all hon. members to keep in mind that no one in the country can get away with only working one day in the spring and one day in the fall and getting a 16% budget increase in two years, for a total of \$50 million plus.

I ask members in good conscience to apply their own good judgment when voting on the Senate estimates.

• (2150)

Mr. Randy White (Langley—Abbotsford, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I have several questions to ask my colleague which may take a few minutes.

When we are talking about the Senate, I often sit back and wonder what life might be like in Canada had the Senate been elected, equal and effective. Let us take, for instance, some of the laws and changes that went through the House of Commons and were rubber stamped by a group of partisan individuals in the other place who basically take the legislation from the House and rubber stamp it.

I can think of some things that happened recently in the House of Commons. For instance, the age of consent for young people to have sex was 16 years old at one time. The government in its wisdom changed that to age 14.

Had there been a non-rubber stamp Senate, I do not think that would have happened. The place called the place of sober second thought would probably have gone around the country and tested the grassroots feelings in this regard. It probably would have come back and said that the average Canadian did not want the age of consensual sex to go from age 16 to 14. Had the Senate been effective and had the authority to turn that back, this would be a different country today.

Let us look at some other things that happened. Three years ago the government changed the fact that the *Lord's Prayer* was read in the House of Commons. Would that have occurred if the Senate had been effective and elected, with no particular ties to the government? After talking to some senators, I think the answer is no.

The fact is that the government said it shall occur. It was in majority and its good old boys in the other place would rubber

stamp it because they are in majority as well. That is the problem with an unelected Senate which is not effective.

People across the country are wondering why it is, with all the good people in opposition, that laws get passed anyway, even though they are unpopular and even though there is a Liberal government elected with 38% of the vote. The fact is that legislation does not have to be checked through grassroots individuals. It just has to come in from cabinet and passed by telling people to put up their hands. Then it goes over to the Senate and the good old boys are told to stamp it because that is what they are there for. That is totally improper.

Does my colleague believe that Canada would be a different place if the Prime Minister were not appointing his friends to the Senate?

Mr. Rob Anders: Mr. Speaker, if the Prime Minister of the land had abided by his promises when he was running for Liberal leader in 1990 and if he had abided by the mandate that was given him when he won the election in 1993, the Senate would be a 34% different place than it is today. It would be well on the way to being an elected and effective place, which he said he wanted to see in the country.

• (2155)

Mr. Randy White (Langley—Abbotsford, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, now that I have the full attention of the real guy who is standing here, I would like to make some comments pointed to the Prime Minister. He often says in question period, after we go at him with this Senate issue, that the Reform Party is responsible for having an unelected Senate.

What the Prime Minister does not say to most Canadians is that at that time there was one Reform member in the House of Commons. It was a number of provinces and millions of Canadians who did not go for the Charlottetown accord. For the Prime Minister to give us—

An hon. member: Who was that one member?

Mr. Randy White: That one member is here too. Here she is, the member for Beaver River. Now that we have the Prime Minister and the member for Beaver River, let us have a contest to see who is right.

The point is that many Canadians voted against it. I want to talk about one issue I am particularly concerned about, and that is drugs. The problem in the country, as I said before, is that the government has the majority. Even though it was elected by 38% of the people in the country, it has the audacity to bring in its own agenda and not the agenda of the people.

I keep referring in the House to the drugs on the street and the drug addiction on the street. The problems with drugs in the country are very serious. We keep raising in the House of Com-

Speaker's Ruling

mons that addiction in prisons, of all places, is at a critical stage. We keep coming back to it and the government keeps saying that it will study it. We are long past that situation.

I go to various cities to talk to various people about this problem. In Vancouver there are some 4,000 to 5,000 addicts. In British Columbia there are 15,000 addicts. They do not understand some things. They do not understand why we spend money on foolish projects and in many cases not one red dime comes from the federal government to areas that need it such as to help people who are addicted to drugs and alcohol.

I see a mess in front of me in the waste report produced by the public accounts chairman. This is not a prop. This is reality. It talks about \$1,057,933 for the Canadian Canoe Museum. That is just one item, but if we talk to people on the streets who need money to help those who are addicted, they ask what is more important.

Where are the priorities of the government? Members across the way do not know what they are talking about. How is it that the Canada Council used \$55,000 of taxpayers money to bankroll a lesbian porno film titled, *Bubbles Galore*? The movie won the best film award at the Freakzone International Festival of Trash Cinema in France.

How is it that we spend \$55,000 of the taxpayers dollars on that trash and do not have one red dime to help those who are addicted on the streets? Why is that?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): I must interrupt the hon. member at this time.

Before I put the question, I would like to advise the House that the point of order raised by the hon. member for St. Albert will be answered by the Speaker after members have been summoned to the Chamber.

• (2200)

[*Translation*]

It being 10 p.m. it is my duty to interrupt proceedings and put forthwith all questions necessary to dispose of the business of supply.

Call in the members.

• (2225)

Before the taking of the vote:

* * *

POINTS OF ORDER

APPROPRIATION BILL—SPEAKER'S RULING

The Speaker: Order, please. I am now prepared to give my ruling on the point of order raised earlier this evening.

[*English*]

The hon. member for St. Albert earlier tonight raised a most interesting point of order challenging the notion of multi-year appropriations and I thank him for doing so.

I must confess that ever since the supply bill was made available to members earlier today, I have had several discussions with the Clerk and his assistants on the very matter raised by the member.

The House is quite aware of the concept of the fiscal year which runs from April to March, and the concept of the yearly appropriation bill which must be based on the estimates for a fiscal year and which must be adopted by parliament to cover the government's expenses for that fiscal year.

[*Translation*]

We are very familiar with these notions of fiscal year and annual appropriations, which are the cornerstones of our parliamentary financial process.

[*English*]

After having looked carefully at the supply bill which is now before the House, I am satisfied that indeed it is based on the main estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2000. Indeed that fact is well expressed by the short title of the bill which reads in clause 1 "Appropriation Act No. 2, 1999-2000".

The multi-year appropriation authority covered in schedule 2 of the bill is based on legislation approved by parliament in 1998 by which Parks Canada Agency is granted the authority to carry over to the end of 2000-01 fiscal year the unexpended balance of money in fiscal year 1999-2000. But in my view, that money is originally appropriated for the 1999-2000 fiscal year. Despite what the long title says, we are still talking here about a yearly appropriation bill for the fiscal year 1999-2000. What is included in schedule 2 and referred to in clause 2 is there strictly for information purposes.

My ruling is therefore that the supply bill is properly before the House.

However, I must express strong reservations about the reference in the long title of the bill to two financial years. The reference is not at all needed and is in fact, in my view, misleading. It is obviously too late in the supply process to envisage an amendment to rectify that anomaly, unless of course the House were to proceed immediately to do so by unanimous consent.

In any case, I do hope that in future supply bills the government will ensure that the title reflects that the appropriation requested from parliament, in keeping with our longstanding practice, is for the single fiscal year covered by the estimates.

I want to thank the hon. member for St. Albert for his vigilance.

Mr. John Williams: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Based on the ruling which you have just given, I would seek

Supply

unanimous consent to change the title of Bill C-86 to "an act for granting to Her Majesty certain sums of money for the public service of Canada for the financial year ending March 31, 2000".

• (2230)

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

* * *

SUPPLY

ALLOTTED DAY—NISGA'A TREATY

The House resumed from June 3 consideration of the motion and of the amendment.

The Speaker: The question is on the amendment.

• (2240)

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

*(Division No. 546)***YEAS**

Members

Abbott	Ablonczy
Anders	Bailey
Breitkreuz (Yellowhead)	Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville)
Cadman	Casson
Chatters	Duncan
Epp	Forseth
Gilmour	Gouk
Grewal	Grey (Edmonton North)
Hanger	Hart
Hill (Macleod)	Hill (Prince George—Peace River)
Hilstrom	Hoepfner
Jaffer	Johnston
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)	Kerpan
Konrad	Lowther
Lunn	Manning
Mark	Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)
Mayfield	McNally
Meredith	Mills (Red Deer)
Morrison	Nunziata
Obhrai	Pankiw
Penson	Ramsay
Reynolds	Ritz
Schmidt	Scott (Skeena)
Solberg	Stinson
Strahl	Thompson (Wild Rose)
Vellacott	White (Langley—Abbotsford)
White (North Vancouver)	Williams—54

NAYS

Members

Adams	Alarie
Alcock	Assad
Assadourian	Asselin
Augustine	Bachand (Richmond—Arthabaska)
Baker	Bakopanos
Beaumier	Bélair
Bélanger	Bellehumeur
Bellemare	Bennett
Bergeron	Bernier (Bonaventure—Gaspé—
Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Pabok)	Bernier (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Bertrand	Bevilacqua

Bigras	Blondin-Andrew
Bonin	Bonwick
Borotsik	Boudria
Bradshaw	Brison
Brown	Bryden
Bulte	Byrne
Caccia	Calder
Cannis	Canuel
Caplan	Cardin
Carroll	Casey
Catterall	Cauchon
Chamberlain	Chan
Charbonneau	Chrétien (Frontenac—Mégantic)
Chrétien (Saint-Maurice)	Coderre
Collenette	Comuzzi
Crête	Cullen
Dalphon-DuGiral	Davies
de Savoye	Debien
Desjarlais	Desrochers
DeVillers	Dhaliwal
Dion	Discepola
Dockrill	Doyle
Dromisky	Drouin
Dubé (Lévis-et-Chutes-de-la-Chaudière)	Dubé (Madawaska—Restigouche)
Duceppe	Duhamel
Dumas	Earle
Easter	Eggleton
Finestone	Finlay
Folco	Fontana
Fournier	Gagliano
Gagnon	Galloway
Gauthier	Girard-Bujold
Godfrey	Godin (Acadie—Bathurst)
Godin (Châteauguay)	Goodale
Graham	Gray (Windsor West)
Grose	Guarnieri
Guay	Harb
Harvard	Harvey
Herron	Hubbard
Ianno	Iftody
Jackson	Jennings
Jones	Jordan
Karetak-Lindell	Karygiannis
Keddy (South Shore)	Keyes
Kilger (Stormont—Dundas—Charlottenburgh)	Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)
Knutson	Kraft Sloan
Laliberte	Lalonde
Lastewka	Lavigne
Lebel	Lee
Leung	Lill
Limoges (Windsor—St. Clair)	Lincoln
Longfield	Loubier
MacAulay	MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough)
Mahoney	Malhi
Maloney	Mancini
Manley	Marceau
Marchand	Marchi
Marleau	Martin (LaSalle—Émard)
Martin (Winnipeg Centre)	Massé
Matthews	McCormick
McDonough	McGuire
McKay (Scarborough East)	McLellan (Edmonton West)
McTeague	McWhinney
Ménard	Mercier
Milliken	Mills (Broadview—Greenwood)
Mitchell	Muise
Murray	Myers
Nault	Normand
Nystrom	O'Brien (Labrador)
O'Brien (London—Fanshawe)	O'Reilly
Pagtakhan	Paradis
Parrish	Parry
Peric	Perron
Peterson	Pettigrew
Phinney	Picard (Drummond)
Pillitteri	Plamondon
Power	Pratt
Price	Proctor
Proud	Provenzano
Redman	Reed
Richardson	Riis
Robillard	Robinson
Rock	Saada
Sauvageau	Scott (Fredericton)
Sekora	Serré
Solomon	Speller
St. Denis	Steele
Stewart (Brant)	Stewart (Northumberland)
St-Hilaire	St-Jacques

St-Julien
Telegdi
Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)
Tremblay (Lac-Saint-Jean)
Ur
Vanclief
Venne
Wappel
Wayne
Wilfert

Szabo
Thibeault
Torsney
Turp
Valeri
Vautour
Volpe
Wasylycia-Leis
Whelan
Wood —219

PAIRED MEMBERS

Anderson
Bachand (Saint-Jean)
Clouthier
Laurin
Rocheleau

Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre)
Barnes
Guimond
Mifflin
Tremblay (Rimouski—Mitis)

The Speaker: I declare the amendment defeated.

Mr. Bob Kilger: Mr. Speaker, I believe you would find consent to apply the results of the vote just taken to the Reform opposition motion concerning the Nisga'a treaty.

The Speaker: Is there agreement to proceed in such a fashion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. John Solomon: Mr. Speaker, I would like to add to the New Democratic Party vote of nay to this motion, the member for Yukon who has just arrived.

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

(Division No. 547)

YEAS

Members

Abbott
Anders
Breitkreuz (Yellowhead)
Cadman
Chatters
Epp
Gilmour
Grewal
Hanger
Hill (Macleod)
Hilstrom
Jaffer
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Konrad
Lunn
Mark
Mayfield
Meredith
Morrison
Ohrhai
Penson
Reynolds
Schmidt
Solberg
Strahl

Ablonczy
Bailey
Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville)
Casson
Duncan
Forseth
Gouk
Grey (Edmonton North)
Hart
Hill (Prince George—Peace River)
Hoepfner
Johnston
Kerpan
Lowther
Manning
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)
McNally
Mills (Red Deer)
Nunziata
Pankiw
Ramsay
Ritz
Scott (Skeena)
Stinson
Thompson (Wild Rose)

Vellacott
White (North Vancouver)

White (Langley—Abbotsford)
Williams—54

Supply

NAYS

Members

Adams
Alcock
Assadourian
Augustine
Baker
Beaumier
Bélanger
Bellemare
Bergeron
Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Pabok
Bertrand
Bigras
Bonin
Borotsik
Bradshaw
Brown
Bulte
Caccia
Cannis
Caplan
Carroll
Catterall
Chamberlain
Charbonneau
Chrétien (Saint-Maurice)
Collenette
Crête
Dalphond-Guiral
de Savoye
Desjarlais
DeVillers
Dion
Dockrill
Dromisky
Dubé (Lévis-et-Chutes-de-la-Chaudière)
Duceppe
Dumas
Easter
Finestone
Folco
Fournier
Gagnon
Gauthier
Godfrey
Godin (Châteauguay)
Graham
Grose
Guay
Hardy
Harvey
Hubbard
Iftody
Jennings
Jordan
Karygiannis
Keyes
Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)
Kraft Sloan
Lalonde
Lavigne
Lee
Lill
Lincoln
Loubier
MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough)
Malhi
Mancini
Marceau
Marchi
Martin (LaSalle—Énard)
Massé
McCormick
McGuire
McLellan (Edmonton West)

Alarie
Assad
Asselin
Bachand (Richmond—Arthabaska)
Bakopanos
Bélair
Bellehumeur
Bennett
Bernier (Bonaventure—Gaspé—
Bernier (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Bevilacqua
Blondin-Andrew
Bonwick
Boudria
Brisson
Bryden
Byrne
Calder
Canuel
Cardin
Casey
Cauchon
Chan
Chrétien (Frontenac—Mégantic)
Coderre
Comuzzi
Cullen
Davies
Debien
Desrochers
Dhaliwal
Discepola
Doyle
Drouin
Dubé (Madawaska—Restigouche)
Duhamel
Earle
Eggleton
Finlay
Fontana
Gagliano
Galloway
Girard-Bujold
Godin (Acadie—Bathurst)
Goodale
Gray (Windsor West)
Guarnieri
Harb
Harvard
Herron
Ianno
Jackson
Jones
Karetak-Lindell
Keddy (South Shore)
Kilger (Stormont—Dundas—Charlottenburgh)
Knutson
Laliberte
Lastewka
Lebel
Leung
Limoges (Windsor—St. Clair)
Longfield
MacAulay
Mahoney
Maloney
Manley
Marchand
Marleau
Martin (Winnipeg Centre)
Matthews
McDonough
McKay (Scarborough East)
McTeague

Supply

McWhinney	Ménard
Mercier	Milliken
Mills (Broadview—Greenwood)	Mitchell
Muise	Murray
Myers	Nault
Normand	Nystrom
O'Brien (Labrador)	O'Brien (London—Fanshawe)
O'Reilly	Pagtakhan
Paradis	Parrish
Patry	Peric
Perron	Peterson
Pettigrew	Phinney
Picard (Drummond)	Pillitteri
Plamondon	Power
Pratt	Price
Proctor	Proud
Provenzano	Redman
Reed	Richardson
Riis	Robillard
Robinson	Rock
Saada	Sauvageau
Scott (Fredericton)	Sekora
Serré	Solomon
Speller	St. Denis
Steckle	Stewart (Brant)
Stewart (Northumberland)	St-Hilaire
St-Jacques	St-Julien
Szabo	Telegdi
Thibeault	Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)
Torsney	Tremblay (Lac-Saint-Jean)
Turp	Ur
Valeri	Vanclief
Vautour	Venne
Volpe	Wappel
Wasylcia-Leis	Wayne
Whelan	Wilfert
Wood —220	

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

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Speaker: In my opinion the yeas have it.

And more than five members having risen:

● (2255)

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

(Division No. 548)

PAIRED MEMBERS

Anderson	Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre)
Bachand (Saint-Jean)	Barnes
Clouthier	Guimond
Laurin	Mifflin
Rocheleau	Tremblay (Rimouski—Mitis)

The Speaker: I declare the motion defeated.

ALLOTTED DAY—MARRIAGE

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

The Speaker: Pursuant to Standing Order 81(18), the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the main motion relating to the Business of Supply.

The question is on the main motion, as amended. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

YEAS

Members

Abbott	Abлонczy
Adams	Alcock
Anders	Assad
Assadourian	Asselin
Augustine	Bailey
Baker	Bakopanos
Belair	Bellemare
Bernier (Tobique—Mactaquac)	Bertrand
Bevilacqua	Blondin-Andrew
Bonin	Bonwick
Borotsik	Boudria
Bradshaw	Breitkreuz (Yellowhead)
Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville)	Brown
Bryden	Byrne
Cadman	Calder
Cannis	Canuel
Caplan	Cardin
Casey	Casson
Catterall	Cauchon
Chamberlain	Chan
Charbonneau	Chatters
Chrétien (Frontenac—Mégantic)	Chrétien (Saint-Maurice)
Coderre	Collenette
Comuzzi	Cullen
Desjarlais	Desrochers
Dhaliwal	Dion
Discepola	Doyle
Dromisky	Drouin
Dubé (Madawaska—Restigouche)	Duhamel
Duncan	Easter
Eggleton	Epp
Fontana	Forseth
Fournier	Gagliano
Galloway	Gauthier
Gilmour	Godin (Châteauguay)
Goodale	Gouk
Gray (Windsor West)	Grewal
Grey (Edmonton North)	Grose
Guarnieri	Hanger
Harb	Hart
Harvard	Herron
Hill (Macleod)	Hill (Prince George—Peace River)

Hilstrom
Hubbard
Iftody
Jaffer
Johnston
Jordan
Karygiannis
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Keyes
Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)
Konrad
Lavigne
Lee
Limoges (Windsor—St. Clair)
Longfield
Lunn
MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough)
Malhi
Manley
Marchand
Mark
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)
Massé
Mayfield
McGuire
McLellan (Edmonton West)
McTeague
Mercier
Mills (Broadview—Greenwood)
Mitchell
Muise
Myers
Normand
Obhrai
O'Brien (London—Fanshawe)
Pagtakhan
Paradis
Patry
Peric
Peterson
Phinney
Pillitteri
Pratt
Provenzano
Redman
Reynolds
Riis
Robillard
Saada
Scott (Fredericton)
Sekora
Solberg
Speller
Steckle
Stewart (Northumberland)
St-Julien
Szabo
Thibeault
Thompson (Wild Rose)
Ur
Vanclief
Venne
Wappel
Whelan
White (North Vancouver)
Williams

Hoepfner
Ianno
Jackson
Jennings
Jones
Karetak-Lindell
Keddy (South Shore)
Kerpan
Kilger (Stormont—Dundas—Charlottenburgh)
Knutson
Lastewka
Lebel
Leung
Lincoln
Lowther
MacAulay
Mahoney
Maloney
Manning
Marchi
Marleau
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)
Matthews
McCormick
McKay (Scarborough East)
McNally
McWhinney
Meredith
Mills (Red Deer)
Morrison
Murray
Nault
Nunziata
O'Brien (Labrador)
O'Reilly
Pankiw
Parrish
Penson
Perron
Pettigrew
Pickard (Chatham—Kent Essex)
Power
Proud
Ramsay
Reed
Richardson
Ritz
Rock
Schmidt
Scott (Skeena)
Serré
Solomon
St. Denis
Stewart (Brant)
Stinson
Strahl
Telegdi
Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)
Torsney
Valeri
Vellacott
Volpe
Wayne
White (Langley—Abbotsford)
Wilfert
Wood—216

NAYS

Members

Alarie
Beaumier
Bellehumeur
Bergeron
Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Pabok
Brison
Crête

Bachand (Richmond—Arthabaska)
Bélangier
Bennett
Bernier (Bonaventure—Gaspé—
Bigras
Caccia

Supply

Dalphon-Duval
de Savoye
DeVillers
Dubé (Lévis-et-Chutes-de-la-Chaudière)
Dumas
Finestone
Folco
Girard-Bujold
Graham
Hardy
Kraft Sloan
Lalonde
Loubier
Marceau
McDonough
Nystrom
Plamondon
Proctor
Sauvageau
St-Jacques
Turp
Wasylcyia-Leis—55

Davies
Debien
Dockrill
Duceppe
Earle
Finlay
Gagnon
Godin (Acadie—Bathurst)
Guay
Harvey
Laliberté
Lill
Mançini
Martin (Winnipeg Centre)
Ménard
Picard (Drummond)
Price
Robinson
St-Hilaire
Tremblay (Lac-Saint-Jean)
Vautour

PAIRED MEMBERS

Anderson
Bachand (Saint-Jean)
Clouthier
Laurin
Rocheleau

Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre)
Barnes
Guimond
Mifflin
Tremblay (Rimouski—Mitis)

The Speaker: I declare the motion, as amended, carried.

* * *

MAIN ESTIMATES, 1999-2000

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 1—PARLIAMENT

The House resumed consideration of Motion No. 1.

The Speaker: The House will now proceed to the taking of several recorded divisions on motions relating to the main estimates standing in the name of the hon. President of the Treasury Board.

I wish to inform the House that Motions Nos. 9 to 184 standing in the name of the President of the Treasury Board will not be put to the House.

The question is on Motion No. 1. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt to the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

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

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Speaker: In my opinion the nays have it.

And more than five members having risen:

Supply

● (2305)

[Translation]

During the taking of the vote:

Mr. André Harvey: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I wish to inform you that the Progressive Conservative members present will vote yes on the motion.

[English]

The Speaker: Order, please. We have a little bit of a different situation. I would ask this question: Are there any more people who wish to vote nay on this vote? If there are, I would like them to stand now.

It is rather unusual, but because we are taking a vote one by one, if those who want to vote yea have not already done so, I invite them to do it now.

(The House divided on Motion No. 1, which was agreed to on the following division:)

(Division No. 549)

YEAS

Members

Adams	Alcock
Assad	Assadourian
Augustine	Bachand (Richmond—Arthabaska)
Baker	Bakopanos
Beaumier	Bélair
Bélanger	Bellemare
Bennett	Bernier (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Bertrand	Bevilacqua
Blondin-Andrew	Bonin
Bonwick	Borotsik
Boudria	Bradshaw
Brison	Brown
Bryden	Bulte
Byrne	Caccia
Calder	Cannis
Caplan	Carroll
Casey	Catterall
Cauchon	Chamberlain
Chan	Charbonneau
Chrétien (Saint-Maurice)	Coderre
Collenette	Comuzzi
Cullen	DeVillers
Dhalival	Dion
Discepola	Doyle
Dromisky	Drouin
Dubé (Madawaska—Restigouche)	Duhamel
Easter	Eggleton
Finestone	Finlay
Folco	Fontana
Fry	Gagliano
Godfrey	Goodale
Graham	Gray (Windsor West)
Grose	Guarnieri
Harb	Harvard
Harvey	Herron
Hubbard	Ianno
Iftody	Jackson
Jennings	Jones
Jordan	Karetak-Lindell
Karygiannis	Keddy (South Shore)
Keys	Kilger (Stormont—Dundas—Charlottenburgh)
Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)	Knutson
Kraft Sloan	Lastewka
Lavigne	Lee
Leung	Limoges (Windsor—St. Clair)
Lincoln	MacAulay
MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough)	Mahoney
Malhi	Maloney
Manley	Marchi
Marleau	Martin (LaSalle—Émard)
Massé	Matthews

McCormick	McGuire
McKay (Scarborough East)	McLellan (Edmonton West)
McTeague	McWhinney
Milliken	Mills (Broadview—Greenwood)
Minna	Mitchell
Muise	Murray
Myers	Nault
Normand	O'Brien (London—Fanshawe)
O'Reilly	Pagtakhan
Paradis	Parrish
Patry	Peric
Peterson	Pettigrew
Phinney	Pickard (Chatham—Kent Essex)
Pillitteri	Power
Pratt	Price
Proud	Provenzano
Redman	Reed
Richardson	Robillard
Rock	Saada
Scott (Fredericton)	Sekora
Serré	Speller
St. Denis	Steckle
Stewart (Brant)	Stewart (Northumberland)
St-Jacques	St-Julien
Szabo	Telegdi
Thibeault	Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)
Torsney	Ur
Valeri	Vanclief
Volpe	Wappel
Wayne	Whelan
Wilfert	Wood—164

NAYS

Members

Abbott	Ablonczy
Alarie	Anders
Asselin	Bailey
Bellehumeur	Bergeron
Bernier (Bonaventure—Gaspé—Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Pabok)	Breitkreuz (Yellowhead)
Bigras	Cadman
Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville)	Cardin
Canuel	Chatters
Casson	Crête
Chrétien (Frontenac—Mégantic)	Davies
Dalphon-DuGiral	Debien
de Savoye	Desrochers
Desjarlais	Dubé (Lévis-et-Chutes-de-la-Chaudière)
Dockrill	Dumas
Duceppe	Earle
Duncan	Forseth
Epp	Gagnon
Fournier	Gauthier
Galloway	Girard-Bujold
Gilmour	Godin (Châteauguay)
Godin (Acadie—Bathurst)	Grewal
Gouk	Guay
Grey (Edmonton North)	Hardy
Hanger	Hill (Macleod)
Hart	Hilstrom
Hill (Prince George—Peace River)	Jaffer
Hoeppner	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Johnston	Konrad
Kerpan	Lalonde
Laliberte	Lill
Lebel	Lowther
Loubier	Mancini
Lunn	Marceau
Manning	Mark
Marchand	Martin (Winnipeg Centre)
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)	McDonough
Mayfield	Ménard
McNally	Meredith
Mercier	Morrison
Mills (Red Deer)	Nystrom
Nunziata	O'Brien (Labrador)
Obhrai	Penson
Pankiw	Picard (Drummond)
Perron	Proctor
Plamondon	Reynolds
Ramsay	Ritz
Riis	Sauvageau
Robinson	Scott (Skeena)
Schmidt	

Solberg
St-Hilaire
Strahl
Tremblay (Lac-Saint-Jean)
Vauthour
Venne
White (Langley—Abbotsford)
Williams—112

Solomon
Stinson
Thompson (Wild Rose)
Turp
Vellacott
Wasylycia-Leis
White (North Vancouver)

PAIRED MEMBERS

Anderson
Bachand (Saint-Jean)
Clouthier
Laurin
Rocheleau

Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre)
Barnes
Guimond
Mifflin
Tremblay (Rimouski—Mitis)

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

The next question is on Motion No. 2.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE NO. 90—CANADIAN HERITAGE

Hon. Marcel Massé (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 2

That Vote 90, in the amount of \$59,170,000, under CANADIAN HERITAGE—National Film Board—Revolving Fund, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2000 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Bob Kilger: Mr. Speaker, I believe you would find unanimous consent to have the members who voted on the previous motion recorded as having voted on the motion now before the House, with the Liberal members voting yes.

[*English*]

The Speaker: Is there agreement to proceed in such a fashion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Chuck Strahl: Mr. Speaker, notwithstanding *Bubbles Galore*, we are voting no to this motion.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Mr. Speaker, the members of the Bloc Québécois vote against this motion.

• (2310)

[*English*]

Mr. John Solomon: Mr. Speaker, members of the NDP present this evening vote yes to this motion.

Supply

[*Translation*]

Mr. André Harvey: Mr. Speaker, the Progressive Conservative members present will vote no to this motion.

[*English*]

Mr. John Nunziata: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the independents present in the House, we vote no.

The Speaker: So there will not be any confusion, the members who are standing, I would like them to declare which way they will vote.

Mr. Roger Gallaway: Mr. Speaker, I will vote yes.

Mr. Alex Shepherd: Mr. Speaker, I will vote yes.

Mr. Lawrence D. O'Brien: Mr. Speaker, I will vote yes.

Mrs. Judi Longfield: Mr. Speaker, I will vote yes.

(The House divided on Motion No. 2, which was agreed to on the following division:)

(*Division No. 550*)

YEAS

Members

Adams	Alcock
Assad	Assadourian
Augustine	Baker
Bakopanos	Beaumier
Bélaïr	Bélangier
Bellemare	Bennett
Bertrand	Bevilacqua
Blondin-Andrew	Bonin
Bonwick	Boudria
Bradshaw	Brown
Bryden	Bulte
Byrne	Caccia
Calder	Cannis
Caplan	Carroll
Catterall	Cauchon
Chamberlain	Chan
Charbonneau	Chrétien (Saint-Maurice)
Coderre	Collenette
Comuzzi	Cullen
Davies	Desjarlais
DeVillers	Dhaliwal
Dion	Discepolo
Dockrill	Dromisky
Drouin	Duhamel
Earle	Easter
Eggleton	Finestone
Finlay	Folco
Fontana	Fry
Gagliano	Galloway
Godfrey	Godin (Acadie—Bathurst)
Goodale	Graham
Gray (Windsor West)	Grose
Guarnieri	Harb
Hardy	Harvard
Hubbard	Ianno
Iftody	Jackson
Jennings	Jordan
Karetak-Lindell	Karygiannis
Keyes	Kilger (Stormont—Dundas—Charlottenburgh)
Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)	Knutson
Kraft Sloan	Laliberte
Lastewka	Lavigne
Lee	Leung

Supply

Lill
Lincoln
Mahoney
Maloney
Manley
Marleau
Martin (Winnipeg Centre)
McCormick
McGuire
McLellan (Edmonton West)
McWhinney
Mills (Broadview—Greenwood)
Mitchell
Myers
Normand
O'Brien (Labrador)
O'Reilly
Paradis
Patry
Peterson
Phinney
Pillitteri
Proctor
Provenzano
Reed
Riis
Robinson
Saada
Sekora
Solomon
St. Denis
Stewart (Brant)
St-Julien
Telegdi
Torsney
Valeri
Vautour
Wappel
Whelan
Wood—165

Limoges (Windsor—St. Clair)
MacAulay
Malhi
Mancini
Marchi
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)
Massé
McDonough
McKay (Scarborough East)
McTeague
Milliken
Minna
Murray
Nault
Nystrom
O'Brien (London—Fanshawe)
Pagtakhan
Parrish
Peric
Pettigrew
Pickard (Chatham—Kent Essex)
Pratt
Proud
Redman
Richardson
Robillard
Rock
Scott (Fredericton)
Serré
Speller
Steckle
Stewart (Northumberland)
Szabo
Thibeault
Ur
Vanclief
Volpe
Wasylycia-Leis
Willfert

Nunziata
Pankiw
Perron
Plamondon
Price
Reynolds
Sauvageau
Scott (Skeena)
St-Hilaire
St-Jacques
Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)
Tremblay (Lac-Saint-Jean)
Vellacott
Wayne
White (North Vancouver)
Obhrai
Penson
Picard (Drummond)
Power
Ramsay
Ritz
Schmidt
Solberg
Stinson
Strahl
Thompson (Wild Rose)
Turp
Venne
White (Langley—Abbotsford)
Williams—111

PAIRED MEMBERS

Anderson
Bachand (Saint-Jean)
Clouthier
Laurin
Rocheleau
Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre)
Barnes
Guimond
Mifflyn
Tremblay (Rimouski—Mitis)

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

● (2315)

NAYS

Members

Abbott
Alarie
Asselin
Bailey
Bergeron
Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Pabok)
Bigras
Breitkreuz (Yellowhead)
Brison
Canuel
Casey
Chatters
Crête
de Savoye
Desrochers
Dubé (Lévis-et-Chutes-de-la-Chaudière)
Duceppe
Duncan
Forseth
Gagnon
Gilmour
Godin (Châteauguay)
Grewal
Guay
Hart
Herron
Hill (Prince George—Peace River)
Hoepfner
Johnston
Keddy (South Shore)
Kerpan
Lalonde
Loubier
Lunn
Manning
Marchand
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)
Mayfield
Ménard
Meredith
Morrison

Ablonczy
Anders
Bachand (Richmond—Arthabaska)
Bellehumeur
Bernier (Bonaventure—Gaspé—
Bernier (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Borotsik
Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville)
Cadman
Cardin
Casson
Chrétien (Frontenac—Mégantic)
Dalphond-Guiral
Debien
Doyle
Dubé (Madawaska—Restigouche)
Dumas
Epp
Fournier
Gauthier
Girard-Bujold
Gouk
Grey (Edmonton North)
Hanger
Harvey
Hill (Macleod)
Hilstrom
Jaffer
Jones
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Konrad
Lebel
Lowther
MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough)
Marceau
Mark
Matthews
McNally
Mercier
Mills (Red Deer)
Muise

Mr. Bob Kilger: Mr. Speaker, just for my clarification, if we have not voted on Vote 1 under Public Works and Government Services, I would then ask the House if we could have unanimous consent to propose that members who voted on the previous motion be recorded as having voted on the motion now before the House, with Liberal members voting yea, and then I will follow afterward with an application on the other motions.

The Speaker: Is there unanimous consent to proceed in such a fashion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 1—PUBLIC WORKS AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES CANADA

Hon. Marcel Massé (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 3

That Vote 1, in the amount of \$1,520,010,000, under PUBLIC WORKS AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES CANADA—Operating expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2000 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

The Speaker: The question is on Motion No. 3.

Mr. Chuck Strahl: Mr. Speaker, Reform Party members present vote no to this motion

[Translation]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Mr. Speaker, the members of the Bloc Québécois will oppose this motion.

[English]

Mr. John Solomon: Mr. Speaker, members of the NDP vote no to this motion.

[Translation]

Mr. André Harvey: Mr. Speaker, the Progressive Conservative members present will vote no to this motion.

[English]

Mr. John Nunziata: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the residents of York South—Weston, I would vote yes.

(The House divided on Motion No. 3, which was agreed to on the following division:)

(Division No. 551)

YEAS

Members

Adams	Alcock
Assad	Assadourian
Augustine	Baker
Bakopanos	Beaumier
Bélair	Bélanger
Bellemare	Bennett
Bertrand	Bevilacqua
Blondin-Andrew	Bonin
Bonwick	Boudria
Bradshaw	Brown
Bryden	Bulte
Byrne	Caccia
Calder	Cannis
Caplan	Carroll
Catterall	Cauchon
Chamberlain	Chan
Charbonneau	Chrétien (Saint-Maurice)
Coderre	Collenette
Comuzzi	Cullen
De Villers	Dhaliwal
Dion	Discepola
Dromisky	Drouin
Duhamel	Easter
Eggleton	Finestone
Finlay	Folco
Fontana	Fry
Gagliano	Galloway
Godfrey	Goodale
Graham	Gray (Windsor West)
Grose	Guarnieri
Harb	Harvard
Hubbard	Ianno
Iftody	Jackson
Jennings	Jordan
Karetak-Lindell	Karygiannis
Keys	Kilger (Stormont—Dundas—Charlottenburgh)
Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)	Knutson
Kraft Sloan	Lastewka
Lavigne	Lee
Leung	Limoges (Windsor—St. Clair)
Lincoln	MacAulay
Mahoney	Malhi
Maloney	Manley
Marchi	Marleau
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)	Massé
McCormick	McGuire
McKay (Scarborough East)	McLellan (Edmonton West)
McTeague	McWhinney
Milliken	Mills (Broadview—Greenwood)
Minna	Mitchell

Murray
Nault
Nunziata
O'Brien (London—Fanshawe)
Pagtakhan
Parrish
Peric
Pettigrew
Pickard (Chatham—Kent Essex)
Pratt
Provenzano
Reed
Robillard
Saada
Sekora
Speller
Steckle
Stewart (Northumberland)
Szabo
Thibeault
Ur
Vanclief
Wappel
Wilfert

Supply

Myers
Normand
O'Brien (Labrador)
O'Reilly
Paradis
Patry
Peterson
Phinney
Pillitteri
Proud
Redman
Richardson
Rock
Scott (Fredericton)
Serré
St. Denis
Stewart (Brant)
St-Julien
Telegdi
Torsney
Valeri
Volpe
Whelan
Wood—148

NAYS

Members

Abbott	Ablonczy
Alarie	Anders
Asselin	Bachand (Richmond—Arthabaska)
Bailey	Bellehumeur
Bergeron	Bernier (Bonaventure—Gaspé—
Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Pabok)	Bernier (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Bigras	Borotsik
Breitkreuz (Yellowhead)	Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville)
Brisson	Cadman
Canuel	Cardin
Casey	Casson
Chatters	Chrétien (Frontenac—Mégantic)
Crête	Dalphond-Guiral
Davies	de Savoye
Debien	Desjarlais
Desrochers	Dockrill
Doyle	Dubé (Lévis-et-Chutes-de-la-Chaudière)
Dubé (Madawaska—Restigouche)	Duceppe
Dumas	Duncan
Earle	Epp
Forseth	Fournier
Gagnon	Gauthier
Gilmour	Girard-Bujold
Godin (Acadie—Bathurst)	Godin (Châteauguay)
Gouk	Grewal
Grey (Edmonton North)	Guay
Hanger	Hardy
Hart	Harvey
Herron	Hill (Macleod)
Hill (Prince George—Peace River)	Hilstrom
Hoepfner	Jaffer
Johnston	Jones
Keddy (South Shore)	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Kerpan	Konrad
Laliberte	Lalonde
Lebel	Lill
Loubier	Lowther
Lunn	MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough)
Mancini	Manning
Marceau	Marchand
Mark	Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)
Martin (Winnipeg Centre)	Matthews
Mayfield	McDonough
McNally	Ménard
Mercier	Meredith
Mills (Red Deer)	Morrison
Muise	Nystrom
Obhrai	Pankiw
Penson	Perron
Picard (Drummond)	Plamondon
Power	Price
Proctor	Ramsay
Reynolds	

Supply

Riis	Ritz
Robinson	Sauvageau
Schmidt	Scott (Skeena)
Solberg	Solomon
St-Hilaire	Stinson
St-Jacques	Strahl
Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)	Thompson (Wild Rose)
Tremblay (Lac-Saint-Jean)	Turp
Vautour	Vellacott
Venne	Wasylycia-Leis
Wayne	White (Langley—Abbotsford)
White (North Vancouver)	Williams—128

PAIRED MEMBERS

Anderson	Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre)
Bachand (Saint-Jean)	Barnes
Clouthier	Guimond
Laurin	Mifflin
Rochelleau	Tremblay (Rimouski—Mitis)

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Mr. Bob Kilger: Mr. Speaker, I believe you would find consent to apply the results of the vote just taken to the following items under Public Works and Government Services: Votes Nos. 5, 10, 15, 25 and 30.

The Speaker: Is there agreement to proceed in such a fashion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 5—PUBLIC WORKS AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES CANADA

Hon. Marcel Massé (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 4

That Vote 5, in the amount of \$314,672,000, under PUBLIC WORKS AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES CANADA—Capital expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2000 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

(The House divided on Motion No. 4, which was agreed to on the following division:)

(Division No. 552)

YEAS

Members

Adams	Alcock
Assad	Assadourian
Augustine	Baker
Bakopanos	Beaumier
Béclair	Bélangier
Bellemare	Bennett
Bertrand	Bevilacqua
Blondin-Andrew	Bonin
Bonwick	Boudria
Bradshaw	Brown
Bryden	Bulte
Byrne	Caccia
Calder	Cannis
Caplan	Carroll
Catterall	Cauchon
Chamberlain	Chan
Charbonneau	Chrétien (Saint-Maurice)
Coderre	Collenette
Comuzzi	Cullen
DeVillers	Dhaliwal
Dion	Discepola
Dromisky	Drouin
Duhamel	Easter

Eggleton	Finestone
Finlay	Folco
Fontana	Fry
Gagliano	Galloway
Godfrey	Goodale
Graham	Gray (Windsor West)
Grose	Guarnieri
Harb	Harvard
Hubbard	Ianno
Iftody	Jackson
Jennings	Jordan
Karetak-Lindell	Karygiannis
Keyes	Kilger (Stormont—Dundas—Charlottenburgh)
Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)	Knutson
Kraft Sloan	Lastewka
Lavigne	Lee
Leung	Limoges (Windsor—St. Clair)
Lincoln	MacAulay
Mahoney	Malhi
Maloney	Manley
Marchi	Marleau
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)	Massé
McCormick	McGuire
McKay (Scarborough East)	McLellan (Edmonton West)
McTeague	McWhinney
Milliken	Mills (Broadview—Greenwood)
Minna	Mitchell
Murray	Myers
Nault	Normand
Nunziata	O'Brien (Labrador)
O'Brien (London—Fanshawe)	O'Reilly
Pagtakhan	Paradis
Parrish	Patry
Peric	Peterson
Pettigrew	Phinney
Pickard (Chatham—Kent Essex)	Pillitteri
Pratt	Proud
Provenzano	Redman
Reed	Richardson
Robillard	Rock
Saada	Scott (Fredericton)
Sekora	Serré
Speller	St. Denis
Steckle	Stewart (Brant)
Stewart (Northumberland)	St-Julien
Szabo	Telegdi
Thibeault	Torsney
Ur	Valeri
Vancielief	Volpe
Wappel	Whelan
Wilfert	Wood—148

NAYS

Members

Ablonczy
Anders
Bachand (Richmond—Arthabaska)
Bellehumeur
Bernier (Bonaventure—Gaspé—Bernier (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Borotsik
Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville)
Cadman
Cardin
Casson
Chrétien (Frontenac—Mégantic)
Dalphon-D-Guiral
de Savoye
Desjarlais
Dockrill
Dubé (Lévis-et-Chutes-de-la-Chaudière)
Duceppe
Duncan
Epp
Fournier
Gauthier

*Supply**(Division No. 553)*

YEAS

Members

Girard-Bujold
 Godin (Châteauguay)
 Grewal
 Guay
 Hardy
 Harvey
 Hill (Macleod)
 Hilstrom
 Jaffer
 Jones
 Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
 Konrad
 Lalonde
 Lill
 Lowther
 MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough)
 Manning
 Marchand
 Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)
 Matthews
 McDonough
 Ménard
 Meredith
 Morrison
 Nystrom
 Pankiw
 Perron
 Plamondon
 Price
 Ramsay
 Riis
 Robinson
 Schmidt
 Solberg
 St-Hilaire
 St-Jacques
 Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)
 Tremblay (Lac-Saint-Jean)
 Vautour
 Venne
 Wayne
 White (North Vancouver)

Godin (Acadie—Bathurst)
 Gouk
 Grey (Edmonton North)
 Hanger
 Hart
 Herron
 Hill (Prince George—Peace River)
 Hoepfner
 Johnston
 Keddy (South Shore)
 Kerpan
 Laliberte
 Lebel
 Loubier
 Lunn
 Mancini
 Marceau
 Mark
 Martin (Winnipeg Centre)
 Mayfield
 McNally
 Mercier
 Mills (Red Deer)
 Muise
 Obhrai
 Penon
 Picard (Drummond)
 Power
 Proctor
 Reynolds
 Ritz
 Sauvageau
 Scott (Skeena)
 Solomon
 Stinson
 Strahl
 Thompson (Wild Rose)
 Turp
 Vellacott
 Wasylucia-Leis
 White (Langley—Abbotsford)
 Williams—128

PAIRED MEMBERS

Anderson
 Bachand (Saint-Jean)
 Clouthier
 Laurin
 Rocheleau

Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre)
 Barnes
 Guimond
 Mifflin
 Tremblay (Rimouski—Mitis)

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 10—PUBLIC WORKS AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES CANADA

Hon. Marcel Massé (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.)
 moved:

Motion No. 5

That Vote 10, in the amount of \$7,756,000, under PUBLIC WORKS AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES CANADA—Old Port of Montreal Corporation Inc., in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2000 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

(The House divided on Motion No. 5, which was agreed to on the following division:)

Adams
 Assad
 Augustine
 Bakopanos
 Bélair
 Bellemare
 Bertrand
 Blondin-Andrew
 Bonwick
 Bradshaw
 Bryden
 Byrne
 Calder
 Caplan
 Catterall
 Chamberlain
 Charbonneau
 Coderre
 Comuzzi
 DeVillers
 Dion
 Dromisky
 Duhamel
 Eggleton
 Finlay
 Fontana
 Gagliano
 Godfrey
 Graham
 Grose
 Harb
 Hubbard
 Iftody
 Jennings
 Karetak-Lindell
 Keyes
 Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)
 Kraft Sloan
 Lavigne
 Leung
 Lincoln
 Mahoney
 Maloney
 Marchi
 Martin (LaSalle—Émard)
 McCormick
 McKay (Scarborough East)
 McTeague
 Milliken
 Minna
 Murray
 Nault
 Nunziata
 O'Brien (London—Fanshawe)
 Pagtakhan
 Parrish
 Peric
 Pettigrew
 Pickard (Chatham—Kent Essex)
 Pratt
 Provenzano
 Reed
 Robillard
 Saada
 Sekora
 Speller
 Steckle
 Stewart (Northumberland)
 Szabo
 Thibeault
 Ur
 Vanclief
 Wappel
 Wilfert

Alcock
 Assadourian
 Baker
 Beaumier
 Bélanger
 Bennett
 Bevilacqua
 Bonin
 Boudria
 Brown
 Bulte
 Caccia
 Cannis
 Carroll
 Cauchon
 Chan
 Chrétiën (Saint-Maurice)
 Collette
 Cullen
 Dhaliwal
 Discepola
 Drouin
 Easter
 Finestone
 Folco
 Fry
 Gallaway
 Goodale
 Gray (Windsor West)
 Guarnieri
 Harvard
 Ianno
 Jackson
 Jordan
 Karygiannis
 Kilger (Stormont—Dundas—Charlottenburgh)
 Knutson
 Lastewka
 Lee
 Limoges (Windsor—St. Clair)
 MacAulay
 Malhi
 Manley
 Marleau
 Massé
 McGuire
 McLellan (Edmonton West)
 McWhinney
 Mills (Broadview—Greenwood)
 Mitchell
 Myers
 Normand
 O'Brien (Labrador)
 O'Reilly
 Paradis
 Patry
 Peterson
 Phinney
 Pillitteri
 Proud
 Redman
 Richardson
 Rock
 Scott (Fredericton)
 Serré
 St. Denis
 Stewart (Brant)
 St-Julien
 Telegdi
 Torsney
 Valeri
 Volpe
 Whelan
 Wood—148

Supply

NAYS

Members

Abbott	Ablonczy
Alarie	Anders
Asselin	Bachand (Richmond—Arthabaska)
Bailey	Bellehumeur
Bergeron	Bernier (Bonaventure—Gaspé—
Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Pabok)	Bernier (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Bigras	Borotsik
Breitkreuz (Yellowhead)	Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville)
Brisson	Cadman
Canuel	Cardin
Casey	Casson
Chatters	Chrétien (Frontenac—Mégantic)
Crête	Dalphond-Guiral
Davies	de Savoye
Debien	Desjarlais
Desrochers	Dockrill
Doyle	Dubé (Lévis-et-Chutes-de-la-Chaudière)
Dubé (Madawaska—Restigouche)	Duceppe
Dumas	Duncan
Earle	Epp
Forseth	Fournier
Gagnon	Gauthier
Gilmour	Girard-Bujold
Godin (Acadie—Bathurst)	Godin (Châteauguay)
Gouk	Grewal
Grey (Edmonton North)	Guay
Hanger	Hardy
Hart	Harvey
Herron	Hill (MacLeod)
Hill (Prince George—Peace River)	Hilstrom
Hoepfner	Jaffer
Johnston	Jones
Keddy (South Shore)	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Kerpan	Konrad
Laliberté	Lalonde
Lebel	Lill
Loubier	Lowther
Lunn	MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough)
Mancini	Manning
Marceau	Marchand
Mark	Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)
Martin (Winnipeg Centre)	Matthews
Mayfield	McDonough
McNally	Ménard
Mercier	Meredith
Mills (Red Deer)	Morrison
Muise	Nystrom
Obhrai	Pankiw
Penson	Perron
Picard (Drummond)	Plamondon
Power	Price
Proctor	Ramsay
Reynolds	Riis
Ritz	Robinson
Sauvageau	Schmidt
Scott (Skeena)	Solberg
Solomon	St-Hilaire
Stinson	St-Jacques
Strahl	Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)
Thompson (Wild Rose)	Tremblay (Lac-Saint-Jean)
Turp	Vautour
Vellacott	Venne
Wasylycia-Leis	Wayne
White (Langley—Abbotsford)	White (North Vancouver)
Williams—128	

PAIRED MEMBERS

Anderson	Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre)
Bachand (Saint-Jean)	Barnes
Cloutier	Guimond
Laurin	Mifflin
Rocheleau	Tremblay (Rimouski—Mitis)

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 15—PUBLIC WORKS AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES CANADA

Hon. Marcel Massé (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.)
moved:

Motion No. 6

That Vote 15, in the amount of \$3,045,000, under PUBLIC WORKS AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES CANADA—Queens Quay West Land Corporation, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2000 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

(The House divided on Motion No. 6, which was agreed to on the following division:)

(Division No. 554)

YEAS

Members

Adams	Alcock
Assad	Assadourian
Augustine	Baker
Bakopanos	Beaumier
Bélair	Bélanger
Bellemare	Bennett
Bertrand	Bevilacqua
Blondin-Andrew	Bonin
Bonwick	Boudria
Bradshaw	Brown
Bryden	Bulte
Byrne	Caccia
Calder	Cannis
Caplan	Carroll
Catterall	Cauchon
Chamberlain	Chan
Charbonneau	Chrétien (Saint-Maurice)
Coderre	Colletette
Comuzzi	Cullen
DeVillers	Dhaliwal
Dion	Discepola
Dromisky	Drouin
Duhamel	Easter
Eggleton	Finestone
Finlay	Folco
Fontana	Fry
Gagliano	Galloway
Godfrey	Goodale
Graham	Gray (Windsor West)
Grose	Guarnieri
Harb	Harvard
Hubbard	Ianno
Iftody	Jackson
Jennings	Jordan
Karetak-Lindell	Karygiannis
Keyes	Kilger (Stormont—Dundas—Charlottenburgh)
Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)	Knutson
Kraft Sloan	Lastewka
Lavigne	Lee
Leung	Limoges (Windsor—St. Clair)
Lincoln	MacAulay
Mahoney	Malhi
Maloney	Manley
Marchi	Marleau
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)	Massé
McCormick	McGuire
McKay (Scarborough East)	McLellan (Edmonton West)
McTeague	McWhinney
Milliken	Mills (Broadview—Greenwood)
Minna	Mitchell
Murray	Myers

Nault
Nunziata
O'Brien (London—Fanshawe)
Pagtakhan
Parrish
Peric
Pettigrew
Pickard (Chatham—Kent Essex)
Pratt
Provenzano
Reed
Robillard
Saada
Sekora
Speller
Steckle
Stewart (Northumberland)
Szabo
Thibeault
Ur
Vanclief
Wappel
Wilfert

Normand
O'Brien (Labrador)
O'Reilly
Paradis
Patri
Peterson
Phinney
Pillitteri
Proud
Redman
Richardson
Rock
Scott (Fredericton)
Serré
St. Denis
Stewart (Brant)
St-Julien
Telegdi
Torsney
Valeri
Volpe
Whelan
Wood—148

Schmidt
Solberg
St-Hilaire
St-Jacques
Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)
Tremblay (Lac-Saint-Jean)
Vautour
Venne
Wayne
White (North Vancouver)

Scott (Skeena)
Solomon
Stinson
Strahl
Thompson (Wild Rose)
Turp
Vellacott
Wasylcia-Leis
White (Langley—Abbotsford)
Williams—128

PAIRED MEMBERS

Anderson	Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre)
Bachand (Saint-Jean)	Barnes
Clouthier	Gumond
Laurin	Mifflin
Rocheleau	Tremblay (Rimouski—Mitis)

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 25—PUBLIC WORKS AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES CANADA

NAYS

Members

Abbott
Alarie
Asselin
Bailey
Bergeron
Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Pabok
Bigras
Breitkreuz (Yellowhead)
Brisson
Canuel
Casey
Chatters
Crête
Davies
Debien
Desrochers
Doyle
Dubé (Madawaska—Restigouche)
Dumas
Earle
Forseth
Gagnon
Gilmour
Godin (Acadie—Bathurst)
Gouk
Grey (Edmonton North)
Hanger
Hart
Herron
Hill (Prince George—Peace River)
Hoeppner
Johnston
Keddy (South Shore)
Kerpan
Laliberte
Lebel
Loubier
Lunn
Mancini
Marceau
Mark
Martin (Winnipeg Centre)
Mayfield
McNally
Mercier
Mills (Red Deer)
Muisse
Obhrai
Penson
Picard (Drummond)
Power
Proctor
Reynolds
Ritz
Sauvageau

Ablonczy
Anders
Bachand (Richmond—Arthabaska)
Bellehumeur
Bernier (Bonaventure—Gaspé—
Bernier (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Borotsik
Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville)
Cadman
Cardin
Casson
Chrétien (Frontenac—Mégantic)
Dalphond-Guiral
de Savoye
Desjarlais
Dockrill
Dubé (Lévis-et-Chutes-de-la-Chaudière)
Duceppe
Duncan
Epp
Fournier
Gauthier
Girard-Bujold
Godin (Châteauguay)
Grewal
Guay
Hardy
Harvey
Hill (MacLeod)
Hilstrom
Jaffer
Jones
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Konrad
Lalonde
Lill
Lowther
MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough)
Manning
Marchand
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)
Matthews
McDonough
Ménard
Meredith
Morrison
Nystrom
Pankiw
Perron
Plamondon
Price
Ramsay
Riis
Robinson

Hon. Marcel Massé (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 7

That Vote 25, in the amount of \$1,888,685,000, under PUBLIC WORKS AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES CANADA—Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation—Operating expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2000 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

(The House divided on Motion No. 7, which was agreed to on the following division:)

(Division No. 555)

YEAS

Members

Adams	Alcock
Assad	Assadourian
Augustine	Baker
Bakopanos	Beaumier
Bélair	Bélanger
Bellemare	Bennett
Bertrand	Bevilacqua
Blondin-Andrew	Bonin
Bonwick	Boudria
Bradshaw	Brown
Bryden	Bulte
Byrne	Caccia
Calder	Cannis
Caplan	Carroll
Catterall	Cauchon
Chamberlain	Chan
Charbonneau	Chrétien (Saint-Maurice)
Coderre	Collenette
Comuzzi	Cullen
DeVillers	Dhaliwal
Dion	Discepolo
Dromisky	Drouin
Duhamel	Easter
Eggleton	Finestone
Finlay	Folco
Fontana	Fry
Gagliano	Galloway
Godfrey	Goodale
Graham	Gray (Windsor West)
Grose	Guarnieri
Harb	Harvard
Hubbard	Ianno
Iftody	Jackson
Jennings	Jordan
Karetak-Lindell	Karygiannis
Keyes	Kilger (Stormont—Dundas—Charlottenburgh)
Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)	Knutson
Kraft Sloan	Lastewka
Lavigne	Lee

Supply

Leung	Limoges (Windsor—St. Clair)
Lincoln	MacAulay
Mahoney	Malhi
Maloney	Manley
Marchi	Marleau
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)	Massé
McCormick	McGuire
McKay (Scarborough East)	McLellan (Edmonton West)
McTeague	McWhinney
Milliken	Mills (Broadview—Greenwood)
Minna	Mitchell
Murray	Myers
Nault	Normand
Nunziata	O'Brien (Labrador)
O'Brien (London—Fanshawe)	O'Reilly
Pagtakhan	Paradis
Parrish	Patry
Peric	Peterson
Pettigrew	Phinney
Pickard (Chatham—Kent Essex)	Pillitteri
Pratt	Proud
Provenzano	Redman
Reed	Richardson
Robillard	Rock
Saada	Scott (Fredericton)
Sekora	Serré
Speller	St. Denis
Steckle	Stewart (Brant)
Stewart (Northumberland)	St-Julien
Szabo	Telegdi
Thibeault	Torsney
Ur	Valeri
Vanclief	Volpe
Wappel	Whelan
Wilfert	Wood—148

Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)	Martin (Winnipeg Centre)
Matthews	Mayfield
McDonough	McNally
Ménard	Mercier
Meredith	Mills (Red Deer)
Morrison	Muise
Nystrom	Obhrai
Pankiw	Penson
Perron	Picard (Drummond)
Plamondon	Power
Price	Proctor
Ramsay	Reynolds
Riis	Ritz
Robinson	Sauvageau
Schmidt	Scott (Skeena)
Solberg	Solomon
St-Hilaire	Stinson
St-Jacques	Strahl
Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)	Thompson (Wild Rose)
Tremblay (Lac-Saint-Jean)	Turp
Vautour	Vellacott
Venne	Wasylcia-Leis
Wayne	White (Langley—Abbotsford)
White (North Vancouver)	Williams—128

PAIRED MEMBERS

Anderson	Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre)
Bachand (Saint-Jean)	Barnes
Clouthier	Guimond
Laurin	Mifflin
Rocheleau	Tremblay (Rimouski—Mitis)

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 30—PUBLIC WORKS AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES CANADA

NAYS

Members

Abbott	Ablonczy
Alarie	Anders
Asselin	Bachand (Richmond—Arthabaska)
Bailey	Bellehumeur
Bergeron	Bernier (Bonaventure—Gaspé—
Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Pabok)	Bernier (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Bigras	Borotsik
Breitkreuz (Yellowhead)	Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville)
Brison	Cadman
Canuel	Cardin
Casey	Casson
Chatters	Chrétien (Frontenac—Mégantic)
Crête	Dalphond-Guiral
Davies	de Savoye
Debien	Desjarlais
Desrochers	Dockrill
Doyle	Dubé (Lévis-et-Chutes-de-la-Chaudière)
Dubé (Madawaska—Restigouche)	Duceppe
Dumas	Duncan
Earle	Epp
Forseth	Fournier
Gagnon	Gauthier
Gilmour	Girard-Bujold
Godin (Acadie—Bathurst)	Godin (Châteauguay)
Gouk	Grewal
Grey (Edmonton North)	Guay
Hanger	Hardy
Hart	Harvey
Herron	Hill (Macleod)
Hill (Prince George—Peace River)	Hilstrom
Hoepfner	Jaffer
Johnston	Jones
Keddy (South Shore)	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Kerpan	Konrad
Laliberte	Lalonde
Lebel	Lill
Loubier	Lowther
Lunn	MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough)
Mancini	Manning
Marceau	Marchand
Mark	

Hon. Marcel Massé (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 8

That Vote 30, in the amount of \$142,100,000, under PUBLIC WORKS AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES CANADA—Canada Post Corporation in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2000 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

(The House divided on Motion No. 8, which was agreed to on the following division:)

(Division No. 556)

YEAS

Members

Adams	Alcock
Assad	Assadourian
Augustine	Baker
Bakopanos	Beaumier
Bélair	Bélangier
Bellemare	Bennett
Bertrand	Bevilacqua
Blondin-Andrew	Bonin
Bonwick	Boudria
Bradshaw	Brown
Bryden	Bulte
Byrne	Caccia
Calder	Canniss
Caplan	Carroll
Catterall	Cauchon
Chamberlain	Chan
Charbonneau	Chrétien (Saint-Maurice)
Coderre	Collenette
Comuzzi	Cullen
DeVillers	Dhaliwal
Dion	Discepolo
Dromisky	Drouin
Duhamel	Easter

Eggleton
Finlay
Fontana
Gagliano
Godfrey
Graham
Grose
Harb
Hubbard
Iftody
Jennings
Karetak-Lindell
Keys
Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)
Kraft Sloan
Lavigne
Leung
Lincoln
Mahoney
Maloney
Marchi
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)
McCormick
McKay (Scarborough East)
McTeague
Milliken
Minna
Murray
Nault
Nunziata
O'Brien (London—Fanshawe)
Pagtakhan
Parrish
Peric
Pettigrew
Pickard (Chatham—Kent Essex)
Pratt
Provenzano
Reed
Robillard
Saada
Sekora
Speller
Steckle
Stewart (Northumberland)
Szabo
Thibeault
Ur
Vanclief
Wappel
Wilfert

Finestone
Folco
Fry
Galloway
Goodale
Gray (Windsor West)
Guarnieri
Harvard
Ianno
Jackson
Jordan
Karygiannis
Kilger (Stormont—Dundas—Charlottenburgh)
Knutson
Lastewka
Lee
Limoges (Windsor—St. Clair)
MacAulay
Malhi
Manley
Marleau
Massé
McGuire
McLellan (Edmonton West)
McWhinney
Mills (Broadview—Greenwood)
Mitchell
Myers
Normand
O'Brien (Labrador)
O'Reilly
Paradis
Patry
Peterson
Phinney
Pillitteri
Proud
Redman
Richardson
Rock
Scott (Fredericton)
Serré
St. Denis
Stewart (Brant)
St-Julien
Telegdi
Torsney
Valeri
Volpe
Whelan
Wood—148

Girard-Bujold
Godin (Châteauguay)
Grewal
Guay
Hardy
Harvey
Hill (MacLeod)
Hilstrom
Jaffer
Jones
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Konrad
Lalonde
Lill
Lowther
MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough)
Manning
Marchand
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)
Matthews
McDonough
Ménard
Meredith
Morrison
Nystrom
Pankiw
Perron
Plamondon
Price
Ramsay
Riis
Robinson
Schmidt
Solberg
St-Hilaire
St-Jacques
Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)
Tremblay (Lac-Saint-Jean)
Vautour
Venne
Wayne
White (North Vancouver)

Supply

Godin (Acadie—Bathurst)
Gouk
Grey (Edmonton North)
Hanger
Hart
Herron
Hill (Prince George—Peace River)
Hoepfner
Johnston
Keddy (South Shore)
Kerpan
Laliberte
Lebel
Loubier
Lunn
Mancini
Marceau
Mark
Martin (Winnipeg Centre)
Mayfield
McNally
Mercier
Mills (Red Deer)
Muisse
Obhrai
Penson
Picard (Drummond)
Power
Proctor
Reynolds
Ritz
Sauvageau
Scott (Skeena)
Solomon
Stinson
Strahl
Thompson (Wild Rose)
Turp
Vellacott
Wasylcyia-Leis
White (Langley—Abbotsford)
Williams—128

PAIRED MEMBERS

Anderson	Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre)
Bachand (Saint-Jean)	Barnes
Clouthier	Guimond
Laurin	Mifflin
Rocheleau	Tremblay (Rimouski—Mitis)

NAYS

Members

Abbott
Alarie
Asselin
Bailey
Bergeron
Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Pabok)
Bigras
Breitkreuz (Yellowhead)
Brisson
Canuel
Casey
Chatters
Crête
Davies
Debien
Desrochers
Doyle
Dubé (Madawaska—Restigouche)
Dumas
Earle
Forseth
Gagnon
Gilmour

Ablonczy
Anders
Bachand (Richmond—Arthabaska)
Bellehumeur
Bernier (Bonaventure—Gaspé—
Bernier (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Borotsik
Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville)
Cadman
Cardin
Casson
Chrétien (Frontenac—Mégantic)
Dalphond-Guiral
de Savoye
Desjarlais
Dockrill
Dubé (Lévis-et-Chutes-de-la-Chaudière)
Duceppe
Duncan
Epp
Fournier
Gauthier

The Speaker: I therefore declare Motions Nos. 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 carried.

MOTION FOR CONCURRENCE

Hon. Marcel Massé (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.) moved:

That the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2000, except any Vote disposed of earlier today and less the amounts voted in Interim Supply, be concurred in.

Mr. Bob Kilger: Mr. Speaker, if the House would agree, I would propose that you seek unanimous consent that members who voted on the previous motion be recorded as having voted on the motion now before the House, with Liberal members voting yea.

The Speaker: Is there agreement to proceed in such a fashion?

Supply

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Chuck Strahl: Mr. Speaker, Reform Party members present vote no to this vote.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Mr. Speaker, the members of the Bloc Québécois will vote no to this motion.

[*English*]

Mr. John Solomon: Mr. Speaker, members of the NDP present vote no to this vote.

[*Translation*]

Mr. André Harvey: Mr. Speaker, the Progressive Conservative members present will vote no to this motion.

[*English*]

Mr. John Nunziata: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the residents of York South—Weston I would vote yes.

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

*(Division No. 557)***YEAS**

Members

Adams	Alcock
Assad	Assadourian
Augustine	Baker
Bakopanos	Beaumier
Bélair	Bélangier
Bellemare	Bennett
Bertrand	Bevilacqua
Blondin-Andrew	Bonin
Bonwick	Boudria
Bradshaw	Brown
Bryden	Bulte
Byrne	Caccia
Calder	Cannis
Caplan	Carroll
Catterall	Cauchon
Chamberlain	Chan
Charbonneau	Chrétien (Saint-Maurice)
Coderre	Collenette
Comuzzi	Cullen
DeVillers	Dhaliwal
Dion	Discepola
Dromisky	Drouin
Duhamel	Easter
Eggleton	Finestone
Finlay	Folco
Fontana	Fry
Gagliano	Galloway
Godfrey	Goodale
Graham	Gray (Windsor West)
Grose	Guarnieri
Harb	Harvard
Hubbard	Ianno
Iftody	Jackson
Jennings	Jordan
Karetak-Lindell	Karygiannis
Keys	Kilger (Stormont—Dundas—Charlottenburgh)
Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)	Knutson
Kraft Sloan	Lastewka
Lavigne	Lee
Leung	Limoges (Windsor—St. Clair)
Lincoln	MacAulay
Mahoney	Malhi
Maloney	Manley
Marchi	Marleau
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)	Massé
McCormick	McGuire
McKay (Scarborough East)	McLellan (Edmonton West)
McTeague	McWhinney

Milliken
Minna
Murray
Nault
Nunziata
O'Brien (London—Fanshawe)
Pagtakhan
Parrish
Peric
Pettigrew
Pickard (Chatham—Kent Essex)
Pratt
Provenzano
Reed
Robillard
Saada
Sekora
Speller
Steckle
Stewart (Northumberland)
Szabo
Thibeault
Ur
Vanclief
Wappel
Wilfert

Mills (Broadview—Greenwood)
Mitchell
Myers
Normand
O'Brien (Labrador)
O'Reilly
Paradis
Patry
Peterson
Phinney
Pillitteri
Proud
Redman
Richardson
Rock
Scott (Fredericton)
Serré
St. Denis
Stewart (Brant)
St-Julien
Telegdi
Torsney
Valeri
Volpe
Whelan
Wood—148

NAYS

Members

Abbott	Ablonczy
Alarie	Anders
Asselin	Bachand (Richmond—Arthabaska)
Bailey	Bellehumeur
Bergeron	Bernier (Bonaventure—Gaspé—
Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Pabok)	Bernier (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Bigras	Borotsik
Breitkreuz (Yellowhead)	Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville)
Brisson	Cadman
Canuel	Cardin
Casey	Casson
Chatters	Chrétien (Frontenac—Mégantic)
Crête	Dalphond-Guiral
Davies	de Savoye
Debien	Desjarlais
Desrochers	Dockrill
Doyle	Dubé (Lévis-et-Chutes-de-la-Chaudière)
Dubé (Madawaska—Restigouche)	Duceppe
Dumas	Duncan
Earle	Epp
Forseth	Fournier
Gagnon	Gauthier
Gilmour	Girard-Bujold
Godin (Acadie—Bathurst)	Godin (Châteauguay)
Gouk	Grewal
Grey (Edmonton North)	Guay
Hanger	Hardy
Hart	Harvey
Herron	Hill (Macleod)
Hill (Prince George—Peace River)	Hilstrom
Hoepfner	Jaffer
Johnston	Jones
Keddy (South Shore)	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Kerpan	Konrad
Laliberte	Lalonde
Lebel	Lill
Loubier	Lowther
Lunn	MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough)
Mancini	Manning
Marceau	Marchand
Mark	Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)
Martin (Winnipeg Centre)	Matthews
Mayfield	McDonough
McNally	Ménard
Mercier	Meredith
Mills (Red Deer)	Morrison
Muise	Nystrom
Obhrai	Pankiw
Penson	Perron
Picard (Drummond)	Plamondon
Power	

Price	Proctor
Ramsay	Reynolds
Riis	Ritz
Robinson	Sauvageau
Schmidt	Scott (Skeena)
Solberg	Solomon
St-Hilaire	Stinson
St-Jacques	Strahl
Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)	Thompson (Wild Rose)
Tremblay (Lac-Saint-Jean)	Turp
Vautour	Vellacott
Venne	Wasylcia-Leis
Wayne	White (Langley—Abbotsford)
White (North Vancouver)	Williams—128

PAIRED MEMBERS

Anderson	Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre)
Bachand (Saint-Jean)	Barnes
Clouthier	Guimond
Laurin	Mifflin
Rocheleau	Tremblay (Rimouski—Mitis)

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

• (2320)

Hon. Marcel Massé moved that Bill C-86, an act for granting to Her Majesty certain sums of money for the Public Service of Canada for the financial years ending March 31, 2000 and March 31, 2001, be read the first time.

(Motion deemed adopted and bill read the first time)

Hon. Marcel Massé moved that the bill be read the second time and, by unanimous consent, referred to committee of the whole.

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

Mr. Bob Kilger: Mr. Speaker, I believe you would find consent to apply the results of the vote just taken to the question now before the House.

The Speaker: Is there agreement to proceed in such a fashion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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

(Division No. 558)

YEAS

Members

Adams	Alcock
Assad	Assadourian
Augustine	Baker
Bakopanos	Beaumier
Bélaïr	Bélangier
Bellemare	Bennett
Bertrand	Bevilacqua
Blondin-Andrew	Bonin
Bonwick	Boudria
Bradshaw	Brown
Bryden	Bulte
Byrne	Caccia
Calder	Cannis
Caplan	Carroll
Catterall	Cauchon
Chamberlain	Chan
Charbonneau	Chrétien (Saint-Maurice)

Coderre
Comuzzi
DeVillers
Dion
Dromisky
Duhamel
Eggleton
Finlay
Fontana
Gagliano
Godfrey
Graham
Grose
Harb
Hubbard
Iftody
Jennings
Karetak-Lindell
Keyes
Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)
Kraft Sloan
Lavigne
Leung
Lincoln
Mahoney
Maloney
Marchi
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)
McCormick
McKay (Scarborough East)
McTeague
Milliken
Minna
Murray
Nault
Nunziata
O'Brien (London—Fanshawe)
Pagtakhan
Parrish
Peric
Pettigrew
Pickard (Chatham—Kent Essex)
Pratt
Provenzano
Reed
Robillard
Saada
Sekora
Speller
Steckle
Stewart (Northumberland)
Szabo
Thibeault
Ur
Vanclief
Wappel
Wilfert

Supply

Collenette
Cullen
Dhaliwal
Discepolo
Drouin
Easter
Finestone
Folco
Fry
Galloway
Goodale
Gray (Windsor West)
Guarnieri
Harvard
Ianno
Jackson
Jordan
Karygiannis
Kilger (Stormont—Dundas—Charlottenburgh)
Knutson
Lastewka
Lee
Limoges (Windsor—St. Clair)
MacAulay
Malhi
Manley
Marleau
Massé
McGuire
McLellan (Edmonton West)
McWhinney
Mills (Broadview—Greenwood)
Mitchell
Myers
Normand
O'Brien (Labrador)
O'Reilly
Paradis
Patry
Peterson
Phinney
Pillitteri
Proud
Redman
Richardson
Rock
Scott (Fredericton)
Serré
St. Denis
Stewart (Brant)
St-Julien
Telegdi
Torsney
Valeri
Volpe
Whelan
Wood—148

NAYS

Members

Ablonczy
Anders
Bachand (Richmond—Arthabaska)
Bellehumeur
Bernier (Bonaventure—Gaspé—
Bernier (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Borotsik
Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville)
Cadman
Cardin
Casson
Chrétien (Frontenac—Mégantic)
Dalphond-Guiral
de Savoye
Desjarlais

Supply

Dockrill	Doyle
Dubé (Lévis-et-Chutes-de-la-Chaudière)	Dubé (Madawaska—Restigouche)
Duceppe	Dumas
Duncan	Earle
Epp	Forseth
Fournier	Gagnon
Gauthier	Gilmour
Girard-Bujold	Godin (Acadie—Bathurst)
Godin (Châteauguay)	Gouk
Grewal	Grey (Edmonton North)
Guay	Hanger
Hardy	Hart
Harvey	Herron
Hill (Macleod)	Hill (Prince George—Peace River)
Hilstrom	Hoepfner
Jaffer	Johnston
Jones	Keddy (South Shore)
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)	Kerpan
Konrad	Laliberté
Lalonde	Lebel
Lill	Loubier
Lowther	Lunn
MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough)	Mancini
Manning	Marceau
Marchand	Mark
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)	Martin (Winnipeg Centre)
Matthews	Mayfield
McDonough	McNally
Ménard	Mercier
Meredith	Mills (Red Deer)
Morrison	Muise
Nystrom	Obhrai
Pankiw	Penson
Perron	Picard (Drummond)
Plamondon	Power
Price	Proctor
Ramsay	Reynolds
Riis	Ritz
Robinson	Sauvageau
Schmidt	Scott (Skeena)
Solberg	Solomon
St-Hilaire	Stinson
St-Jacques	Strahl
Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)	Thompson (Wild Rose)
Tremblay (Lac-Saint-Jean)	Turp
Vautour	Vellacott
Venne	Wasylcia-Leis
Wayne	White (Langley—Abbotsford)
White (North Vancouver)	Williams—128

PAIRED MEMBERS

Anderson	Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre)
Bachand (Saint-Jean)	Barnes
Clouthier	Guimond
Laurin	Mifflin
Rocheleau	Tremblay (Rimouski—Mitis)

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

(Bill read the second time and the House went into committee thereon, Mr. Milliken in the chair)

The Chairman: We are now in committee of the whole on Bill C-86.

(On clause 2)

Mr. John Williams (St. Albert, Ref.): Mr. Chairman, far from the reservations expressed earlier by the Speaker regarding the title, could the President of the Treasury Board please confirm that this bill is in its usual form and explain the specific changes relating to the long title of the bill and schedule 2 of the bill.

Hon. Marcel Massé (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.): Mr. Chairman, the form of this bill is essentially the same as that passed in previous years.

Mr. John Williams: Mr. Chairman, I did ask the President of the Treasury Board to explain the specific changes relating to the long title of the bill and to schedule 2 of the bill.

Hon. Marcel Massé: Mr. Chairman, an additional schedule has been added to this appropriation bill. Schedule 2 contains Canadian Heritage, Parks Canada Agency which is the first agency to be granted multi-year appropriation authority. This was provided for in the Parks Canada Agency Act, Statutes of Canada for 1998, chapter 31, subsection 19(2) which states:

The unexpended balance of money referred to in subsection 1 appropriated by any act of parliament for the purpose of making operational expenditures of the agency lapses at the end of the fiscal year following the year in which the money was originally appropriated or at the end of any longer period that may be specified in the act.

Pursuant to this provision, the authority provided through the program expenditure vote for the Parks Canada Agency will not lapse until March 31, 2001.

The Chairman: Shall clause 2 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Clause 2 agreed to)

[Translation]

The Chairman: Shall clause 3 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Clause 3 agreed to)

[English]

The Chairman: Shall clause 4 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Clause 4 agreed to)

The Chairman: Shall clause 5 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

Supply

(Clause 5 agreed to)

• (2325)

[*Translation*]

The Chairman: Shall clause 6 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Clause 6 agreed to)

The Chairman: Shall clause 7 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Clause 7 agreed to)

[*English*]

The Chairman: Shall schedule 1 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Schedule 1 agreed to)

The Chairman: Shall schedule 2 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Schedule 2 agreed to)

[*Translation*]

The Chairman: Shall clause 1 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Clause 1 agreed to)

The Chairman: Shall the preamble carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Preamble agreed to)

[*English*]

The Chairman: Shall the title carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Title agreed to)

(Bill reported)

Hon. Marcel Massé moved that the bill be concurred in.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Bob Kilger: Mr. Speaker, I would propose that you seek the unanimous consent of the House that members who voted on the previous motion be recorded as having voted on the motion now before the House, with Liberals voting yea.

[*English*]

The Speaker: Is there agreement to proceed in such a fashion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Chuck Strahl: Mr. Speaker, Reform Party members present vote no. I would like you to note the absence of the member for Calgary Centre.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Mr. Speaker, the members of the Bloc Québécois vote no to the motion. The names of the members for Bonaventure—Gaspé—Îles de la Madeleine—Pabok and Chambly should be deleted from the division list.

[*English*]

Mr. John Solomon: Mr. Speaker, members of the NDP present vote no to this motion.

[*Translation*]

Mr. André Harvey: Mr. Speaker, the members of the Progressive Conservative Party vote no to the motion, with the exception of the members for Richmond—Arthabaska, Kings—Hants, Brandon—Souris, and Shefford.

[*English*]

Mr. John Nunziata: Mr. Speaker, I would cast my ballot in favour of the motion.

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

Supply

(Division No. 559)

YEAS

Members

Adams
Assad
Augustine
Bakopanos
Bélaire
Bellemare
Bertrand
Blondin-Andrew
Bonwick
Bradshaw
Bryden
Byrne
Calder
Caplan
Catterall
Chamberlain
Charbonneau
Coderre
Comuzzi
De Villers
Dion
Dromisky
Duhamel
Eggleton
Finlay
Fontana
Gagliano
Godfrey
Graham
Grose
Harb
Hubbard
Iftody
Jennings
Karetak-Lindell
Keys
Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)
Kraft Sloan
Lavigne
Leung
Lincoln
Mahoney
Maloney
Marchi
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)
McCormick
McKay (Scarborough East)
McTeague
Milliken
Minna
Murray
Nault
Nunziata
O'Brien (London—Fanshawe)
Pagtakhan
Parrish
Peric
Pettigrew
Pickard (Chatham—Kent Essex)
Pratt
Provenzano
Reed
Robillard
Saada
Sekora
Speller
Steckle
Stewart (Northumberland)
Szabo
Thibeault
Ur
Vanclief
Wappel
Wilfert

Alcock
Assadourian
Baker
Beaumier
Bélangier
Bennett
Bevilacqua
Bonin
Boudria
Brown
Bulte
Caccia
Cannis
Carroll
Cauchon
Chan
Chrétien (Saint-Maurice)
Collenette
Cullen
Dhaliwal
Discepola
Drouin
Easter
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Goodale
Gray (Windsor West)
Guarnieri
Harvard
Ianno
Jackson
Jordan
Karygiannis
Kilger (Stormont—Dundas—Charlottenburgh)
Knutson
Lastewka
Lee
Limoges (Windsor—St. Clair)
MacAulay
Malhi
Manley
Marleau
Massé
McGuire
McLellan (Edmonton West)
McWhinney
Mills (Broadview—Greenwood)
Mitchell
Myers
Normand
O'Brien (Labrador)
O'Reilly
Paradis
Patry
Peterson
Phinney
Pillitteri
Proud
Redman
Richardson
Rock
Scott (Fredericton)
Serré
St. Denis
Stewart (Brant)
St-Julien
Telegdi
Torsney
Valeri
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NAYS

Members

Abbott
Alarie
Asselin
Bellehumeur
Bernier (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Breitkreuz (Yellowhead)
Cadman
Cardin
Casson
Chrétien (Frontenac—Mégantic)
Dalphondu-Guiral
de Savoye
Desjarlais
Dockrill
Dubé (Lévis-et-Chutes-de-la-Chaudière)
Duceppe
Duncan
Epp
Fournier
Gauthier
Girard-Bujold
Godin (Châteauguay)
Grewal
Guay
Hardy
Harvey
Hill (Macleod)
Hilstrom
Jaffer
Jones
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Konrad
Lalonde
Loubier
MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough)
Manning
Marchand
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)
Matthews
McDonough
Ménard
Meredith
Morrison
Nystrom
Pankiw
Perron
Plamondon
Price
Ramsay
Riis
Robinson
Schmidt
Solberg
St-Hilaire
Strahl
Thompson (Wild Rose)
Turp
Vellacott
Wasylcia-Leis
White (Langley—Abbotsford)
Williams—121

Ablonczy
Anders
Bailey
Bergeron
Bigras
Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville)
Canuel
Casey
Chatters
Crête
Davies
Debien
Desrochers
Doyle
Dubé (Madawaska—Restigouche)
Dumas
Earle
Forseth
Gagnon
Gilmour
Godin (Acadie—Bathurst)
Gouk
Grey (Edmonton North)
Hanger
Hart
Herron
Hill (Prince George—Peace River)
Hoepfner
Johnston
Keddy (South Shore)
Kerpan
Laliberte
Lill
Lunn
Mancini
Marceau
Mark
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Mayfield
McNally
Mercier
Mills (Red Deer)
Muise
Obhrai
Penson
Picard (Drummond)
Power
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Reynolds
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Scott (Skeena)
Solomon
Stinson
Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)
Tremblay (Lac-Saint-Jean)
Vautour
Venne
Wayne
White (North Vancouver)

PAIRED MEMBERS

Anderson
Bachand (Saint-Jean)
Clouthier
Laurin
Rocheleau

Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre)
Barnes
Guimond
Mifflin
Tremblay (Rimouski—Mitis)

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Hon. Marcel Massé moved that the bill be read the third time and passed.

Mr. Bob Kilger: Mr. Speaker, I believe you would find consent to apply the results of the vote just taken to the question now before the House.

The Speaker: Is there consent to proceed in such a fashion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

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

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Speaker: In my opinion the nays have it.

And more than five members having risen:

• (2335)

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

(Division No. 560)

YEAS

Members

Adams	Alcock
Assad	Assadourian
Augustine	Baker
Bakopanos	Beaumier
Bélair	Bélangier
Bellemare	Bennett
Bertrand	Bevilacqua
Blondin-Andrew	Bonin
Bonwick	Boudria
Bradshaw	Brown
Bryden	Bulte
Byrne	Caccia
Calder	Cannis
Caplan	Carroll
Catterall	Cauchon
Chamberlain	Chan
Charbonneau	Chrétien (Saint-Maurice)
Coderre	Collenette
Comuzzi	Cullen
DeVillers	Dhaliwal
Dion	Discepola
Dromisky	Drouin
Duhamel	Easter
Eggleton	Finestone
Finlay	Folco
Fontana	Fry
Gagliano	Galloway
Godfrey	Goodale
Graham	Gray (Windsor West)
Grose	Guarnieri
Harb	Harvard
Hubbard	Ianno
Iftody	Jackson
Jennings	Jordan
Karetak-Lindell	Karygiannis
Keys	Kilger (Stormont—Dundas—Charlottetown)
Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)	Knutson
Kraft Sloan	Lastewka
Lavigne	Lee
Leung	Limoges (Windsor—St. Clair)
Lincoln	Longfield
MacAulay	Mahoney
Malhi	Maloney
Manley	Marchi
Marleau	Martin (LaSalle—Émard)
Massé	McCormick

McGuire
McLellan (Edmonton West)
McWhinney
Minna
Murray
Nault
Nunziata
O'Brien (London—Fanshawe)
Pagtakhan
Parrish
Peric
Pettigrew
Pickard (Chatham—Kent Essex)
Pratt
Provenzano
Reed
Robillard
Saada
Sekora
Shepherd
St. Denis
Stewart (Brant)
St-Julien
Telegdi
Torsney
Valeri
Volpe
Whelan
Wood—149

Supply

McKay (Scarborough East)
McTeague
Mills (Broadview—Greenwood)
Mitchell
Myers
Normand
O'Brien (Labrador)
O'Reilly
Paradis
Patry
Peterson
Phinney
Pillitteri
Proud
Redman
Richardson
Rock
Scott (Fredericton)
Serré
Speller
Steckle
Stewart (Northumberland)
Szabo
Thibeault
Ur
Vanclief
Wappel
Wilfert

NAYS

Members

Abbott	Ablonczy
Alarie	Anders
Asselin	Bachand (Richmond—Arthabaska)
Bailey	Bellehumeur
Bergeron	Bernier (Bonaventure—Gaspé—
Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Pabok)	Bernier (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Bigras	Borotsik
Breitkreuz (Yellowhead)	Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville)
Brison	Cadman
Canuel	Cardin
Casey	Casson
Chatters	Chrétien (Frontenac—Mégantic)
Crête	Dalphond-Guiral
Davies	de Savoye
Debien	Desjarlais
Desrochers	Dockrill
Doyle	Dubé (Lévis-et-Chutes-de-la-Chaudière)
Dubé (Madawaska—Restigouche)	Duceppe
Dumas	Duncan
Earle	Epp
Forseth	Fournier
Gagnon	Gauthier
Gilmour	Girard-Bujold
Godin (Acadie—Bathurst)	Godin (Châteauguay)
Gouk	Grewal
Grey (Edmonton North)	Guay
Hanger	Hardy
Hart	Harvey
Herron	Hill (Macleod)
Hill (Prince George—Peace River)	Hilstrom
Hoepfner	Jaffer
Johnston	Jones
Keddy (South Shore)	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Kerpan	Konrad
Laliberte	Lalonde
Lebel	Lill
Loubier	Lowther
Lunn	MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough)
Mancini	Manning
Marceau	Marchand
Mark	Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)
Martin (Winnipeg Centre)	Matthews
Mayfield	McDonough
McNally	Ménard
Mercier	Meredith
Mills (Red Deer)	Morrison
Muise	Nystrom
Obhrai	Pankiv
Penson	Perron
Picard (Drummond)	Plamondon
Power	Price
Proctor	Ramsay

Supply

Reynolds
Ritz
Sauvageau
Scott (Skeena)
Solomon
Stinson
Strahl
Thompson (Wild Rose)
Turp
Vellacott
Wasylcia-Leis
White (Langley—Abbotsford)
Williams—128

Riis
Robinson
Schmidt
Solberg
St-Hilaire
St-Jacques
Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)
Tremblay (Lac-Saint-Jean)
Vautour
Venne
Wayne
White (North Vancouver)

Clouthier
Laurin
Rocheleau

Guimond
Mifflin
Tremblay (Rimouski—Mitis)

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

(Bill read the the third time and passed)

The Speaker: It being 11.38 p.m., the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

PAIRED MEMBERS

Anderson
Bachand (Saint-Jean)

Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre)
Barnes

(The House adjourned at 11.38 p.m.)

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Tuesday, June 8, 1999

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