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OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)

Friday, February 7, 2003

—

Speaker: The Honourable Peter Milliken

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, February 7, 2003

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

• (1005)

[English]

REPORT OF THE FEDERAL ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES COMMISSION FOR MANITOBA

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos): It is my duty, pursuant to section 21 of the Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act, to lay upon the table a certified copy of the report of the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for Manitoba.

[Translation]

This report is deemed permanently referred to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs.

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BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos): Pursuant to Standing Order 81(14), it is my duty to inform the House of the motion to be addressed Monday in studying the business of supply.

That this House consider the sending of troops to Iraq by the government only after the United Nations Security Council has passed a resolution explicitly authorizing a military intervention in Iraq.

This motion, standing in the name of the member for Saint-Jean, is a votable motion. Copies of the motion are available at the Table.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

SPECIFIC CLAIMS RESOLUTION ACT

Hon. Robert Nault (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Lib.) moved that Bill C-6, an act to establish the Canadian Centre for the Independent Resolution of First Nations Specific Claims to provide for the filing, negotiation and resolution of specific claims and to make related amendments to other Acts, be read the third time and passed.

He said: Madam Speaker, there are countless compelling reasons to support this important legislation. Perhaps most important, the specific claims resolution act would enable us to achieve honourable and just settlements to some of the longstanding grievances of aboriginal people, yet of all the arguments, few are more persuasive

than the fact that this act would create opportunities for unprecedented economic and social development in first nations.

The Canadian centre for the independent resolution of first nations specific claims established by Bill C-6 will usher in a new era of cooperative and impartial negotiations; negotiations which will allow us to more efficiently address the grievances of the past so we can focus on building stronger, more self-sufficient first nations communities in the future.

One of the greatest benefits of the bill is that it reflects the priorities identified by aboriginal communities. In response to the recommendations of the First Nations-Canada Joint Task Force on Specific Claims, we are proposing an independent centre that would operate at arm's length from government. It would be comprised of a chief executive officer and two components: a commission division to facilitate negotiations on specific claims and a tribunal division to resolve disputes involving those claims.

The centre would promote a fairer and more transparent process for the research and assessment of claims and to conduct negotiations. It would also establish a forum in which both parties can be held to account for their actions to resolve claims.

I want to go back to many years ago to reflect for a moment and advise the House that this is the third time in the last 50 years that we have attempted to create an independent resolution process for specific claims and claims for aboriginal grievances. I am proud today to stand in this place to recognize the hard work of the aboriginal joint initiative between ourselves and the first nations, in particular the AFN. We have gotten to a point where we are now talking about a piece of legislation that will remove the judge and jury type of philosophy that we have used in this place for many years to deal with these kinds of claims. We will now have, I believe, a very independent body to deal with these very fundamental issues of grievances of the past.

This is a very important step as it would increase first nations people's confidence in the process and help us reach agreements more amicably and efficiently. We would no longer be left with no alternative other than being bogged down in an adversarial court system. We would instead be able to resolve impasses before an impartial tribunal.

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With the specific claims resolution act, we will be able to create a system that is more fair and just as important, more effective in settling specific claims. The claims resolution centre would provide a range of modern dispute resolution mechanisms to help to accelerate the rate of claims settlements.

All specific claims would have access to the centre's modern day bargaining tools which would include facilitation, mediation, non-binding arbitration and, with the consent of all parties, binding arbitration. These alternative mechanisms emphasize that the Government of Canada and first nations would rather negotiate than litigate, because negotiations save unnecessary delays and help to reduce costs.

As a labour unionist in my past life and a negotiator, I can say that one of the most important parts of arriving at arrangements between parties is the ability to have these modern tools at our disposal. Whether it is mediation, joint research, or the ability to go to arbitration when necessary, these are the kinds of tools the centre would bring to the forefront for the first time in our relationship.

It would be done with the independence of a commission whose members would be appointed by order in council, but they would be qualified people, as is done in the same fashion with other commissions right across the country. They would also, through the budget that would be set down for them, have the ability to use it in an efficient way to arrive at the kinds of arrangements they want and to get away from going to court, as we do on a regular basis.

• (1010)

I remind my hon. colleagues that not only first nations residents but entrepreneurs and communities all across Canada, aboriginal and non-aboriginal alike, profit from the settlement of these claims. Successfully completed specific claims produce a win-win situation for Canada as a whole.

The first obvious impact that comes to mind is the economic benefits they create. One key obstacle to the development of aboriginal businesses is the difficulty of getting the investment and the loan capital that companies need to grow. The certainty provided by claim settlements can help to bridge this gap.

Settled claims pave the way for partnerships among first nations and the private sector, governments and other Canadian communities. Once claim settlements have been reached, the door is open to expanded opportunities, such as joint ventures with non-aboriginal businesses. Investors can proceed with confidence and first nations can negotiate from positions of strength.

The strongest cases for settling specific claims are the investments that communities make in their own development. For example, with the funds from its successfully resolved claim, the English River First Nation has purchased Tron Power, a general contracting firm which provides specialized construction services.

Equally important are the training opportunities these funds generate which create career options for young people living in aboriginal communities. The Kitigan Zibi First Nation used its \$2.7 million settlement for both infrastructure and other social programs.

Of course from the first nations' perspective, perhaps the most critically important aspect of settled claims is access to land and

resources. A number of first nations have purchased agricultural lands with the proceeds from their settlements to farm or to lease to non-aboriginal farmers. As one example, the Osoyoos settlement allowed the first nation to purchase a large orchard and further develop its vineyards.

Some first nations have purchased oil and gas producing lands with their claim settlements which generate revenues, employment opportunities and even sometimes joint venture projects. These partnerships benefit Canada not just from an economic standpoint, but they also strengthen the presence of aboriginal culture in the country and create new opportunities for the aboriginal and non-aboriginal communities to get to know each other better. As we all learn more about each other, we all learn to appreciate the value of different cultures and gain greater respect for our shared history. I am sure hon. colleagues would agree that we simply cannot put a price tag on that.

I want to remind the House that this progress is made possible through the settlement of first nations claims. By moving forward with the bill we can create a more positive climate for other aboriginal communities so they too can see business and other partnerships flourish.

As was made clear in the Speech from the Throne, the government is determined to move further and faster to achieve the same progress for first nations still awaiting the settlement of their specific claims. We know that the revenues generated by settled claims lead to greater partnerships and self-sufficiency. We know too that the end result of this economic success is the ability to better respond to community needs. This in turn leads to an improved quality of life for aboriginal people. It is this above all that we are determined to achieve.

For all the many good reasons I have outlined, the House must move forward in supporting Bill C-6. This economically advantageous and very necessary legislation will help to ensure that first nations people will finally see the grievances of the past resolved and can look forward to a brighter future. There can be no doubt that we all believe this will make us richer, richer as a country, richer as a people.

I know that in any discussion we have with first nations people, there are always other things they want as it relates to a piece of legislation.

• (1015)

But I think that in the general sense of what we have achieved here after 50 years of trying to get a piece of legislation before the House, we have achieved a good balance, a balance that the government needs to have as it relates to fiscal responsibility in a budget and also at the same time the independence necessary to work very closely with first nations on these grievances, these specific claims, in arriving at a just and very acceptable solution for all.

I thank the House for allowing me this time to voice our strong view that this is a good piece of legislation and one that needs to be supported by the House. I look forward to it coming into effect so that we can move very quickly to resolve the specific claims that are outstanding.

Government Orders

Mr. Maurice Vellacott (Saskatoon—Wanuskewin, Canadian Alliance): Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak to Bill C-6, entitled an act to establish the Canadian Centre for the Independent Resolution of First Nations Specific Claims to provide for the filing, negotiation and resolution of specific claims and to make related amendments to other Acts.

For non-technical listeners today, a layman's explanation is that the bill is designed to set up a permanent centre to evaluate specific claims brought against the federal government by first nations.

An Indian Claims Commission already exists, but it was put in place eleven years ago in 1991, as a temporary measure, to stay until the Liberals got around to fulfilling their 1993 red book promise. That promise is nine years old now. In my view and in the view of others on the committee, the Liberals are still not keeping their promise with the bill before the House today.

For the most part, specific claims deal with outstanding grievances that first nations have regarding Canada's fulfillment of its obligation under historic treaties or its administration of first nations lands or other assets under the Indian Act. That is of course in contrast to the comprehensive claims, which are substantial land claim treaties such as the Nisga'a and Delgamuukw claims.

In other words, at points in our country's history, and maybe even until a few decades ago, there were sharp Indian agents, too sharp by half, who took native lands, who absconded and cheated first nations out of certain shares of that land. Some of these claims have been validated already, but for others, that was the whole point of this centre.

Bill C-6 proposes to set up a claims resolution centre made up of a commission and a tribunal. First nations will file a claim with the commission and if it meets the terms of an admissible claim for the purposes of the commission, the claim then will be submitted to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development for consideration. The commission then will convene preparatory meetings to help the claimants present their case to the minister. Upon completion of that phase of the process, the commission must then suspend proceedings until it receives a written response from the minister as to whether or not he will negotiate the claim. Therein lies the rub, and I will talk later about the stall and delay tactics that can be engaged in thereafter.

In other words, the minister is not given any deadline for making his decision. If the minister decides not to negotiate the claim, the commission will sit down with both parties in an attempt to help them resolve the question of the validity of the claim using alternative dispute resolution mechanisms.

If that process does not work, the claimant can then request that the case be sent to the tribunal, but only if the total amount of the claim does not exceed \$7 million. If the tribunal decides that a claim is valid or if at the earlier stage in the process the minister decides to negotiate the claim, the commission then has to try to help the two parties arrive at an agreed upon amount of compensation.

If the compensation question cannot be resolved by the commission, the claimant can make an appeal to a tribunal to have the case heard, but again only if the compensation being demanded

by the claimant does not exceed \$7 million. The tribunal has the power to make a binding decision after it has heard the case.

The goal behind the bill is to expedite the process of resolving specific claims. Between 1970 and March of last year, Indian bands across the country had filed 1,146 claims and only 232 had been settled, which is less than 20%. The backlog is terrible. The cost in terms of human lives and suffering in the meanwhile is only getting worse, with both the government and first nations becoming increasingly frustrated with the current system.

Unfortunately Bill C-6 is not the legislation we need, despite the minister's pretext to the contrary. I certainly agree that the intent behind the bill is sound and the goal is correct, but the mechanism proposed is terrible. It will not work. What we have before us today is unfortunately a badly and deeply flawed bill.

At committee, the Canadian Alliance Party introduced about 40 amendments to the bill to improve it, to get it right, to make it fair and just and to make it work. But as we in the House of Commons know, the government always has a majority on a committee. The Liberal dominated committee voted against every single amendment we put forward. If it had passed even just one of those amendments, I might be able to stand here today with a message of some hope and some optimism for the Indians who are supposed to use the centre that the bill authorizes and for the taxpayers of this great country who are expected to fund this institution.

• (1020)

Unfortunately I cannot do that, because I believe the claim centre that Bill C-6 proposes will not work. It will fail because it does not have the confidence of the first nations people who are supposed to use it. It will fail because the \$7 million cap on the claims that can be heard by the tribunal will significantly limit the number of claims the new centre will be able to consider. It will fail because it lacks transparency, concrete accountability measures and provisions to prevent patronage.

When it fails it will fuel the feelings of injustice and unrest among Indian people across our nation. It will put Canadian taxpayers on the hook for the cost of setting up and running this centre, but with no return, or a very negligible one, on their investment.

Taxpayers will also have to continue to pay the government's legal bills for the expensive court cases that will be launched in place of the mediated hearings that would take place in an effective claims commission and tribunal. First nations people will continue their uphill battle to have legitimate claims recognized over incidents of injustice and maltreatment at the hands of the federal government and its agents in violation of historic treaty agreements.

I want to discuss some of the reasons why Bill C-6 is such a flawed bill. I will revisit some of the current concerns we raised by way of amendment in committee and hopefully this time around the government will be listening. As a result, perhaps even at this late hour the government may be of a mind to withdraw the bill or to send it back to the aboriginal affairs committee for further examination.

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One of the worst aspects of the bill, in contradiction to the proposals and recommendations that came prior to this in the lead-up to the bill, is the lack of independence of this centre. The government spent three years negotiating with first nations to come up with a plan for dealing with specific claims, or longer than that if we count some of the negotiations prior to that process, which produced the 1998 report of the Joint First Nations-Canada Task Force on specific claims policy reform.

That report reiterated the longstanding recommendation for an independent claims centre. The primary mechanism by which it would be made independent was a joint government-first nations process for appointing the commissioners and the adjudicators. Both parties were to develop a list of jointly approved candidates. The government would pick the commissioners and adjudicators from that list. However, the government has completely abandoned that particular key and crucial proposal.

In Bill C-6 the government has the exclusive prerogative of appointing and reappointing these officials and deciding whether to increase or reduce the number of commissioners or adjudicators, of course within the parameters provided by the bill.

Also, the three to five year review process mandated by Bill C-6 is to be undertaken only by the government, rather than by a joint team of government officials and first nations representatives or other vested interests. The government may, and again "may" is a slippery word, bring other parties into the review process, but it is not required to.

We certainly do not consider the government's track record of late to be one of transparency and disclosure when it comes to dealing with ethical violations. We hearken back to the lack of disclosures on the gun bill of late, to some of the deceptive stuff that was going on there. We do not believe that there will be the transparency and disclosure that is required for this centre to work properly. Therefore, the review process sends the message that the government is interested in the effectiveness of the centre from only its own perspective, rather than understanding its impact on all of the parties involved and concerned.

Indian chiefs from across the country, as well as the Assembly of First Nations, have made their position abundantly clear: that this appointment process mandated by Bill C-6 undermines any claim that the centre will be independent and impartial. If first nations use the centre at all they will not or will very reluctantly accept the rulings against their claims, because they lack confidence in the impartiality of this proposed centre. Unless the government has already decided that it will negotiate all specific claims, it has set up a process that really will not resolve anything in terms of producing closure on or finality for a particular claim.

The parliamentary secretary told us in committee that the minister would consult first nations, but having said that, he was unable to explain why the minister was unwilling to put such a promise into the bill, black on white, where all could see it and read it. Simply saying, "Trust me, I am from the government", does not work today. It never did. If an MP were to try that, going back to the constituency and telling people, "Trust me, I'm from the government", people would not be likely to swallow that real well, especially not when such a sentiment produces \$1 billion gun registry fiascos and

numerous other examples of gross incompetence and questionable ethics.

● (1025)

Canadians want to make their government accountable by seeing its promises stipulated in legislation so that there can be no backing out or waffling on what was intended by some verbal statement. Verbal assurances are not good enough and certainly not when there is the kind of legacy that this government has.

There is also concern about the possibility of patronage appointments to the new centre. There is nothing to prevent the government from resorting to its common practice of patronage and stacking it with its own people who are really not capable and not competent. They may have raised money for the party and done other kinds of things and maybe they are competent in that respect or that sphere, but not with respect to something as important, as crucial, and as complex as this might sometimes be.

The bill does not provide sufficient details on the credentials required of the commissioner or adjudicator so as to ensure that the person actually has some basic understanding of specific claims. Bill C-6 states that the majority of the adjudicators, those who serve on the tribunal, including either the chief adjudicator or the vice-chief adjudicator, need to be members in good standing of the bar of a particular province or the *Chambre des notaires du Québec*, but the bill states nothing about the professional qualifications of those eligible for appointment to the actual claims commission.

In a saner time one might have been able to trust the competence of appointments without more specification, but I am not even sure if ever in the history of our country we could. Right now a parliamentary committee is calling bureaucrats to account over the billion dollar boondoggle of the gun registry to determine their role in the out of control spending that took place there and the less than ideal amount of disclosure. Of course patronage is standard operating procedure for governments through the course of history of our country, particularly for the Liberal government. So we have real concerns about the need for greater clarity as to the credentials of potential appointees to the claims centre.

First nations have also expressed a concern that the appointment periods for the chief and the vice-chief of commissioners and adjudicators are only five years. For the regular commissioners and adjudicators the period is three years. There is the possibility of reappointment in all cases. First nations fear that these short periods of service will tempt the officials to rule in favour of the government of the day to ensure their being reappointed. I think they have a legitimate point.

I served on a district health board in my province as one of the elected members. We had eight elected and six appointed. I think fair observers of that whole process in Saskatchewan would be quick to say that yes indeed, when push came to shove, those who were appointed tended to be looking over their shoulders in terms of whether to be on the government side because of more money. Sometimes we were being underfunded or there were other issues, but they did not want to rock the boat very much because they owed their appointments to the government of the day. As an elected member, I did not. I was not at the government's beck and call. It was the old adage of he who pays the piper calls the tune.

Therefore, we think there needs to be a longer period of time so the officials are not so beholden to the government by way of the appointment process.

The government has abandoned the recommendation of the joint task force report. A number of these things that I am talking about today were from the joint task force report. Despite the statements of the minister here, first nations are not accepting of that. Our party is not, because we want a quick, expeditious and fair settlement of claims and this is only going to bog it down and make it longer, to the frustration of all parties involved.

We believe that the government has chosen to act in bad faith with Indians by securing exclusive control over the appointment process for the claims centre. As such, it has undermined the legitimacy and the credibility of the agency, guaranteeing its failure before it has even begun. That is a tragedy and it is one that victimizes first nations, some 600 bands across our country. It victimizes them all over again and also victimizes the taxpayers who have to pay out more because of that.

A third area of serious concern with the legislation is the complete lack of transparency. The provisions allow the government to stall, delay and stonewall the process of considering a claim.

• (1030)

If the minister, for example, were to decide not to negotiate the claim, he would have no obligation to explain his decision. Of course, if the claimant were to decide to challenge the minister's decision, he would need to provide complete disclosure in his defence. The minister does at a point much later along the way, if we even get there. The claimant, however, must provide a full accounting of his position and his rationale from the very outset of the process.

One would expect that in a context that is supposed to be conciliatory and guided by alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, rather than the adversarial environment of the courts, that the bill would make clear both parties' responsibilities for full disclosure. In a court of law or in any other judicial or semi-judicial proceeding it is not acceptable that only one is required to divulge his or her position fully, exhaustively and completely, while the other one has no onus at all in that respect .

The government has built a number of mechanisms into the bill to enable delay and obstruction in the process of considering a claim. It has avoided the establishment of tangible timelines, contrary to recommendations in the 1988 joint task force report that would have helped to ensure a speedy and effective claims resolution, which is

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what the Canadian Alliance, and the Reform Party before that, had insisted on.

The government also rejected the joint task force report proposals that would have given the claimant or the commission the ability to move the process forward if the government seemed to be taking excessive time to consider a claim. The first example of a stalling clause in the bill is the provision for multiple preparatory meetings. On the initial preparatory meeting, the commission is authorized to hold additional such meetings at the request of either party. The minister can conceivably use this provision to delay the process.

Indian representatives who spoke to us said that generally one preparatory meeting would be enough and that therefore the optional additional meetings would not likely to be found useful to first nations. Concern was raised that it existed more for the benefit of the government for use as a stalling mechanism. These meetings do not necessarily have to happen back to back and they can be strung out and protracted over a long period of time too.

The bill does not require the commission to hold additional meetings at the request of either party. One could imagine the government using this point in its defence. However, without protections in the bill to ensure that the commissioners are competent and patronage free, this means very little.

Later in the process, where the bill discusses the minister's need to consider the merits of the claimant's case and to make a decision as to whether or not he will negotiate the claim, the bill gives him six months to report back with a decision. That sounds well and fine enough for more complex kinds of issues and settlements but in clause 30 of the bill it states that the minister can come back to the commission in six months and, instead of reporting his decision, he can just simply say that he needs more time. Six months later he can come back again and say he needs more time. This could go on indefinitely. Therefore at first blush it might seem like a reasonable provision to ask for an extension of six months but if it is extended again and again, which it can be with no particular reasons other than he needs more time, then there really are no timelines or final deadlines provided at all. The government could theoretically ask indefinitely for additional six month extensions.

One of the amendments that we submitted, which we thought was a reasonable and fair amendment, would have put a one year limit on the process. However the government voted down that amendment. More specifically, our amendment would have required the minister to apply to the commission for more time, giving the commission the right to deny the government's request. It also would have required the commission to hear from the claimant before making a decision.

Currently, the bill does not require the minister to seek permission for an extension. The minister can make the decision unilaterally and the commission and the claimant are forced to live with it. The bill does not even require the government to provide its reasons for insisting on this extension to its reporting deadline.

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We are dealing with a government that appears to, these days at least, despise accountability and transparency. Subclause 30(3) states that the government may, and there is that slippery word again, provide the reasons that it needs more time, and here it really compounds it, "if applicable".

● (1035)

The way the clause is phrased it treats the practice of not providing reasons as normative by stating that the minister only needs to produce reasons if it is deemed applicable to do so. I do not know what situations would make it not applicable for him to provide reasons for delaying the process and leaving the parties hanging.

One of my amendments in committee was to delete the words "if applicable" but, alas, the government members voted it down.

Although I am not quite sure why, this secrecy provision is important to the government, even though the minister is secretive about telling us why it is important. It is the lack of transparency in the bill that raises serious questions about how effective it would be at clearing up the terrible backlog that exists today in specific claims.

The government even added a fourth section to clause 30 to protect itself against penalties for stalling the process. Subclause 30(4) reads:

No passage of time in relation to the decision on whether to negotiate a claim may be considered as constituting a decision not to negotiate the claim.

The government protected itself quite well there.

That subclause reinforces the fact that the bill makes no provision for the claimant to circumvent this part in the process. The commission may not treat the lack of a decision from the government as a decision one way or the other. It remains in limbo until the minister decides to announce his decision. It has no possibility of going another way, no recourse to some alternate route, until such time.

The Canadian Alliance proposed an amendment to delete that subclause from the bill but again the government members in the committee defeated the amendment.

I want to take a moment to quote the legal analysis of Bill C-6 produced by the Assembly of First Nations, being that the minister said that they were so much in love with the bill and supported it so grandly. The following is their analysis pertaining to the issues of accountability and transparency in the claim process proposed in the legislation. They state:

Under Bill C-6, the federal government unilaterally controls the pace at which claims are considered. Bill C-6 permits the Minister to "consider" a claim indefinitely at an early stage in the process. There are no time limits that must be obeyed. No independent body can ever say "enough is enough, the claim goes to the next stage." A claim might have to go through an elaborate series of distinct stages and steps before compensation is ever paid. This could include:

The following is the AFN list:

a funding application; initial preparatory meetings; Ministerial consideration; mediation; further delays while the Minister considers an amendment that the claimant makes to its initial claim; an application and hearing to convince the Commission that mediation has been exhausted;

They tried everything and absolutely covered all the grounds. The list goes on:

a hearing in front of the Tribunal to determine compensation; mediation to deal with compensation; an application and hearing to determine whether mediation has been exhausted;

Even as I read this I am almost exhausted thinking about the long, drawn out and frustrating process. To continue:

proceedings in front of the Tribunal; a five year delay while the award is paid out; judicial review of the award.

The AFN continues:

Many of these steps could have been eliminated or combined. With others, the delays could have been controlled by giving an independent body control over the pace or by setting a strict time frame in the statute itself. The Joint Task Force Model Bill was built for making major headway on the backlog. Bill C-6 is almost certain to ensure that the backlog grows.

In a footnote to these comments, the AFN notes that:

Under the JTF Report, the Minister did not have the discretion to consider a claim indefinitely.

I think that was a good thing in the joint task force report.

Once a claim was lodged, the Commission and Tribunal, not the federal government, had the primary say over the pace of proceedings. A First Nation was not required to attend more than one preparatory meeting, or to prove to a third party that mediation or other "alternate dispute resolution" was exhausted. When a claim reached the tribunal, both validity and compensation could be dealt with together.

As I have examined the bill and the claims process in general, including the history leading to the place we find ourselves today, these observations strike me, generally speaking, as quite reasonable.

When the minister finally gets around to making a decision, if he decides not to negotiate the claim, the claimant can then request the commission to bring the minister to the negotiating table in an attempt to resolve their differences. That is where we face yet more problems.

● (1040)

The bill would require a claim to be heard twice by the commission and by the tribunal if the claim could not be resolved through the commission. It would first have to go through a validity phase, which is designed to determine the validity of the claim. After a claim is deemed valid, if the government decides to negotiate it or the tribunal rules that the government just get on and negotiate it, the claim would then have to go through a similar process in order to determine compensation.

As everybody knows by now, Bill C-6 includes a cap such that any claim valued above the level of the cap would not even be heard by the claims tribunal. The cap proposed in the bill is \$7 million and whether or not a cap of some sort should exist at the compensation stage of the process, there is no reason that the cap should be proposed at the validity stage.

Since the bill would clearly separate these two parts of the process, it should be relatively easy, one would think, to eliminate the cap requirement for the validity stage. In committee, the Canadian Alliance introduced an amendment that would have done just that. It would have eliminated subclause 32(1)(c) which would have required the claimant to waive any compensation for the claim that is in excess of the claim limit. We wanted that subclause eliminated.

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The government likes to point out that the cap is only applicable at the tribunal stage of the process, that there is no cap for claims heard by the commission, but if government officials knew that an unresolved claim at the commission level had to be bumped into the slow and expensive court system because it could not be sent to the tribunal, that would act as an incentive to stall and obstruct the process in the case of claims the government really had no interest, no desire or did not want to resolve.

In other words, although the cap would not apply directly to the work of the commission, the other side of it is that it, nevertheless, would have a significant and severe impact on the work that would take place there as well.

Perhaps the reason for preventing access to the tribunal for determining validity for costly claims is strictly political. Some first nations have told me that a tolerable compromise might be a measure similar to the one that is available in the current Indian Claims Commission.

The current commission cannot issue binding decisions on a claim but it can prepare non-binding reports that first nations could use to generate some political pressure on the government at least, if they feel the government is unfairly stalling in the resolution process. That is more likely the reason that the Liberals do not want an expensive claim to come before the tribunal, even to deal with the matter of validity. The unfortunate result is that far fewer claims will be successfully processed through this new claims centre than the government hopes.

Another problem with clause 32 is the obstructionist language used in terms of the requirements the claimant would have to fulfill before the commission would be permitted to send a claim to the tribunal. A claim could go to the tribunal if the government refused to negotiate it following the discussions facilitated by the commission with the help of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms. However if the claimant still wanted to pursue his claim he could ask the commission to refer it to the tribunal for a binding decision. The problem here is the excessive threshold of proof that the bill would impose on the claimant before his claim could go before that tribunal.

Subclause 32(1)(a) states:

the basis for the claim and all matters of fact and law on which the claimant relies in support of the claim have been fully and clearly identified and adequately researched and have been considered by the Minister;

Subclause 32(1)(b) states:

all dispute resolution processes appropriate for resolving the issue have been exhausted without the issue having been resolved;

These sections, essentially, would require the claimant to prove to the claims commission that he had done absolutely everything that he could possibly do, no stone unturned. The onus would be on him to prove that he had done that within the alternative dispute resolution process before the commission could send that claim to the tribunal to consider its validity.

The absolutist language in that subclause would impose an excessive, if not impossible, threshold of proof on the claimant before he would be permitted to pursue a hearing before the tribunal. If pro-government patronage appointments were sitting on the

commissions, and we think there is every likelihood of that, they could help the government use this provision as yet another stalling tactic. If the claimant does not have every single *t* crossed and every *i* dotted, this step in the process could be a place to delay justice for aboriginal people. We think that cannot and should not be and, unfortunately, it is again, to the detriment of native people across our country.

• (1045)

First nations have pointed out that they support the use of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms and that if the alternative dispute resolution process is working for a particular claim, it really is in their interest to make it work. First nations therefore say that they do not understand why the government is using this big stick approach to ensure the use of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, unless it is another mechanism to be used as a stalling tactic to force the claimant to continue to sit down again and again with the federal government even long after any reasonable person, any outside fair-minded observer, would say that there is nothing further to be gained by additional negotiations.

One comment we received from first nations on this issue is as follows:

Alternate dispute settlement mechanisms, such as mediation, only work if both parties are committed to making it work. The best judge of that is the parties themselves. A claimant should not have to "prove" to the commission, in another potentially very expensive and dilatory proceeding, that alternative dispute resolution is "exhausted". The current provision allows the federal government to further stall and frustrate the process by dragging its feet with respect to its participation in the alternative dispute resolution process.

I want to move to the compensation phase of the process. Assuming the tribunal has made a binding decision if the claim is valid, both parties then have to go back to the commission to try to negotiate the appropriate compensation for the claim. That is dealt with in clause 35 of Bill C-6. Subclauses 1(a) and 1(b) of this clause duplicate those found in clause 32. We have talked about that before, and the same reasons why it is so flawed and problematic apply in this case here.

We introduced amendments in committee to improve these clauses, but again they were defeated by the government without explanation. This was the course, a stony silence on the other side. Even when its own member on the committee asked for the reasons for voting down some of these amendments, there was dead silence. Other times there were other offhand remarks that were not respectful of the process.

Some first nations have said that if alternative dispute resolution mechanisms do not work by the end of one year, there should be a provision for the claimant to request that the claim be transferred to the tribunal. One representation we received, stated in part:

After one year of attempting to negotiate a resolution, the claimant should be free to proceed to the tribunal. It should not have to go through further hoops, involving additional delay and expense, to show that it tried to exhaust other means of settlement. It is unnecessary and unfair to require the claimant to exhaustively state its case, including all of its evidence and legal arguments, prior to that tribunal hearing. No one is required to do so in any other comparable litigation or arbitration context.

The representation went on to state:

Government Orders

The Minister should not be able to delay resolution by dragging a First Nation through a slow or endless series of "negotiations". Any First Nation that can achieve a reasonable settlement by negotiation will do so. Why would it risk losing at the tribunal?

That is a very valid point.

They certainly seem to me to be reasonable observations. I am not saying that no criteria should be stipulated as a basic requirement of part of the process, but we think that the claimant should be able to proceed without being stalled or stonewalled in that way. It has to be something met by the claimant before the commission can transfer it to the tribunal. Perhaps there are ways that I or others in committee have not thought of, but more thought could be given to that, if in fact a claimant tried to unfairly take advantage of a situation in which no criteria were required. At the very least, the criteria should be modified with changes to the absolutist language that currently exists in the bill.

Subclause (1)(d) of clause 35 requires the claimant to waive any compensation amount higher than the cap stipulated in clause 56, which is currently set at \$7 million. We introduced an amendment to increase the cap to \$25 million. I will be talking about this more in a moment.

When we think about the section before us, we have to realize that the claimant is really being asked to waive his right to a claim amount higher than the designated cap before even knowing what the final value of that claim might be. That strikes me as being rather perverse. The longer a claim takes to be resolved, the more its value grows in terms of interest and appreciation. If a claim is close to the value of the cap or if the government stalls the resolution over many years, the value of that claim rises above the cap. Claimants who have signed waivers have to essentially take a loss in terms of the maximum amount they can receive from the federal government for the claims.

• (1050)

If it is ruled an authentic claim, then questions arise about the legitimacy of attempts to get the claimant to accept the compromise. We well understand that the government does not have an unlimited pot of money, but it raises some serious philosophical and practical questions when we allow the fiscal limitations to guide, in this case, the government's decisions about whether it will honour contractual and treaty obligations. Others have to declare bankruptcy to escape fiscal obligations. To hold the government to a lesser standard of contractual obligation, is to grant it the right to exercise arbitrary power.

As I stated earlier, there might be issues of jurisprudence that should be revisited, but to maintain respect for the rule of law, the government should be held accountable to honour whatever jurisprudence it has chosen to accept.

The claimant already has had to waive a compensation amount over the value of the cap before the claim can even proceed to the tribunal at the validation stage. The claim might be well more than the \$7 million, and that is the whole purpose of the process. However claimants have to waive that, or sign away their life so to speak, at the outset of the process and that seems hardly fair. It is not even clear why they have to sign waivers a second time prior to the tribunal accepting it for the purpose of determining compensation.

There are other aspects of the clause that might have some merit, although I expect that is rather open to debate. However due to the government's refusal to make the important amendments proposed by the Canadian Alliance in committee, I introduced an amendment to delete the entire clause from the bill.

The government has not told us what it is afraid of when it comes to being held to the same standard of accountability that first nations are held to with this piece of legislation. Yet time after time in committee amendments, from the Canadian Alliance as well as from other parties, that would have introduced stronger measures for accountability and transparency into the legislation were defeated. It just shows how self-important or maybe even arrogant a government can become.

Most of the amendments were put forward with sincerity and reasonableness but were defeated without explanation. Committee members from the various opposition parties continually asked the government members to explain why. From time to time we had wringers in committee, and I am sure we are all familiar with that term. They walked into committee totally unaware and out of the loop of the discussion beforehand. Therefore we understood why they could not explain. However no attempt was even made by other committee members who had been supposedly told to vote a certain way.

I confess one Liberal member voted with us on a number of these. Consistently he asked his own colleagues for an explanation to refute the apparent reasonableness of some of our amendments, yet almost without exception our questions were met with blank stares and stoney silence. I suppose when the government has a majority in Parliament, it does not have to explain its actions or defend its decisions. It can do whatever it wants in the hope that constituents will have forgotten by the time the next election comes around.

I want to speak for a moment about clause 56 which stipulates the criteria for determining compensation, including the \$7 million cap. I think that cap is very unfair. We had proposed a cap of \$25 million. I will leave it to subsequent speakers to deal with that. However, I move:

That the motion be amended by deleting all the words after the word "That" and substituting the following therefore:

Bill C-6, an act to establish the Canadian Centre for the Independent Resolution of First Nations Specific Claims to provide for the filing, negotiation and resolution of specific claims and to make related amendments to other acts, be not now read a third time, but be referred back to the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs, Northern Development and Natural Resources for the purpose of reconsidering clauses 30, 32 and 35 with the view to making the claims negotiation process faster by, among other things, setting timelines for each step of the process.

• (1055)

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos): The amendment is in order.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

•(1100)

[English]

HEALTH

Mr. Rob Merrifield (Yellowhead, Canadian Alliance): Madam Speaker, Wednesday's health accord represents a commendable start to improving health care in Canada. There is some confusion about the money because the Prime Minister is good at inflating the numbers, but the first ministers agreed with the deal.

Now, it is up to all parties to meet their commitments, work together, and improve health care for all Canadians. It is time for the squabbling to be put behind us and to focus on the needs of all Canadians.

There is much in the accord that the Canadian Alliance called for. We called for flexibility in implementing the new programs. We called for restoring funding for the core health services. We called for no restrictions on private delivery within the public system. We called for dedicated health transfers for adding transparency and accountability. We will now be holding the government accountable for the deal that it has signed.

Canadians want to see tangible improvements for frontline health care services, that is, more doctors, nurses, hospital beds, shorter wait times, and wider delivery options.

It is time to put health care on solid footing in the 21st century. That means putting the interests of the patient first.

* * *

CHINESE NEW YEAR

Ms. Sophia Leung (Vancouver Kingsway, Lib.): Madam Speaker, over the last two weeks I have had the opportunity to attend many Chinese New Year's celebrations in British Columbia and Alberta. As the third largest ethnic group with over one million Chinese Canadians, Chinese New Year has become a major celebration for many Canadians.

I want to congratulate groups such as the Chinese Benevolent Association of Vancouver, Chinese Culture Centre of Vancouver, Vancouver Chinatown Merchants Association, SUCCESS, and the Taiwan Chamber of Commerce in B.C., just to name a few, for helping Canadians celebrate this important holiday in Chinese culture.

I would also like to extend greetings to all Canadians for a healthy and successful year of the ram.

* * *

HOUSING

Mr. John Maloney (Eric—Lincoln, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the Governments of Canada and Ontario announced the allocation of 3,200 units for low to moderate income residents in 12 municipalities under the community rental housing program. The units were distributed to municipalities with the greatest need for affordable housing under the first phase of the Canada/Ontario affordable housing program agreement.

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The affordable housing program will provide \$489.42 million over the next five years to help increase the supply of much needed affordable housing in the province. Government of Canada funding of \$244.72 million, together with matching contributions from the Government of Ontario, municipalities, and other private and non-private partners will help create an estimated 10,500 affordable housing units. All governments, federal, provincial and municipal, must work together to encourage investment in affordable housing.

I strongly urge the Minister of Finance and cabinet to support the extension of the residential rehabilitation assistance program, RRAP, and the supporting communities partnership initiative, SCPI, as well as to continue funding commitments for affordable housing.

* * *

DOROTHY RUNGELING

Mr. Tony Tirabassi (Niagara Centre, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to congratulate my constituent, Dorothy Wetherald Rungeling, for being named a Member of the Order of Canada.

Once billed as "Canada's Flying Housewife", Dorothy dared to challenge convention and secured a place in aviation history. From her base at the Welland airport she earned her pilot's licence in 1949, her commercial licence in 1951, her instructor's certification in 1953, and her senior commercial pilot's licence in 1954.

To this day she is one of only three women in Canada to have accomplished this combination of feats. She also became the first Canadian woman to conduct a solo helicopter flight. The pursuit of her life long passion attracted worldwide attention as she competed in national and international air races.

Now in her nineties she remains active as a writer and instructor of computer skills to senior citizens. I wish to congratulate Dorothy.

* * *

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF CANADA

Mr. Mac Harb (Ottawa Centre, Lib.): Madam Speaker, a book provides a refuge for the soul of the reader; a library a refuge for the soul of a country. The National Library of Canada, the soul of our country, is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year.

Since 1953 the library has brought together the needs and interests of Canadians, their culture, their heritage, and their understanding of Canada's place in the world.

Fifty years later the government has announced its intention to provide Canadians with even better access to their history. The new institutions, the Library and Archives Canada, will combine these two great institutions and stand out as a world class agency dedicated to the preservation of our culture.

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QUEEN'S JUBILEE MEDAL

Mr. Deepak Obhrai (Calgary East, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the recipients of the Queen's Jubilee Medal awarded throughout Canada and particularly in my constituency of Calgary East.

We co-hosted an event with four other constituencies and the Hon. Lieutenant Governor Lois E. Hole attended to present medals to extraordinary Canadians who, in their own way, have made a valuable and outstanding contribution to both community and country.

I would like to congratulate: Raghbir Basati, Surendra Bhandari, Fariborz Birjandian, Chuck Blanchard, Gita Boyd, Pradeep Charan, Ray Clark, Dinesh Dattani, Michael Detheridge, Vinay Dey, Titus Matthews, Ed McNally, Krishna Naicker, Michael Pearson, Prabhudas Ruparell, Ian Seright, Kumar Sharma, Abbimanyu Singh, Ajit Singh, Gabrielle Stapleton, Tishma Taneja, Rufo "Tigs" Tidalgo, Anil Tiwari, Manhar Verma and Neville Wells.

* * *

• (1105)

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Mr. Gurbax Malhi (Bramalea—Gore—Malton—Springdale, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Black History Month is dedicated to the recognition, learning, and celebration of black history in North America.

In 1995 the Government of Canada declared February to be Black History Month. This gives us the opportunity to celebrate cultural, social, economic, and political contributions of blacks to North America. I am pleased that in my riding of Bramalea—Gore—Malton—Springdale the Malton Black Development Association will be holding its annual dinner to honour the many young people who will receive scholarship money for excelling at education and athletics.

I would especially like to acknowledge the ongoing efforts of all the organizers of this annual event who have made it a success for more than 20 years.

* * *

[*Translation*]

RIDING OF JONQUIÈRE

Ms. Jocelyne Girard-Bujold (Jonquière, BQ): Mr. Speaker, last Friday, the Alumiform company, in my riding, announced a new expansion plan that will create 50 new jobs.

Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions has invested \$2.9 million in this project. However, once again, this loan was announced by the Secretary of State responsible for Canada Economic Development and by the member for Chicoutimi—Le Fjord.

Since I am the member of such a flourishing riding where it rains grants, I can only be pleased. I thank the member for Chicoutimi—Le Fjord for announcing the assistance for my riding on my behalf, even if everyone knows that he has nothing to do with promoting these causes.

This way, I can listen in person to my constituents' concerns, serve them in Parliament and defend their interests, their causes and their ideas, particularly with regard to the war against Iraq.

I thank the member for Chicoutimi—Le Fjord. All members dream of having a press secretary like him at their service.

* * *

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT WEEK

Mr. André Harvey (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, as part of the activities for International Development Week 2003, the Minister for International Cooperation launched a national contest for young people between the ages of 14 and 18, sponsored by CIDA and called Butterfly 208.

This contest gives young people the chance to think about ways to do something about poverty and injustice in some of the poorest countries in the world.

Yesterday, roughly one hundred Ottawa school children took part in a forum to launch the contest, which young people everywhere are strongly encouraged to participate in. They can submit an essay or an art entry on themes such as child protection, AIDS awareness, or education.

I invite all Canadians to encourage young people they know to participate in Butterfly 208 and help change the lives of others for the better.

* * *

[*English*]

SPECIES AT RISK

Mr. Philip Mayfield (Cariboo—Chilcotin, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, the new species at risk law is already, even before it is proclaimed, unnecessarily throwing some British Columbians out of work.

Healthy and growing caribou herds in the Itcha Ilgatchuz Mountains in western B.C. have been lumped into the same eco-province as the vulnerable caribou herd in the Cariboo Mountains 500 kilometres to the east and with another herd in Alberta. What this means is that guide outfitters have been told there is no work for them and also, planned establishment of new herds in the East Kootenays using this healthy stock have been stopped.

This heavy handedness has occurred despite years of success by wildlife biologists, logging companies, guide outfitters and private citizens to enhance this western herd. This new law will come into effect in June. Therefore, any exemptions have to be made now, even though letters have been sent to the guides telling them there will be no work this fall.

This is so typical of the government. Already it cannot tell the difference between its own listing of endangered species and it has no idea of how to effectively enforce the law that it has made.

CANADIAN COAST GUARD

Mr. Joe Peschisolido (Richmond, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the House today to congratulate the fisheries minister on his announcement on the implementation of a full time, full service, rescue dive program at the Coast Guard's Sea Island base in my riding of Richmond.

A full service dive program means that full rescue dive and backup teams will be installed on a 24 hours a day, 7 day a week basis to respond to maritime emergencies off the lower mainland of British Columbia.

The Coast Guard has allocated an initial \$300,000 to recruit and train new divers, and update equipment and facilities. A full dive team will be set up consisting of at least four teams of six divers, and a further \$1 million per year will follow to ensure its continuing operation.

This program will be fully compliant with all necessary regulations and will ensure the safety of our divers while giving British Columbians the full time, full service, dive program they value.

* * *

• (1110)

CANADIAN ALLIANCE

Mr. Pat Martin (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise today as the NDP critic of the official opposition.

The Prime Minister might write the Speech from the Throne, but it seems it is the Canadian Alliance that dictates Liberal policy, and here is a good example.

Yesterday, in a bizarre spectacle of solidarity, Alliance and Liberal MPs shared not one, but two, standing ovations, a veritable love-in, in saying no to the Romanow report and in celebrating increased privatization of health care. Surely an unholy alliance that should alarm Canadians across the country.

Here is another disturbing fact: the member for Saskatoon—Humboldt is such an extremist that he has become a pariah in the House of Commons, yet guess where he gets support for his warped world views? He gets seconders for his motions from the Canadian Alliance member for Calgary West, a member who used to work as a professional union buster for the leader of the official opposition when he was the head of the National Citizens' Coalition.

Canadians need to know what the Canadian Alliance really stands for, and it is my great pleasure to assist them by pointing out and drawing attention—

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Joliette.

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[Translation]

WORLD SOCIAL FORUM IN PÔRTO ALEGRE

Mr. Pierre Paquette (Joliette, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the third annual world social forum in Pôrto Alegre—attended by only one party from the House of Commons, the Bloc Québécois—advocated globalization with respect for the sovereignty of nations, the environment and shared prosperity.

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At the parliamentary forum, alternatives to neo-liberal globalization were presented: protecting cultural diversity, levying a tax on financial transactions, respecting fundamental rights to work and the environment in trade agreements, and eliminating tax havens.

The Bloc Québécois made sure so that the final statement at the parliamentary forum would indicate our opposition to the negotiation of a multilateral agreement on investment within the WTO and the FTAA that stands to benefit transnationals.

Parliamentarians also agreed to ask their government to pressure the IMF to change its charter to take human rights into account in their refinancing plan.

The federal government's absence was glaring but the Quebec government was represented by Minister Louise Beaudoin, who publicly voiced her hopes that Quebec would attain full sovereignty and join the countries that are working toward globalization that serves the people.

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[English]

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Mr. John McKay (Scarborough East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in commemorating Black History Month, the Government of Canada sponsors the Mathieu Da Costa Challenge. The challenge invites elementary and secondary school students to research, discover, and celebrate contributions made by Canadians of all ethnic and racial backgrounds to the building of Canada.

I am pleased to acknowledge the presence in Ottawa today of the 2003 winners. The hon. Secretary of State for Multiculturalism had the pleasure yesterday of awarding certificates of achievements to the following: Best Essays in English: Alana Poon, Winnipeg, Man.; Hannah Crump, Toronto, Ont.; Chloe Hamilton, Elmira, Ont.; Best speeches in French: Gérard De Francesco, Kanata, Ont.; Danny St-Jacques, Ottawa, Ont.; Sarah Beaupré, Ottawa, Ont.; Best artistic representations: Kara Chan, Abbotsford, B.C.; Kristin Blackmore, Fredericton, N.B.; and Kylene Cachelin, Kamloops, B.C.

We congratulate everyone. Well done kids.

* * *

VETERANS AFFAIRS

Mr. Rex Barnes (Gander—Grand Falls, PC): Mr. Speaker, I stand today to speak on a very important issue. In fact, this issue should be dear to the hearts of all Canadians. We have a responsibility to care for all Canadian veterans and their spouses.

While veterans are alive, their spouses enjoy the benefits they rightly deserve. However upon the death of a veteran the pension benefits do not continue for the spouse. This is shameful. I call upon the minister to make the necessary changes.

What is even more shameful is that the spouses of the Newfoundland Overseas Forestry Unit were promised that they would receive benefits, but they have yet to receive such benefits.

Oral Questions

I call upon the minister responsible for veterans affairs to do the right thing. The minister should financially care for all spouses of deceased veterans. The minister must ensure that changes are made to deliver all benefits to those who paid such a heavy price for our freedom.

* * *

● (1115)

FISHERIES

Mr. John Duncan (Vancouver Island North, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, in the 1990s the Department of Fisheries and Oceans took the initiative to buy out all of the wild Atlantic salmon commercial fishery licences in Newfoundland and Labrador for conservation reasons. This was a welcome and necessary move.

Now we have a similar situation on the west coast. There are approximately 70 rock cod boats for inside waters on the B.C. coast. Their current and projected catch allocations are too small to be economic due to serious conservation concerns.

I have been asked by licence holders to present to the minister the benefits of a licence buy-back. This would solve the conservation issue and remove extreme economic hardship. It would be in the public interest and would also remove a major long term management hurdle for fisheries and oceans personnel at a reasonable cost. I encourage the minister to quickly adopt this proposal.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD
*[English]***IRAQ**

Mr. Grant Hill (Macleod, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, two years into his mandate President Bush is planning on making his first state visit to what should be his closest ally, Canada.

While many countries have made their position on Iraq clear, Canada's position remains somewhat hazy. When President Bush does arrive here in Canada, will he find an ally with a clear position on Iraq or a fence sitter?

Hon. John Manley (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am not sure why the member feels that there is some uncertainty about looking to the United Nations in order to establish the legal authority for very serious military action in another region of the world.

We have asked for a resolution. Resolution 1441 was given. It clearly provides for an intrusive inspection regime. That has been and is being carried out. We should see what Mr. Blix has to say to the Security Council on February 14.

Mr. Grant Hill (Macleod, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, Australia's position on Iraq is clear. Spain's position is clear. Great Britain's position on Iraq is crystal clear.

The best way to prevent a war is for Saddam Hussein to know that there is an allied coalition that is strong. That is the only thing that he will fully understand.

My question stands: When will Canada's position on Iraq be clear, like our closest allies?

Hon. John Manley (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada's position on Iraq is clear and it is expressed in resolution 1441 of the United Nations Security Council. If the Alliance Party would prefer to follow other rules of engagement, other than those that are established by the international community, let it explain what those rules would be.

* * *

BORDER SECURITY

Mr. Grant Hill (Macleod, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, the government is fuzzy on Iraq and also fuzzy on border security.

Since September 11, 2001, the Canadian Alliance has called for a continental border security policy, one that would allow the free flow of people and goods across our border.

Instead, why has the Liberal government not ensured an exemption from the 24 hour advance notice proposal that will hurt Canada?

Hon. John Manley (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would be happy to advise the hon. member at his convenience of the work that has been done under the thirty point smart border action plan that we have pursued essentially since September 11, but which was signed in December 2001, and of the establishment of the NEXUS and FAST programs that ensure rapid access across the border by shippers and frequent travellers in both directions. These are innovative new measures that make the Canada-U.S border one of the most intelligent borders in the world.

* * *

JUSTICE

Mr. Vic Toews (Provencher, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, in January 2002 an Edmonton man received house arrest for sexually molesting his nieces for 15 years.

The Canadian Police Association has called upon the minister to stand up for victims and repeal the house arrest provisions of the Criminal Code, yet the minister continues to defend these outrageous sentences.

Why does the minister continue to defend the rights of sexual predators but lack the courage to protect their victims?

Mrs. Marlene Jennings (Parliamentary Secretary to the Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government takes seriously criminal offences and in terms of house arrest it is part of the sentencing process. The tribunal, the parole board that orders house arrest, does so independently but with public safety in its view. It is the primary cause and the primary concern of the justice system.

● (1120)

Mr. Vic Toews (Provencher, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, the member does not even know what tribunal issues the sentences, but let us talk about balance.

Oral Questions

In July 2002 an Edmonton businessman received house arrest after attacking his ex-wife with a knife. In October 2002 a Calgary man received house arrest for bending his nine month old daughter into a U-shape, snapping her spine and severing her aorta.

Could the minister explain to the Canadian people why he continues to defend house arrest for those who cripple children and abuse women?

Hon. Martin Cauchon (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is referring of course to very sad and tragic events, but the question which is asked today is basically a question of the sentencing scheme we have in place in Canada—

An hon. member: A scheme.

Hon. Martin Cauchon: —the sentencing system that is in place. As I said, we have been discussing the question of sentencing with our federal-provincial colleagues, at the last meeting that we had before Christmas, and the justice committee is looking into it at this very moment.

When we are talking about protection of our Canadian people, protection as well of our children, there is a bill which is before the House and I just hope that actually they will—

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Longueuil.

* * *

[*Translation*]

IRAQ

Ms. Caroline St-Hilaire (Longueuil, BQ): Mr. Speaker, many of us share the UN Secretary General's belief that war can be avoided. There is still room for hope and for peace. It is vital that all possible resources be made available to the inspectors so that Iraq may be disarmed through peaceful means.

Will the Minister of Foreign Affairs admit that these are the two fundamental objectives his government must pursue?

Hon. John Manley (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we certainly have the same objective, namely the disarmament of Iraq. I believe the Government of Iraq must respect the resolution adopted by the Security Council. This is the best way to avoid conflict in Iraq.

Ms. Caroline St-Hilaire (Longueuil, BQ): Mr. Speaker, yesterday President Bush said "The game is over".

Given the obvious impatience of the American president to go to war, should the government's role not be to support the only other remaining avenue to peace, which is to promote to the maximum the inspection process currently under way?

Hon. John Manley (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we can promote the inspection process but the Security Council resolution must be respected in Iraq. If the inspectors do not have access to locations where weapons may be concealed, they cannot carry out the inspection the Security Council had in mind. This is why the outcome really depends on the decision of Saddam Hussein.

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Verchères—Les-Patriotes, BQ): Mr. Speaker, several countries are hesitant about blindly following the

United States as it heads down the warpath against Iraq and they are continuing to make concrete proposals to provide inspectors with more material resources, as France recently did.

Can the government tell us what additional material and financial resources it plans to provide UN inspectors for Iraq's disarmament process?

[*English*]

Ms. Aileen Carroll (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as the minister said yesterday, the initiatives on the part of other countries, such as those of the British and the French, are theirs to make.

We have been very supportive of the Security Council. We are satisfied very much with the efforts it is making. Our perspective is that we are to represent Canada and are doing exactly that.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Verchères—Les-Patriotes, BQ): Mr. Speaker, how can the government reconcile its policy on Iraq—which until now has consisted of waiting and watching—with its rhetoric, in which it attempts to portray Canada as an important player on the international scene?

Hon. John Manley (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think that Canada's role is based on our history, which involves supporting the UN process. I think that by asking the Security Council to pass a very strong resolution, we have followed Canada's traditional instinct, which is to help the world find peaceful solutions. However, there are problems that have to be resolved according to the process adopted by the Security Council.

• (1125)

[*English*]

Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, yesterday George Bush said the "game is over". War in Iraq is not a game. Hundreds of thousands of lives are at risk, and Canada has no position.

What about the so-called proof as presented by Colin Powell, proof the Alliance wants to go to war over? The Liberals have yet to disagree.

Is the Prime Minister aware of reports that the U.K. intelligence dossier, praised by Powell, is copied from three articles, including a graduate student's? This is the evidence? Surely we are not going to go to war over this.

Hon. John Manley (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is always enlightening to be in the House where one party across the way thinks that we should agree with the United States even if the United States is wrong, and another party thinks we should disagree with the United States even if the United States is right.

We have expressed a very plain and principled position in this matter which is based upon the crucial role of the United Nations. The UN has adopted a strong resolution in 1441. The inspectors have reported once, somewhat disagreeably, on Iraq, even the hon. member must agree. There is more work to do.

Oral Questions

Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, if there is a principled position, we have yet to hear it.

Canadians do not want this war. The world does not want this war. Will the government say nothing to stop George Bush from beating the drums of war without proof, without listening and refusing to rule out the possible use of nuclear weapons? Even U.S. senators are sounding the alarm bells.

If the Liberals will not tell Bush he is wrong on the war, will they at least say he is wrong to refuse to rule out the use of nuclear weapons? Will the government at least go that far and say that?

Hon. John Manley (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the only principle that the New Democrats seem to follow in this is that they do not like the United States.

I think it is important to look at the very words of the inspectors, Mr. Blix and his group, with respect to their visit to Iraq. It is important to consider the evidence, not just the recent evidence but the evidence of behaviour over a long period of time with respect to the conduct of the dictator in Iraq.

Canadians do not want war. The world does not want war, but the absence of conflict is not necessarily peace. The responsibility on the government in Iraq to respond to the UN—

The Deputy Speaker: Order. The right hon. member for Calgary Centre.

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HEALTH

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Calgary Centre, PC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Prime Minister acknowledged that Wednesday's agreed arrangement on health care is unfair to the three territories, where an exclusive per capita formula simply makes no sense. The Prime Minister promised to fix the problem on a bilateral basis.

The territories need more than another promise. They need a concrete agreement immediately that is not subject to clawback and provides a base that takes account of the unusual distances and challenges of the north.

Will the government today give a commitment in principle to conclude a fair agreement with the three territories, and will the Deputy Prime Minister undertake to report progress back to the House before the end of February?

Hon. John Manley (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am sure that the hon. member is aware of the arrangements for territorial financing which see the territorial governments receive per capita transfers significantly higher than those that are received by the provinces.

In fact, with the increase in the transfers to the provinces, for every \$1 in increase per capita to the provinces, the territorial impact is \$3.60 per capita in Nunavut, \$2.88 in the Northwest Territories and \$2.60 in the Yukon. The territorial financing formula does take into account those additional costs.

FIREARMS REGISTRY

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Calgary Centre, PC): Mr. Speaker, I very much regret that position and hope that when the Prime Minister comes back, it will be reconsidered.

Earlier this week, the supporting documentation on the long gun registry report was published in English only. The government leader in the other place said it is a legitimate position to ask that official documents be published in both official languages. It is more than a legitimate position; it is an obligation under the Official Languages Act.

Why did the Government of Canada abandon the spirit and perhaps the letter of the Official Languages Act in this case? May we have a guarantee that the government will begin again to respect both the spirit and the letter of the Official Languages Act?

• (1130)

Hon. Don Boudria (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the right hon. member has it incorrect. In fact what happened was that all documents that were available at the time were tabled in the House of Commons. A backgrounder for the people that were working on the information had not been translated at the time and therefore was not tabled. It is in the process of being translated. I am informed that it could be tabled possibly as early as next Monday.

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CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, a tip from American authorities led police to arrest a Markham, Ontario man. He was convicted of possessing and distributing child pornography. The pictures included weeping babies being sexually assaulted. On February 5 the man was sentenced to 14 months house arrest and three years probation.

Can the minister explain why these people are still receiving such insignificant sentences for such horrific crimes?

Hon. Martin Cauchon (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is fully aware that the government tabled some time ago new legislation with regard to the protection of our children in our nation, as well as protection of the most vulnerable people. Of course we will touch on the question of the defence of artistic merit in order to change that defence and replace it with the public good defence. The member should know as well, if he has read the bill, that we are also going to be tougher on sentencing.

I would refer the hon. member to the bill. If the member really believed in public safety, he would stand up to support that wonderful piece of legislation for Canadian society and for the protection of our children.

Mr. Chuck Cadman (Surrey North, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, this morning the Toronto police sex crimes unit announced another child pornography arrest. In this case it seized over 50,000 pictures and 2,000 homemade movies belonging to a 57-year-old man. We ask again, will the Minister of Justice commit right now to restrict the use of conditional sentencing so that this individual, if convicted, is not just sent home as so many others have been before him?

Oral Questions

Hon. Martin Cauchon (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the protection of our children is of course the top priority on this side of the House. The question of public safety is also a top priority for the government.

If members are interested in this topic, they should look at the bill that we have tabled, Bill C-20, which talks about the protection of our children, as well as the protection of the most vulnerable people in our society. In that bill we talk about changing the defence of artistic merit following the Sharpe case in B.C. We are talking as well about a tougher sentencing regime. They should be supporting—

The Deputy Speaker: Order. The hon. member for Champlain.

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[Translation]

AGRICULTURE

Mr. Marcel Gagnon (Champlain, BQ): Mr. Speaker, yesterday our committee heard evidence from senior officials at Agriculture Canada to the effect that Quebec had three years to adjust downward to match the federal department's program, penalizing those farmers, and Quebec, which are ahead in terms of stabilization insurance.

How can the minister justify an approach that sets farmers back and denies Quebec's agricultural specificity?

[English]

Hon. Lyle Vanclief (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to make this very clear. As we know, the contribution the federal government makes to agriculture in the provinces is on a 60:40 basis. The province of Quebec provides \$1.60 to its farmers above and beyond the contribution and most provinces make contributions in the low forties.

The work that is being done with the province of Quebec is to modestly change not how much, but how 24¢ out of the \$1.60 is spent in the province of Quebec. It continues to spend the other \$1.36 as it can and has for its industry in the past.

[Translation]

Mr. Marcel Gagnon (Champlain, BQ): Mr. Speaker, Quebec has sound financial tools developed as part of a complete overhaul of its stabilization insurance programs.

Will the minister finally understand that it is out of the question that our excellent programs in Quebec be jeopardized to accommodate the federal government's visibility objectives?

[English]

Hon. Lyle Vanclief (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will say again that if the province of Quebec wants to, it can continue to contribute above and beyond what the federal government contributes on a provincial basis. We ensure that every farmer in every province in Canada under similar circumstances is treated the same way federally for trade reasons and for equality reasons. The province is free, willing and able to do as it has in the past with the extra support to its farmers. As a federal government, for trade reasons and equitability reasons, we are going to treat every farmer in the same way.

• (1135)

Mrs. Carol Skelton (Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency recently forbade farmers from using their land, claiming that the land might transfer chronic wasting disease. The government neglects to consider how farmers are supposed to earn an income when they cannot use their land.

Will the minister table before the House scientific proof that CWD resides in soil and is communicable in this form?

Hon. Lyle Vanclief (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have worked with the industry's cooperation in order to try to eradicate chronic wasting disease in the elk herds across the country. There is still scientific work being done to try to find out when a herd of animals have contaminated the soil and are removed, how long the contamination stays there so that animals can be safely put back on that soil and not be reinfected with chronic wasting disease. That work is not solid. There is work that needs to be done. We are working with the industry so that the safety and—

The Deputy Speaker: Order. The hon. member for Blackstrap.

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THE ENVIRONMENT

Mrs. Lynne Yelich (Blackstrap, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, the environment minister tells us his plan to reorganize weather station personnel is an act of efficiency. What he is really talking about is centralization and closures. There is no substitute for local input into weather forecasting. We learned this after the last cuts in Saskatoon.

Why is the government so intent on centralizing weather forecasting when history tells us that Canadians will be negatively affected?

Mr. Alan Tonks (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Canadian meteorological service is a fundamental part of all programs across the country to keep people informed and in fact, to keep specialized services in place. There is no suggestion that there will be a relinquishing of that responsibility or a reduction in service. In the Canadian Avalanche Centre, as we said the other day, we are providing on a daily basis the kind of information that hopefully will avoid a recurrence of the tragic events that occurred last week.

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[Translation]

NATIONAL IDENTITY CARD

Ms. Madeleine Dalphond-Guiral (Laval Centre, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the minister of Citizenship and Immigration recently launched a debate that might well result in the establishment of a mandatory national identity card. Yet, in his latest annual report, the Privacy Commissioner of Canada stated that he could "find no justification for a national identity card".

How can the minister reconcile his plans with the opinion of the commissioner, who views this as a further restraint on the right to privacy?

*Oral Questions**[English]*

Mr. Sarkis Assadourian (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the opposition was asking for consultation. This is nothing more than consultation by the minister with Canadians. Next week the committee will travel across the country to listen to their points of view on the issue. It will come up with a proposal if there is a need for a proposal, but it is only consultation, nothing more, nothing less. There is no proposal by the minister at this stage.

[Translation]

Ms. Madeleine Dalphond-Guiral (Laval Centre, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind the hon. parliamentary secretary that the committee will indeed be on the road, but to consult on the citizenship bill, Bill C-18. In my humble opinion, there is nothing in there about a national identity card.

The Minister of Citizenship and Immigration is hard pressed to find support within cabinet. His colleague, the Minister of Revenue, feels that this measure is highly intrusive.

Will the minister abandon his plans for such a card since, for one thing, it is strongly criticized by his own colleagues?

[English]

Mr. Sarkis Assadourian (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday when the minister made a presentation to the committee on this subject, the hon. member herself said it was a good idea because her husband has one. Why is she complaining again in the House?

* * *

● (1140)

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Rahim Jaffer (Edmonton—Strathcona, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, we now know the Minister of National Revenue has been hiding the massive levels of GST fraud committed by organized crime. What we do not know is why the minister refuses to tell Canadians how much has been stolen. Losing \$1 billion is such a regular thing with the government that theft of \$1 billion by criminals makes no difference to it.

How much money needs to be stolen from hardworking Canadians before the minister will properly investigate the problem?

Hon. Elinor Caplan (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this is a very serious issue and I object to the frivolity that the member opposite engages in when he suggests a number, while in fact there is no evidence to suggest that the number which the member keeps repeating is at all accurate. There is no evidence to suggest that at all. I have told him that several times in the House.

I will continue to say that we have a special investigations unit that is looking into fraud. We have 1,000 people doing that. We have 5,000 auditors. We are doing our job.

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SOFTWOOD LUMBER

Mr. John Duncan (Vancouver Island North, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, \$1 billion is hardly frivolous.

Yesterday, the trade minister was asked twice to assure Canadians that he would not drop our softwood lumber dispute legal challenges at NAFTA and the WTO. Both times the minister evaded the answer.

Will the minister assure the House that Canada will not drop its legal challenges unless the provinces and industry are in agreement?

Mr. Murray Calder (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for International Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member across the way fully knows that we are in negotiations with the United States right now on a long term strategy for softwood lumber and in fact, the WTO is an option that is available to us.

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GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS

Mr. John Maloney (Erie—Lincoln, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, earlier this week the Minister of Public Works and Government Services indicated that he would soon have some further information to provide about his department's administrative review of the sponsorship files.

Before the House adjourns for the weekend, could the minister tell us where the matter now stands?

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the first portion of the administrative review has been completed as promised. The work was done between the end of October and the end of January. The work was done by a totally independent, professional forensic accounting consultant. It names certain individuals and details a number of apparent breaches of contracting rules.

As the first step of follow up, the reviewer's report has properly now been given to the RCMP. We will await the RCMP's green light to proceed with our own next administrative steps with all due diligence.

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HEALTH

Mr. Svend Robinson (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we witnessed the unholy spectacle of Liberal and Alliance MPs rising together in the House to applaud the rejection of Roy Romanow's key recommendation that medicare be kept out of the hands of private for profit businesses.

If the government will not stand up to privatizers like Klein, Campbell, Eves and Lord, if it will not keep the promise it made to Canadians in the 2000 election, will it at least guarantee that any public money that goes to private for profit health care will be fully reported to the public in a timely way?

Oral Questions

Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what we saw on Wednesday was the recommitment to publicly financed health care on the part of the Prime Minister and all premiers.

I believe the hon. member's question speaks directly to accountability and reporting of taxpayer dollars. The hon. member should be aware that there are very important accountability provisions, including the creation of a new health council.

The council will be appointed within the next three months. It will be reporting to Canadians on a regular basis in relation to the implementation of the accord. It will have the opportunity to report on where Canadian tax dollars go in our health care system.

Mr. Svend Robinson (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP): Mr. Speaker, if that is the same council that the Prime Minister tried to have Don Mazankowski chair that is really reassuring.

Roy Romanow pointed out in his report that diagnostic services such as MRIs and CAT scans are an essential part of medicare and should not be used to queue jump in the public system.

When will the government move to include diagnostic services under the Canada Health Act as insured health services? Who is calling the shots for the government? Is it Don Mazankowski and Senator Kirby or is it Roy Romanow who speaks out against privatizing in health care?

Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is very plain that all medically necessary services are covered in relation to medical or health insurance.

We are working with the provinces. We are concerned as anyone about the problem of queue jumping. We have identified it as a key concern. Whenever it is brought to our attention or we identify it, we work with provincial officials to solve the problem.

If a violation of the Canada Health Act continues after discussion with provincial officials, we are in a position to withhold dollars in relation to that violation.

• (1145)

Mr. Greg Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest, PC): Mr. Speaker, there seems to be some confusion on the part of the Minister of Health in terms of how much money will go in under this new agreement. I think the confusion might have started with the Prime Minister himself when he confused new money and old money and new new money with old new money.

Would the minister stand up today in her place and tell the House exactly how much money will go in under the new agreement?

Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as the Prime Minister reiterated yesterday in question period, over three years to fiscal 2005-06, the infusion of new money will be \$17 billion and over five years to fiscal 2007-08, the infusion of additional dollars will be \$34 billion.

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NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mr. Rex Barnes (Gander—Grand Falls, PC): Mr. Speaker, the United States has just announced that it will compensate soldiers who were subject to mustard gas experiments during World War II.

When will the Canadian government follow suit and compensate our veterans who were exposed to mustard gas testing, many of whom are sick, suffering and dying as a result?

Mr. Dominic LeBlanc (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to begin by thanking the member for giving me an opportunity to respond to my first question in the House as a parliamentary secretary.

The Department of National Defence is looking at the American decision with respect to compensation. The Minister of Veterans Affairs and the Minister of National Defence will do everything they can to ensure that Canadian veterans are compensated, and deserve the support they have received.

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ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

Mr. Maurice Vellacott (Saskatoon—Wanuskewin, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, with its introduction of the first nations governance act, the federal government had a tremendous opportunity to truly improve the daily lives of aboriginal Canadians. However it has missed the mark. The government has failed to address the issues that aboriginal Canadians have identified as their priorities. Women's rights, matrimonial rights and human rights have all been ignored in the minister's governance model.

Why is the federal government continuing to deny aboriginal Canadians full and complete protection of the Canadian Human Rights Act?

Hon. Robert Nault (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first, I would suggest to the member that if he cared about aboriginal people, he would stop stalling all the bills in the House and let some of them go through so we can work on improving the fundamentals of governance of the first nations people.

Second, he should read Bill C-7. Bill C-7 directly says, if he has read it and I do not think he has because he would not make this comment, that the human rights code will apply to first nations for the first time.

Mr. Brian Pallister (Portage—Lisgar, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, only to that government would debating bills be considered delaying tactics.

The Canadian Alliance will never support two tier human rights for Canadians. That is exactly what the minister is doing with his proposal. Its first nations governance act shows it still believes in the divine right of kings too because it is perpetuating unelected, hereditary chiefs.

Will the minister give me the decency of a respectful answer for a change? Why is the government trampling the democratic rights of aboriginal Canadians in support of unelected, hereditary chiefs?

Oral Questions

Hon. Robert Nault (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the custom codes of first nations have been in place for almost 100 years. I find it quite surprising that the member just realized that there are different systems of governance on first nations.

The first nations governance legislation would allow first nations to develop the kind of governance structures they need within the democratic principles that our society accepts.

I will give the member the respectful answer for which he is looking. He is in committee now. If he would show up from time to time, he could make these presentations to the committee.

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[Translation]

GASOLINE PRICES

Mr. Benoît Sauvageau (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, last week, we learned that the big oil and gas companies were making huge profits. To add insult to injury, the price of a litre of gas today is outrageous. Drivers feel they are being bled dry.

Will the Minister of Industry finally wake up and bring into line the major oil and gas companies who are holding car drivers, taxi drivers, truckers and farmers hostage?

●(1150)

Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, prices are influenced by a wide range of factors. In any case, the provinces have jurisdiction in this matter.

Mr. Benoît Sauvageau (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, for many years, the Bloc Québécois has condemned this situation, as have independent retailers and all those concerned.

One of the major problems with this industry is vertical integration, which allows companies to control extraction, production, refining, distribution, and sales at the pump.

Will the government finally side with the public, take action and ban vertical integration in the oil and gas industry, or will it continue to be silenced by the hundreds of thousands of dollars that these major oil and gas companies contribute to the government's campaign fund?

Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would point out that provincial jurisdiction must be respected, and I invite the hon. member to speak to the Quebec government about this.

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[English]

CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, we have presented thousands of petitions, with thousands of names, in which Canadians are calling for an end to child pornography.

Bill C-20, the government's current legislation, does nothing to strengthen the law. It is just a rewording of current legislation that does not work. That is why we are getting the petitions.

Why does the Liberal government continue to introduce ineffective half measures that simply do not protect our children?

Hon. Martin Cauchon (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as the House knows, we have tabled Bill C-20, which touches on the question of protecting our children. We all know that it is our top priority.

In that bill we touch on the question of defence, following the Sharpe decision. As well, we create a new offence to offer increased protection to our children, our young between 14 and 18 years of age. Also, we have tougher sentencing.

I recommend the hon. member read the bill.

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HOMELESSNESS

Mr. Peter Goldring (Edmonton Centre-East, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, a man has died in Red Deer because of a failed federal homeless policy. Three years and practically no new shelter space, absolutely no new affordable, independent living homes for single persons, and \$753 million squandered for what. The homeless counts are up nationally. In Edmonton the homeless were lodged in public transit stations.

Will the Prime Minister stop the carnage, investigate the waste and redirect the resources to build safe, secure housing for homeless single persons?

Hon. David Collenette (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has described a situation that does not correspond with reality. My colleague, the Minister of Labour, has presided over a very successful effort to deal with this national tragedy, and she should be complimented.

In cities across the country the money, which was allocated by the federal government, is seeing positive results, as people who are homeless are not receiving the proper shelter.

He should not use the facts in such a way as to give the wrong impression to Canadians. This policy is working.

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FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. Mac Harb (Ottawa Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in October of 2002 the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, along with his counterpart in Quebec, announced special measures to deal with the Algerian file.

I would like to ask the parliamentary secretary this. Since the minister just returned from a trip to Algeria three weeks ago, could he report on that visit?

Mr. Sarkis Assadourian (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for Ottawa Centre for his question and interest on this file.

During his active visit to Algeria, the minister met with the minister responsible for overseas community, ministers of foreign affairs, justice and interior, as well as the prime minister of Algeria and the president.

The minister also expressed a desire to establish a working group with these ministers to address issues related to the movement of people. Further, the minister also met with editors of major newspapers to discuss the situation in Algeria. He also met with Algerian human rights NGOs to discuss the situation of human rights in Algeria. Overall, it was a very successful visit.

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NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, the chief of defence staff has confirmed the expansion of the JTF2 is in the capabilities not in the actual numbers. The high stress and burnout rate in the unit has led to a manpower shortage and a lowering of the recruiting standards. Current recruitment is not even enough to keep up with attrition rates. The troops in the regular forces just are not there from which to recruit.

Why is the minister committing JTF2 forces when it does not even have the manpower to fulfil those requirements that it is tasked to do?

• (1155)

Mr. Dominic LeBlanc (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the minister has been very clear that JTF2 represents a very important strategic asset for the Canadian forces, both to support our allies in missions abroad and to protect Canadians domestically. That is why we announced a sizeable increase in the budget for JTF2.

I can tell the hon. member that when I was in Afghanistan with the minister last summer, we met a number of the JTF2 forces who were doing a phenomenal job. They did not tell us that their budgets were as critical as the hon. member pretends.

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HEALTH

Mr. James Lunney (Nanaimo—Alberni, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, the former minister of justice launched a gun registry that has ballooned to a billion dollar fiasco. As health minister, another pet project involved a \$6 million marijuana grow-op in the depths of a mine in Flin Flon, Manitoba.

It has been two years since the pot was planted. Information suggests that there have been two crops and hundreds of pounds of pot produced. Apparently the first crop, at least, was unusable for research.

Canadians would like to know what has been done with the pot from the "rock garden" and how is this joint venture benefiting Canadians?

Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are working with Prairie Plant Systems to provide research grade marijuana so we can move forward with the clinical trials that we all know are important in terms of determining the medicinal benefits and possible adverse effects of using marijuana as a medicinal product.

Oral Questions

I would think the hon. member should be applauding the government ensuring that we are doing the clinical trials to determine if there actually is medicinal—

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Rimouski—Neigette-et-la Mitis.

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[Translation]

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay (Rimouski—Neigette-et-la Mitis, BQ): Mr. Speaker, according to the latest figures from Human Resources Development, close to 35% of EI recipients draw all the benefits to which they are entitled. The majority of these are seasonal workers, who are at risk of having no income whatsoever for a period of up to 10 weeks a year.

When does the Minister of Human Resources Development intend to act on the Bloc Québécois' call for a single EI eligibility level of 420 hours for all workers in seasonal industries?

Ms. Diane St-Jacques (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the response I wish to give the hon. member is that, on the whole, the EI system is working well and helps out those for whom it is intended.

According to the 2001 Monitoring and Assessment Report, 88% of salaried workers would be eligible for EI benefits if they lost their jobs.

The program is, therefore, designed to adjust automatically to local labour market fluctuations. The eligibility criteria become more flexible as unemployment rates rise.

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[English]

HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

Mrs. Sue Barnes (London West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the labour force survey results for the month of January have now been released by Statistics Canada.

Could the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources Development Canada please tell the House what the latest figures mean for Canadians and for the labour force as a whole?

[Translation]

Ms. Diane St-Jacques (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, after an exceptional year in 2002, with an increase of 560,000 jobs, the Statistics Canada figures released today indicate that the rate of unemployment continues its downward trend, and was 7.4% in January.

This news is all the more positive, when we consider that, since October 1993, there have been 2.8 million jobs created, there are 365,000 fewer Canadians unemployed and the unemployment rate has dropped 3.8%.

This is reason for optimism as far as future employment prospects are concerned. This government will continue to encourage strong participation in the Canadian labour market.

Privilege

• (1200)

[English]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Philip Mayfield (Cariboo—Chilcotin, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of the Environment.

The new, unproclaimed species at risk law is already throwing guide outfitters out of work in my riding. Healthy caribou herds in the Itcha Ilgachuz Mountains of western B.C. have been lumped in with the red listed herd of the Cariboo Mountains even with over 500 kilometres between the two herds and no cross migration.

The government has ruled that this western herd cannot be hunted this year even though it is healthy and growing.

Why is this healthy herd being lumped in with a weak herd so far away and why is the environment department not co-operating with British Columbia to reclassify this healthy western B.C. herd of caribou?

Mr. Alan Tonks (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the species at risk legislation is proactive legislation that acts in stewardship models with people who have the herds and where they have been infected, working with provincial health authorities. Where there is a deleterious impact that has been described, it will be taken into consideration. That is the approach that we use.

I would suggest to the member that he take it up further with provincial health authorities and with agricultural authorities.

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[Translation]

HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Monique Guay (Laurentides, BQ): Mr. Speaker, in order to prevent a shortage of specialized workers, Quebec has developed important labour training tools. However, it is still short \$200 million that the federal government refuses to provide under the Canada-Quebec agreement.

Given the considerable flexibility in the Employment Insurance Act for reinvestment in labour training, does the Minister of Human Resources Development intend to begin negotiations with the Government of Quebec to transfer all of the money set aside for labour training?

Ms. Diane St-Jacques (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I believe that the Government of Canada is doing everything in its power to help with training. It is acutely aware of the problem. The money has already been transferred to Quebec City and approximately \$600 million per year could indeed help this problem.

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[English]

TAXATION

Mr. Pat Martin (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, tax season is here again and the government has still done nothing to plug the outrageous tax loophole where businesses can deduct fines as a business expense.

The minister said that most of the claims were denied but she knows full well that they succeed on appeal and that is why the Supreme Court said that Parliament must change the act to deal with the issue.

Why will the government not amend the Income Tax Act to ensure that no one in the country will ever again get a tax deduction for breaking the law?

Hon. John Manley (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member acknowledges, this is a matter that has been dealt with by the courts in a way that reflects the fact that there may be circumstances that sometimes would result in the courts deeming that an expenditure of this nature is properly deductible. That is something that the courts have decided.

We will be looking at other issues related to the Income Tax Act. When I table the budget on February 18 the hon. member will be enlightened concerning them.

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PRESENCE IN GALLERY

The Deputy Speaker: I would like to draw the attention of hon. members to the presence in the ladies' gallery of this year's recipients of the Mathieu da Costa Award: Alana Poon, Hanna Crump, Chloe Hamilton, Gerard De Fancesco, Danny St. Jacques, Sarah Beaupré, Kara Chan, Kristin Blackmore and Kylene Cachelin.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

The Deputy Speaker: I have notice of a question of privilege from the hon. member for New Brunswick Southwest.

* * *

PRIVILEGE

MINISTER OF HEALTH

Mr. Greg Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest, PC): Mr. Speaker, for members of Parliament to do their jobs effectively we need to operate on the basis of good information. That information is often provided by the minister responsible for our critic areas, in this case the Minister of Health.

Giving the minister and her department full credit, they do provide us on a daily basis with the media clippings, reports from across the country.

The reason I bring this forward today to the floor of the House is that I think there was a deliberate attempt by the minister and her department to withhold information from individual members of Parliament, and I refer to those clippings.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, we are debating the so-called health care accord reached with the first ministers. It has been an important subject and in fact the number one topic on the minds of most Canadians.

Today, when I received these clippings they were unusually thin, fewer pages than what we normally get. In fact, on the front page of these clippings provided by the department it says "all FMM (first ministers meetings) related clips are provided in separate package with limited distribution".

Privilege

That limited distribution is restricted to the government side of the House. None of the health critics on this side of the House received that distribution of clippings, which we need to get the information required to question the minister.

Mr. Speaker, you know full well that the minister has been very much confused on how much money is going into this new package in terms of dollars for provinces and dollars for the aboriginals. She was floundering the last couple of days, so there is a deliberate attempt.

I will quickly go to Marleau and Montpetit and read to you, to the public and to this place the responsibilities of a minister:

In terms of ministerial responsibility, Ministers have both individual and collective responsibilities to Parliament.

Further on it states:

The principle of individual ministerial responsibility holds that Ministers are accountable not only for their own actions as department heads, but also for the actions of their subordinates; individual ministerial responsibility provides the basis for accountability throughout the system. Virtually all department activity is carried out in the name of the Minister who, in turn, is responsible to Parliament for those acts.

That is us, Mr. Speaker.

I contend that it was deliberate on the part of the minister's staff to withhold those clippings from us on this side of the House to effectively to our job, because there is egg all over the Prime Minister's face and the minister's face on this accord.

In addition to that, I think you will find, Mr. Speaker, on the evidence that I am providing, a prima facie case of breach of privilege of individual members.

Again I will quote from Marleau and Montpetit, on page 52, chapter 3, Privileges and Immunities. It states:

The distinctive mark of a privilege is its ancillary character. The privileges of Parliament are rights, which are "absolutely necessary for the due execution of its powers". They are enjoyed by individual Members because the House—

And this is most important, Mr. Speaker:

—cannot perform its functions without unimpeded use of the services of its Members; and by each House for the protection of its Members and the vindication of its own authority and dignity.

This place only works when we have good opposition. Governments get sloppy and lazy when that opposition is not there. Knowledge is power. We need to have that knowledge to do our jobs. We should not be denied information on the most important issue on the minds of all Canadians, which we get on a regular basis, and this is not just me speaking as one individual member of Parliament. I have consulted with all the health critics, with the exception of one who I believe was absent today, but none of us received those clippings.

●(1205)

Members on that side of the House got those extra clippings. That put them at a distinct advantage over us in this place.

Mr. Speaker, I expect that you will see that there is a prima facie breach of privilege and I would request that you turn this over to the appropriate committee for an investigation.

●(1210)

Hon. Don Boudria (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, to pretend or to state that this is somehow privilege is overstating the facts at the best of times. Talking about the absolute rights and necessities of Parliament in order to function and to illustrate a portion of the clippings as being part of that is stretching it at the best of times.

If the member feels he has not received the complete material which he is normally getting, I have no idea of the size of the clipping file in that particular ministry. There are many people who do that around here. I know I have intervened as a Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons in the past, with my colleague House leaders of other parties, when a critic was not obtaining such information. I would definitely be prepared to do so again if necessary.

I think the hon. member would want to bring that to the attention of his House leader and I will gladly look into it, but it is not privilege. Speaking of privilege, the ringing that is going on right now is something that probably is.

Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to say that we in the NDP concur with the comments that have been made by the hon. member from the Conservative Party. I have checked with our health critic. He did not receive the full package of information.

I would make this point. It is not as though that information is not available. Clearly on the top of the document there were contained some clippings; it made reference to an additional package of information that was available to some members, government members presumably, in limited distribution and was not made available to all members of the House, particularly the health critics.

Believe me, it is hard enough to do our jobs as critics around here, to stay on top of what is going on and to be aware of the news that is emerging. To know that information has been assembled but simply is not being distributed and is being withheld from certain members of the House really does infringe upon the right of members in the House to be able to do their work in a proper, equitable and fair way. I would urge you to consider the arguments that the member has made.

The Deputy Speaker: Let me thank the hon. member for New Brunswick Southwest for raising the matter, and of course for his intervention the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, and last but not least the member for Vancouver East.

I would deem at this time that the information being referred to of course is not government information as such. It is public information that is available to anyone through the media networks, in this case newspaper clippings, whatever the case may be. That in itself is a substantive matter to differentiate between what could be government information or what is "public" information. Certainly I know that there is a tradition, somewhat of a practice, among government departments, ministers and opposition members, particularly critics, to make these clippings available.

Points of Order

I am pleased to hear from the government House leader that he will look into the matter. I would hope that the matter can be resolved internally among the parties. Should it not be to the satisfaction of members raising the question on the opposition benches, certainly I would be prepared to hear the matter at a later time if necessary.

I also have a point of order from the hon. member for Laval Centre.

* * *

[*Translation*]

POINTS OF ORDER

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Ms. Madeleine Dalphond-Guiral (Laval Centre, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. It is unfortunate that we only have two questions during oral question period.

In an attempt to set the record straight, following the answer from my colleague, the member for Brampton Centre, regarding the position I took yesterday with the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, I have three things to say for the benefit of the House and also for the benefit of the public.

Obviously, debate, no matter what the topic, is always essential in democracy. Debate is what enriches democratic life. A debate on the identity card is certainly necessary.

The second thing I said is that, as far as I am concerned, I accept the idea of an optional identify card. However, there are some very clear things that this identity card should not contain, which I indicated to the minister, such as the place of birth, and other information. In other words, I do not want the card to contain all kinds of information. I want it to be optional. I am happy to have had the chance to clarify my views on this.

• (1215)

The Deputy Speaker: With all due respect for the hon. member for Laval Centre, her comments do not warrant a point of order. She did get to clarify things. That is fine, but it did not turn out to be a point of order.

[*English*]

On another point of order, the hon. member for Portage—Lisgar.

Mr. Brian Pallister (Portage—Lisgar, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, during question period, a particularly well crafted and pertinent question of mine was directed to the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs, to which he chose to respond in I think a rather thin-skinned way. In his answer, in his bombastic display of vitriol, he unfortunately put erroneous information on the record.

That might not be very relevant to him, but it certainly is to me, because of what he implied in his answer very clearly. I do not know the exact words, but I tried to get the gist of what he said written down: what he said was that if I bothered to show up from time to time for committee.

Mr. Speaker, he is referring to my absence from committee and that is not right. I pride myself on doing my job for my constituents and the people of this country and I resent it when a member refers to

my absence from committee, particularly when I have been at over 90% of the meetings this session. All the minister has to do is ask any other member of committee and he would know that.

I do not believe that is fair or right and I also believe that all of us deserve to be treated with respect under the rules of the House.

What I would also say is that this kind of arrogant response is the reason that virtually every submission to our committee regarding the minister's legislation, by people from across Canada, is opposed to his legislation: because he has taken such a thin-skinned approach. He has offended virtually every person who understands and has read the legislation, which I am afraid the minister has not done.

The Deputy Speaker: I must reply to the hon. member for Portage—Lisgar with the greatest of respect that this does not constitute a matter of a point of order, but in fact we are prolonging the debate, if I might. In fact we just took a moment to address the issue of the comment about one's absence, clearly with regard to the House itself we have a certain standard. I am not certain, and I stand to be corrected, but I do not believe it also extends itself to committee.

Is anything fair around here? I will let everyone else be the judge of that, but clearly at this time I must rule that it is not a point of order.

I do this with reluctance, but very briefly, I will hear the hon. member for Portage—Lisgar.

Mr. Brian Pallister: May I ask you humbly, Mr. Speaker, you expressed in your response, Sir, that you were not totally sure if it is permissible for a member of Parliament to imply that another member was absent from committee. I do not want it left on the record. Clearly if it is against the rules of the House of Commons or not, I do not want it left on the record that I have not been doing my work for my constituents, Sir.

I ask the minister to withdraw his comment. I ask that you, Mr. Speaker, instruct him to withdraw it and that he offer an apology for that response, which put misinformation on the record. Clearly that is not correct, it is not right, it is not fair, and the minister should not be given a lease to allow him to do that.

The Deputy Speaker: I verified, in fact, as I did state earlier that I was not certain. I have consulted very briefly, but of course given the availability of our good officers, including the Clerk at the table, that standard of mentioning or referring to one's presence in the House and in committee is not held to the same standard. The reason is that in committee, of course, recorded participation of members is on the public docket. It is public information as to who is or is not present at any one time.

That information, as I said, is public whereas the presence or absence of anyone in the House is not recorded in a similar fashion. That is the reason for the different standard according to the presence or participation of a member in the House at any one time or in committee. I regret, this matter is closed.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

•(1220)

[English]

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

Mr. Rodger Cuzner (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8) I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to four petitions.

* * *

PETITIONS

CANADA POST

Mr. Mac Harb (Ottawa Centre, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I have a petition signed by supporters of rural route mail couriers. They ask the government to take action in order to repeal section 13(5) of the Canada Post Corporation Act.

MARRIAGE

Mr. Maurice Vellacott (Saskatoon—Wanuskewin, Canadian Alliance): Madam Speaker, I have a petition with several hundred signatures. These citizens of Canada want to draw attention to the fact that marriage is the best foundation for families and the raising of children. The definition of marriage as being between a man and a woman is being challenged and they want the House to uphold the traditional definition of marriage as defined in June 1999.

They call for marriage to continue to be defined as a union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others. They bring this to the attention of the Parliament of Canada.

STEM CELL RESEARCH

Mr. Maurice Vellacott (Saskatoon—Wanuskewin, Canadian Alliance): Madam Speaker, I have another petition presented by the undersigned residents who want the proper kind of ethical stem cell research. They acknowledge that many Canadians suffer from debilitating diseases such as Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, diabetes and so on, and that there is encouraging potential in adult stem cell research.

They want to draw the attention that we should stay away from research on embryonic stem cells and that we should focus the legislative agenda on adult stem cell research to find the cures and therapies necessary to treat the illnesses and diseases of suffering Canadians.

[Translation]

MARRIAGE

Mr. Eugène Bellemare (Ottawa—Orléans, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would like to present a petition on the definition of marriage signed by over 500 constituents from my riding.

[English]

They ask that Parliament pass legislation to recognize the institution of marriage in federal law as being a lifelong union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others.

Routine Proceedings

CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

Mr. Svend Robinson (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP): Shut out again, Madam Speaker. I have the honour of presenting two petitions today. The first is a petition which is signed by some 52 residents of my constituency of Burnaby—Douglas. They are petitioning on the subject of child pornography. They draw to the attention of the House their concern that the creation and use of child pornography is condemned by a clear majority of Canadians, that the courts have not applied the current child pornography law in a way which makes it clear that such exploitation of children will always be met with swift punishment.

They call upon Parliament to protect our children by taking all necessary steps to ensure that all materials which promote or glorify pedophilia or sado-masochistic activities involving children are outlawed. This is signed by petitioners including Jenivere Peters, Helen Dirksen, Alex Robertson, Nola Robinson, Ying Wang and many others from Burnaby.

•(1225)

PEACE

Mr. Svend Robinson (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP): Madam Speaker, the second petition that I have the honour of presenting is signed by more than 500 residents of British Columbia, mainly from the Sunshine Coast, in particular endorsed by the Sunshine Coast peace group and Roger and Denise Lagassé-Birklein from Half Moon Bay. They point out that the terrible events of September 11, 2001, have shown how desperately urgent it is to address the underlying causes of violence and terrorism.

They speak in the petition about those underlying causes and they call for the establishment of a ministry of peace to signal to the world that, in this the third millennium, our commitment to global peace is a major priority deserving of serious attention and be an ongoing priority among our government objectives.

CANADA POST

Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the House to present a petition signed by a number of people in Vancouver, Victoria and the lower mainland, who are concerned that the rural route mail couriers earn less than minimum wage and have working conditions that are reminiscent of another era. They are not allowed to bargain collectively and this basic denial of rights is really unfair and discriminates against rural workers.

The petition calls upon Parliament to repeal section 13(5) of Canada Post Corporation Act to allow rural route mail carriers to collectively bargain and have fair rights.

CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island, Canadian Alliance): Madam Speaker, I have the honour to present four petitions. The first three petitions, signed by some 792 individuals in my riding and surrounding areas, deal with the issue of child pornography.

The petitioners call upon Parliament to protect our children by taking all necessary steps to ensure that all materials which promote or glorify pedophilia or sado-masochistic activities involving children are outlawed.

Government Orders

MARRIAGE

Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island, Canadian Alliance): Madam Speaker, the fourth petition, signed by 131 people, also in my riding and some of the areas around it, deals with marriage. The petitioners call upon Parliament to protect the institution of marriage as the union between man and woman.

* * *

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. Rodger Cuzner (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, Lib.): Madam Speaker, Question No. 100 will be answered today.

[Text]

Question No. 100—**Mr. Greg Thompson:**

Does the government have any programmes to promote the recognition of December 25 as a day commemorating the birth of Jesus Christ?

Ms. Carole-Marie Allard (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Madame Speaker the Department of Canadian Heritage has no program that promotes the recognition of December 25 as a day commemorating the birth of Jesus Christ. The multiculturalism program is not responsible for religious holidays, such as December 25. These issues can be recognized by Members of Parliament in the House of Commons through Standing Order 31.

* * *

[English]

QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURN

Mr. Rodger Cuzner (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, Lib.): Madam Speaker, if Question No. 48 could be made an order for return, the return would be tabled immediately.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos): Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[Text]

Question No. 48—**Mr. Joe Comartin:**

With respect to the government's fleet of over twenty-three thousand vehicles, in total and by each department and agency respectively: (a) how many vehicles use alternative transportation fuels (ATFs), are physically capable of using ATFs, are hybrid gasoline-electric vehicles, or are electric vehicles; (b) how many Cabinet Minister and Secretary of State vehicles meet any of the conditions listed in part (a); (c) how many Deputy Minister, Assistant Deputy Minister, Prime Minister Office or Privy Council Office vehicles meet any of the conditions listed in part (a); and (d) does the Prime Minister's vehicle meet any of the conditions listed in part (a), if not why not?

(Return tabled.)

[English]

Mr. Rodger Cuzner: Madam Speaker, I ask that all remaining questions be allowed to stand.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos): Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

SPECIFIC CLAIMS RESOLUTION ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-6, an act to establish the Canadian Centre for the Independent Resolution of First Nations Specific Claims to provide for the filing, negotiation and resolution of specific claims and to make related amendments to other acts, be now read a third time and passed and of the amendment.

Mr. Yvan Loubier (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to participate in the debate on this bill. What is less enjoyable is realizing that the bill is now being considered at third reading without a single opposition amendment having been passed from the time the bill received first reading or during the legislative process that followed.

During the work in committee, several criticisms were levelled at Bill C-6. Most of these criticisms were against the bill as a whole. There were so many deficiencies in the bill that both first nations and the opposition parties were unanimous in asking for this bill to be dropped since it in no way meets the needs of aboriginals with regard to expediting specific claims.

There have been various committees, often joint committees of both first nations and representatives of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. They have made countless recommendations for expediting specific claims by first nations to ensure that the process is effective and objective, and as impartial as possible.

In light of the experience of the past 30 years and the various committees, it is somewhat surprising that, in spite of all the recommendations made, we are once again looking at a bill which, if passed, will not change a thing. It will not improve how quickly specific claims are settled nor ensure the impartiality that has been lacking from the beginning in the processing of these claims.

We are going to end up with a scheme that will be perfectly efficient vis-à-vis the objectives sought, a process that will not be a serious one and one which, in practical terms, amounts to some kind of avoidance strategy on the part of the government when it comes to resolving once and for all the hundreds of specific claims filed by aboriginal nations in Canada.

In the next few minutes, I will try to demonstrate that this bill is a complete farce, contrary to what the minister told us this morning in a haughty, arrogant and cynical fashion.

First, I would like to address the so-called impartiality of the new process and the new institutions proposed by the minister. Through his bill, the minister is proposing the establishment of a specific claim resolution centre, itself comprised of two divisions.

Government Orders

The first one, the specific claims commission, will receive and analyze claims from the first nations, and advise the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and the minister himself on the admissibility of these claims.

After admissibility has been determined, the commission may help set the amount of compensation for each specific claim.

The second is a tribunal responsible for making recommendations to the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, which in turn makes recommendations to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, after the commission has made a decision. If the minister agrees that a given claim is admissible, the tribunal then entertains this claim. This new special specific claims tribunal will be the one reviewing the whole file and setting, in conjunction with the parties—as in a regular trial—the amount of compensation for each specific claim.

The institutions and the process of negotiation between the federal government and the first nations have always been faulted for their lack of impartiality, because the minister and the government appointed people who were both judge and defendant. As representatives of the federal government, they received complaints, acted on them and, in the end, paid out the money.

This could not be any clearer. The federal government has always been both judge and defendant. This morning, the minister claimed that he was remedying the situation. Yet all members of the commission and all members of the tribunal to be created by Bill C-6 are to be appointed by the governor in council on the recommendation of the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

• (1230)

This means that it is the cabinet, acting on the recommendation of the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, that will receive suggestions for appointments and determine the membership of the specific claims commission and tribunal.

Where is there any impartiality, if the minister is both judge and defendant and is the one to appoint those who will sit on the commission and the tribunal to settle specific claims issues? This is a real joke. No one can claim impartiality and be both judge and defendant.

Despite the minister's claims to the contrary, this bill has not done what the joint body, that is one composed of the first nations and the department, had been suggesting for a long time in order to make the process impartial. Members could have been appointed jointly by the government and the Assembly of First Nations.

Neither the Assembly of First Nations nor the aboriginal nations in general have any say on the appointments of commission or tribunal members.

This is a pretty serious situation, when all recommendations made over the past 30 years have emphasized collaboration, partnership, and above all impartiality.

Not only are this new structure and these new institutions not impartial but the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada reserves an unbelievable discretionary power. He has the power,

through his department and ultimately through himself, to make a specific claim admissible when he deems fit.

In other words, several years can pass before the minister decides that a specific territorial claim is admissible and acceptable, and it is sent to the specific claims tribunal.

What this means is that the minister, who is both judge and jury in this situation, could block not only the settlement, but also the admissibility of a specific claim by a first nation, for many years.

Is this right? Is this an effective approach? Previously, all the serious and non-partisan stakeholders told us that the only realistic, appropriate and effective way to handle specific claims by aboriginals was to give them direct access to a specific claims tribunal without an intermediary who is both judge and jury, who stops the process and delays justice.

That is all that ever happens; the normal course of justice is stalled for those, who for 130 years have been subject to the worst law, to practically apartheid, under the Indian Act.

The minister says this will speed things up, but I think the opposite is true, that it will slow down the course of justice which for 30 years has hardly been stellar in terms of settling disputes and specific claims by aboriginals.

There are also no supplementary resources at Indian and Northern Affairs Canada to accelerate the admissibility of specific claims, their processing and, where applicable, the decisions made by the tribunal.

Without any supplementary resources to handle the administration of specific claims, how can the minister say that claims will be processed more quickly and that justice will be served for Canada's first nations?

I also mentioned the experience of the past 30 years; there is a reason for that. Over the past 30 years, every attempt has been made to speed up the settlement of specific claims by aboriginal peoples. In 30 years, only 230 cases have been settled. There are still 1,154 and more will be added in the coming years.

• (1235)

As we go back and research the past, as we find written treaties and call upon the oral traditions of elders and others to analyze these treaties, we become increasingly aware that first nations have rights that were unsuspected. As a result, specific claims will be added to the 1,154 claims that are already pending.

In the last 30 years, 230 of these claims have been resolved. How many years will it take to resolve the 1,154 specific claims, and perhaps the hundreds, or even thousands of others that will arise in the coming years? It is a veritable farce.

Government Orders

If the minister had really wanted to speed things up, he would have provided additional resources, he would have allowed direct access to the new specific claims tribunal for those with claims involving compensation. He would not have been both judge and jury while involving the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development in order to confuse the situation and get away with dragging out the settlement of aboriginal people's claims.

Bill C-6 does something that can only be described as unusual. It excludes specific claims that could exceed \$7 million. Since when in a legal case, do we set a ceiling on the amount that can be claimed—\$7 million in the case of this bill—before even assessing damages, before even calculating the compensation or estimating the value of the case? Since when is legislation worded so as to render only partial justice?

It does not work that way. Either justice is rendered, or it is not, but it cannot be rendered partially, and all specific claims from first nations that exceed \$7 million excluded. It makes no sense.

Say we were to set a ceiling of \$7 million today. Over the years, interest can add up on a case, and costs add up too. Normally, at the end of a case, when a ruling is handed down, the judge takes into account additional costs related to inflation, for example, and the loss of interest revenues, because compensation is not paid until five years after a claim is filed. So, there are all sorts of considerations involved.

This means that if a case is worth \$7 million at the start, then is held up for five years before the specific claims tribunal renders its decision, taking into consideration interest, lost revenue and legal costs, it will still be worth \$7 million and will never go beyond this amount.

Since when has the capacity to render justice to an individual or a group of individuals been limited? This does not make any sense.

If the past few years are any indication, particularly since 1985, in a region like Saskatchewan where many specific claims were made and some resolved, the average amount of a specific claim was \$18.5 million. Does this mean that if the same claims, which represented \$18.5 million at the end of the process, were made today, a first nation that felt that its rights were affected since time immemorial would not have the right to seek more than about one-third of what the claim was worth?

It is quite unbelievable that the government introduced this bill with a straight face, and that we are being told that now aboriginals will obtain justice. If that were done to us, for example, I can tell you that the Canadian Bar Association would be the first to condemn this denial of justice. Perhaps I will pay them a visit to get their opinion. It would be interesting to see if the Canadian government is working outside the law and is guilty of denial of justice with its own bills, if it is breaking all legal conventions. This bill is being presented by a minister whose arrogance and cynicism defy description.

• (1240)

For claims in excess of \$7 million the usual process applies, except that there is one more constraint on the first nations.

For specific claims in excess of the \$7 million cap, the regular courts will be used. It will not be the new tribunal, but rather the regular courts. The novelty of the century, thanks to the cynical and arrogant Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern

Development, is this: he will be the one to decide whether or not a given case is acceptable and can be submitted to the justice department. Incredible. The minister is the one who will determine, when the \$7 million limit has been reached, whether the case is valid or not. He will be the one to determine the time limit, the procedure, and the validity of the largest claims. This will be entirely the responsibility of his department and the Department of Justice.

This is pretty serious business. If ever that cap is exceeded, whether five, six or seven years down the road, the first nations claimants will find themselves passed over to another minister, the Minister of Justice. He will be the one to determine what is valid and what is not, as well as the timeframes for processing the claim. Here again we will end up with the possibility that has been often seen in other instances—revenue cases among them—of the federal government and its lawyers presenting technical defences, limitations and a defence invoking procedure or defective presentation of the specific claim.

In short, all the delaying and defence tactics we have become accustomed to in the regular courts can end up having a case involving an \$8 million claim end up taking 10, 12 even perhaps 15 years before settlement, because of procedural wrangling, postponement of proceedings, technical glitches and new evidence. I do not need to draw hon. members a picture of this.

We find ourselves in a situation where we have the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development telling us, “We are making improvements and we have agreed with those who were calling for improvements”. This is unbelievable. Actually, it is the opposite.

It is as though every road block has been put up, strategically, to avoid settlements. Instead of assessing specific claims and resolving them, everything possible to postpone their settlement has been done. If a case exceeds \$7 million, forget about it, because it will take a long, long time before it will be resolved and before first nations will see any compensation.

I can understand why the Assembly of First Nations and the vast majority of all of the groups that appeared before us condemned this bill as a fraud. They said that the bill will not solve anything, that the bill is ineffective and avoids solving problems. Instead, the bill passes them down to future generations, leaving it up to them to solve the responsibilities that are ours today.

Imagine the situation. Aboriginal communities in Canada have been waiting for years. More than 1,152 cases have been pending for 30 years. These people have not seen justice done. Young people today are getting more and more impatient. I have met young aboriginal people. They are starting to say, “We have had it. Our ancestors were a bit more patient than we will be. We want justice”.

I understand that young aboriginal people are getting impatient and appearing before international tribunals to explain that Canada is not an example when it comes to respecting the rights of first nations, that Canada is not an example when it comes to its ability to solve the problem of specific claims, or that Canada is not an example when it comes to respecting its first nations.

Since September, I have been a member of the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs, Northern Development and Natural Resources. I did not think that it was still possible to hear offensive comments regarding aboriginal peoples. I thought that this was a new era.

● (1245)

I did not think that there could be such paternalistic analyses, which keep aboriginal nations in a state of dependency. I thought that we were living in another century and that we had gone beyond such biases and intellectual hang-ups, and I thought we were prepared to recognize aboriginal nations, to do them justice and to promote mutual respect between our nations and their nations.

I also felt somewhat ashamed to hear some people say that we cannot settle everything, that some issues in justice can only be partly settled. If we were treated in this manner, with justice only half done, we would not appreciate it. Many people in our communities, both in Quebec and in Canada, would cry foul, but when it comes to aboriginal nations, it is no big deal.

Then the minister told us, "We will speed things up and we will make sure that we have the money to meet the needs of aboriginal nations".

When we look at the budget earmarked by the minister to settle issues relating to specific claims, we notice that it is still the same. It is \$75 million, while outstanding claims are estimated at about \$1.5 billion. How can we speed up the settlement and compensation process when the money is not there? There is \$75 million in the budget, but the specific claims that are pending have an estimated value of \$1.5 billion.

Mr. Marcel Gagnon: It will take 141 years to settle them.

Mr. Yvan Loubier: The hon. member for Champlain tells me that, at this rate, it will take 141 years to settle these specific claims. If we take the average pace for the past 30 years, at 8% per year, and taking into account what could be added, with a process such as the one proposed by the minister, aboriginal nations will have to wait 141 years before they can hope for a fair settlement of their specific claims.

When I said it was a joke, this is an indication of how seriously the minister takes his work. This morning, he told me he had the support of the first nations. I wonder where he got this support, because I attended all the committee meetings on Bill C-6 and I did not meet many people, except for public servants, who agreed with this new process.

To sum up, we tried in vain to amend this bill. So many amendments were proposed that, at one point, the bill practically needed to be rewritten. The Liberal majority refused to go along with all the amendments we had proposed to make this a good bill and to give us, finally, the means to settle specific claims in an expeditious and lasting manner. All the amendments were rejected.

We believe that, as things now stand, this bill will limit the right to justice, impartiality and equality for first nations. It is a cynical bill that somewhat reflects the minister who introduced it. This bill is not supported by the first nations, and is an insult to our intelligence and to the intelligence of the first nations.

Government Orders

For this reason and for the sake of justice, equality, effectiveness and intelligence, the Bloc Québécois will vote against this bill, which is a bad bill. Members of this House should vote massively against this bill, which will do nothing to help first nations. On the contrary, this bill will add more obstacles to a process that is already questionable, and has settled 230 specific claims in 30 years.

As my colleague from Champlain said so well, if it is going to take 141 years to settle the current specific claims, this should make many people stop and think.

● (1250)

[*English*]

Mr. Pat Martin (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am very pleased on behalf of the New Democratic Party to join the debate on Bill C-6 at third reading.

I would like to compliment the speech made by my colleague from the Bloc Québécois, a member of the aboriginal affairs committee. His speech contained very thoughtful remarks and a well researched analysis of this very flawed bill.

We intend to emphasize many of the same points as would have been heard from the Canadian Alliance when it opposed the bill and from the previous speaker from the Bloc Québécois as he opposed the bill. Virtually everybody associated with aboriginal claims issues is opposed to the bill, as the hon. member from the Bloc pointed out, with the possible exception of the minister and his immediate staff.

I will mention some of the organizations and communities that have contacted the NDP to express their very strong dissatisfaction with the bill. They include the Assembly of First Nations, as has been pointed out before; the Alliance of Tribal Nations from New Westminster, B.C.; the Saddle Lake First Nation of Saddle Lake, Alberta; the Adams Lake Indian Band from Chase, B.C.; the Lucky Man Cree Nation from Saskatoon; Long Lake Reserve No. 58 from Longlac, Ontario; Eagle Lake First Nation from Ontario; The Society for Threatened People from Austria; the Tlowitsis First Nation from Campbell River, B.C.; the Battlefords Tribal Council from Saskatoon, Saskatchewan; the Blueberry River First Nation from Buick, B.C.; the Boston Bar First Nation from Boston Bar, B.C.; and the Carrier-Sekani Tribal Council from Prince George, B.C.

There is also the Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc. from northern Manitoba. I believe MKO represents some 50 communities in northern Manitoba. There is also the Opaskwayak Cree Nation from The Pas, Manitoba whose chief, Oscar Lathlin, is currently the minister of aboriginal affairs in Manitoba.

Also on the list are the Treaty and Aboriginal Rights Research Centre of Manitoba Inc. from Winnipeg; the North Shore Tribal Council from Cutler, Ontario; the Six Nations of the Grand River from Ontario. The Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, a plenary umbrella group from Saskatchewan is on the list.

Government Orders

The list also includes the Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte from the Mohawk Territory, Ontario; the Pasqua First Nation from Fort Qu'Appelle, Saskatchewan; the Okanagan Indian Band from Vernon, B.C.; the Nanoose First Nation from Lantzville, B.C.; the Tsuu T'ina Nation from Alberta; the Halfway River First Nation from Wonowon, B.C.; the Northwest Tribal Treaty Nations from Terrace, B.C.; the Nipissing First Nation from Garden Village, Ontario; the Union of New Brunswick Indians, Fredericton, New Brunswick; the Seabird Island Band from Agassiz, B.C.; the Algonquin First Nation of Timiskaming, from Notre Dame du Nord, Quebec; the Wolf Lake First Nation from Quebec; the Buffalo Point First Nation and Chief John Thunder from Buffalo Point, Manitoba; the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs, Kamloops, B.C.; and the Barriere Lake Algonquin First Nation from Quebec, just bordering the city of Ottawa.

That is a partial list of the groups that have come forward. Some made representation to the committee and some simply contacted our offices, appealing to the opposition parties to do all they could to stop Bill C-6 because it does not meet their needs. It is not what they are looking for. It is not what they desire in terms of a truly independent claims commission as claimed by the minister.

The most compelling thing I bring to the House today is a petition that was brought to my office. Unfortunately it is not in a format which I could present to the House of Commons. I will not be formally tabling the petition because unfortunately, my office was not contacted first to get the proper format.

Those people went to a great deal of trouble. There are over 50,000 names on those sheets of paper which are in boxes in my office as we speak. I would like to read into the record at least the preamble of that petition, even though I know full well it cannot be presented formally.

• (1255)

It is a petition by the Jubilee Petition on Aboriginal Land Rights called "Land Rights, Right Relations".

Dear Prime Minister,

In keeping with the Jubilee theme of Renewal of the Earth, we the undersigned call for a renewed relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples based on mutual respect, responsibility, and sharing.

As part of this ongoing process towards a new relationship, we are seeking justice for Aboriginal peoples.

We join the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples and the United Nations Human Rights Committee in calling on the federal government to act immediately to establish a truly independent commission with the mandate to implement Aboriginal land, treaty and inherent rights.

The signatories are from all over Canada. I should point out that they are not primarily aboriginal people. The vast majority of the signatures on this 50,000 name petition are not of first nations people. In fact, the sample I am holding are people from downtown Guelph, Ontario: Debbie Armstrong, Cindy Donafeld, Erin Stather and Mike Elrick; these people all identify themselves as being from fairly suburban urban Canada.

Perhaps it was long-winded but I wanted to share with everyone the depth and breadth of the opposition we are learning about to Bill C-6. There are ordinary Canadians as well as first nations communities who do not accept that Bill C-6 is what it is touted

to be, the long awaited and much ballyhooed bill that was looked for with great optimism.

Many aboriginal people I met, leaders through the Assembly of First Nations, authorities in the field of land claims, worked on the joint task force for years leading to the formation of an independent claims body. Many expressed their dismay as soon as the hon. minister of aboriginal affairs presented the idea two years ago that he would be introducing this new claims commission by legislation and advanced preliminary sketches of what the bill might look like.

The Assembly of First Nations made it clear at that time that the government had missed the point, that it did not fold in the important key recommendations of the joint task force. That round table met for, I believe it was 18 months, leading up to the development of its position paper which called for a truly independent Indian claims commission.

There was advance warning. The minister cannot feign that he was somehow blindsided by this. He was advised from the very outset that the bill being contemplated and proposed would miss the mark and did not satisfy or pass the test of the truly independent claims commission that was being called for by first nations leaders.

With that as a preface, I suppose I will outline once again some of our objections to Bill C-6 and give an overview and legal analysis of Bill C-6. I do not think we need to get too technical because it is the position of the New Democratic Party when it put forward umpteen amendments at the committee stage. Every single one of them was rejected. It is now our position that the bill is not redeemable.

The bill in its current form unamended is not worthy of our support and will not be getting our support. Therefore I am not going to bore the House of Commons or anybody watching at home with the gritty details of the minutiae, the technical details. That was done by the Canadian Alliance for 40 minutes half an hour ago.

Our initial review of Bill C-6 identified a number of departures from what was agreed upon in the 1998 joint task force report. We believe this compromises the ability of the new body to assist in resolving claims in the expeditious, fair and impartial manner that was contemplated by the task force. Bill C-6 fails the test of being able to introduce a commission that is truly fair, impartial and expeditious.

• (1300)

There is deep concern, and we expressed it from the very outset, with the conflict of interest in the minister's role in managing the independent claims board process. This point has been made over and over again, and not just by opposition critics in the House of Commons but by authorities who have studied this issue for decades in civil society, both aboriginal and non-aboriginal.

Government Orders

How can the commission be truly independent when the minister's discretionary authority is enhanced in the bill rather than diminished and when the commissioners are appointed by the minister? We believe the independence of the commission and the tribunal are undermined by the retention of the unilateral federal authority over appointments and by the unilateral federal authority over the processing of claims. This is the key fundamental point upon which Bill C-6 falls short of introducing a truly independent Indian claims commission.

As many people were, we were shocked and disappointed to see that appointments would be made upon the recommendation of the very minister charged with defending the Crown against such claims. How can anyone not see the blatant conflict of interest? The minister would get to appoint the commissioners, and it would be the Crown against which these claims would be made. Can people not see what is fundamentally wrong with this picture?

We have tried to articulate it as clearly as we can and still we get no relief from the minister or from the Liberal majority on the standing committee. Our representatives on that committee, using the rules of the House of Commons, legitimately tried to have that amended and corrected. Had we achieved that amendment, we would be supporting the bill. Just as no one in their right mind could fail to see the blatant conflict of interest, no one in their right mind could fail to hope that some of the 550 outstanding specific claims could be settled expeditiously, at least in our lifetimes.

I share in the frustration of aboriginal people, many of whom have waited 30, 40 and 50 years for resolution, not to a general land claim but to a specific claim, which I should explain. Let us use an example.

There have been cases where a military air force base expropriated a certain amount of land from an Indian reserve for a specific purpose. When that function was finished and it came time to return that land to the band, it gave back less than it took. The aboriginal people involved said, "Wait a minute. You borrowed 100 acres and gave us back 85. What is going on here?" They filed a specific claim. I am pulling that abstract out of my head. There are about 550 of those.

Here is another example. The amount of money transferred to aboriginal communities is based upon a per capita basis. There may be a dispute between what the first nation says is its membership and what the federal government has counted as membership. A claim would be filed to address that grievance. That is the type of very specific issue with which we are dealing, but unfortunately without a satisfactory resolution mechanism, the band has no recourse but to clog up the courts with these claims.

As I said, no one in their right mind would not want to see a speedy and expeditious settlement of these outstanding grievances to give remedy to these, in many cases, historic injustices.

We are frustrated and we share the frustration of aboriginal people. It has yet to be determined if all the claims are legitimate. Hopefully, a fair and impartial arbitrator will decide that. However now we will not have that mechanism. The long awaited and much ballyhooed mechanism to finally give satisfaction to these outstanding claims is not forthcoming. These people will have to go forward with what

they perceive to be a biased mechanism, a mechanism that is tainted and clearly prejudiced, or at least there is a conflict of interest. It remains to be seen if fairness can still be achieved.

There are no effective timelines provided under the commission process. We believe that this is a shortcoming of the bill. We would be far more likely to achieve satisfactory resolves, if people could not play the waiting game. Certainly the government has been playing with many claims for all these years.

● (1305)

Using timeliness as a delaying tactic is reprehensible in my mind. There is a phrase "justice delayed is justice denied". It is even more unkind when the government throws it back in the face of aboriginal people by saying that they are always clogging the courts with all of these claims.

The reason the claims are in the courts is because the government refuses to sit at the table and resolve these issues. It takes two to tango. It takes two to create an impasse. Aboriginal people want these claims settled. The government has a vested interest in stalling and delaying because if the claims are resolved, as they are in most cases, it will cost the government money.

If we stipulate ourselves to a dispute mechanism that is supposed to be fair and expeditious, then timelines should be imposed so that these delaying tactics could no longer be used as a tool by the federal government. There are far too many opportunities for federal delay built into this process.

From where did the \$7 million cap figure come? It was pulled out of the air. I cannot say whether it should be more or less for specific claims, but anytime a line like that is drawn there will be cases that fall right on the line. I will give the House an example of a worse case scenario.

Let us say a first nation has been waiting 30 years for satisfaction on a specific claim and it has spent \$2 million on legal fees. The claim is worth \$10 million. It could carry on in the courts, because this is optional, and spend another \$2 million fighting for what it knows to be right, or it could go before the independent claims body and have it settled to a maximum of \$7 million. This may coerce, out of necessity, first nations to accept less than what they deserve and what they have coming because they cannot afford to fight for another 50 years.

As the previous speaker mentioned, this generation of aboriginal people may not be quite as patient as their forefathers were in achieving justice. They need it and they want it now. However because of the cap the maximum that will be handed out will be \$7 million. We believe this is a cost saving measure contemplated, vented and executed by the federal government in imposing this cap into the bill.

My party is further critical of the definition of a specific claim that has been narrowed from the existing policy. Believe it or not, we are supposed to be moving forward toward resolution of these outstanding grievances with the bill. Instead we are going backward. The definition of what constitutes a specific claim for treatment under the independent new commission is narrower than things that could go under the existing independent claims commission.

Government Orders

The bill does not provide for a substantial financial commitment and is more about limiting federal liability than about settling claims. That is the simplest way I can express our objection to the bill. It does not provide for a substantial financial commitment. It is more seized with the issue of limiting federal liability than it is about settling claims. Bill C-6 offers little hope for addressing the growing backlog of specific claims in the foreseeable future.

I appeal to the minister to step back and look at the whole suite of legislation he has introduced, namely, Bill C-6, Bill C-7 and Bill C-19. There are those of us on opposition benches who would like nothing better than to enthusiastically support legislation that will amend the Indian Act because we think the Indian Act is fundamentally evil. We believe it is responsible for 130 years of social tragedy. If I do nothing else in my time here as a member of Parliament, I would like to say that I moved the issue of aboriginal people one step forward.

I appeal to the minister to take a step back and rethink why the entire first nations community is opposed to these measures. I appeal to him to introduce something again, in a co-operative manner, something of which we can all be proud. The government will then have the enthusiastic support of the New Democratic Party instead of the opposition we have expressed toward the bill.

• (1310)

Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP): Madam Speaker, my colleague from Winnipeg North Centre has done an outstanding job in bringing a sense of understanding of what the fundamental flaws are in the bill.

Today the minister of aboriginal affairs talked about consultation and defended government practices. He said that the government was involved in negotiations and consultations with first nations. Yet, as the member has pointed out, the bill itself is a total contradiction of the very principles the government has claimed to be put forward.

Could the hon. member outline some of the opposition that has come forward from the aboriginal community to the bill and look at it in the context of the other bills that come forward and that go completely in the opposite direction to where the government claims it wants to be?

Mr. Pat Martin: Madam Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to answer this question and I will do so as plainly and simply as I can. I really want people to understand why the NDP opposes the bill. It is not just for the sake of opposing everything the government tries to do.

Perhaps this is the single most obvious thing about the bill that points out why it is not worthy of our support. Usually all legislation dealing with aboriginal people include non-derogation clauses. This bill does not. Most bills have a very specific clause at the front saying, "Nothing in this bill shall be interpreted by the courts or anyone thereafter so as to diminish or derogate from existing aboriginal treaty or inherent rights".

The first thing that leaps off the page is the absence of a non-derogation clause in this bill. One can only assume that, because it was deliberately left out and because the amendments were deliberately turned down to add that clause, there is something in

it that will derogate and diminish existing aboriginal inherent rights. That is only reasonable to assume. There is a point in law that says a person can be presumed to have intended the probable consequences of his or her actions. People who read the bill know that the probable consequences of leaving out the non-derogation clause is that there will be derogation. It is a pretty straightforward issue.

To further answer the hon. member's question, the experts, authorities and people who have studied these matters for years are the researchers and the elected leadership who constitute the Assembly of First Nations. They read the bill and pointed out that it did not create an independent and impartial committee. Why? For the reasons I pointed out already.

First, the minister appoints who will be on the commission to make these determinations, even though the very things the commission will be ruling on are a cost factor to the federal government. I do not know how much more clearly I can put it. If people cannot see that, there is something dead between their ears.

What is further frustrating, and I agree with the hon. member for Vancouver East, is that so many qualified people worked with real hope and optimism on the joint task force which dealt with this very issue. They really threw themselves into it. They wrote a meaningful report with meaningful recommendations, only to have those recommendations yet again ignored by the minister and the bureaucracy. The legislation, as crafted, does not accurately reflect the work of the committee.

Why ask people what they want and need, then ignore them by tabling a bill that does not reflect what the government has been told. It is an insult. It makes a mockery of the concept of true consultation. Without getting too technical, this is the fundamental point as to why first nations cannot accept the bill and why the NDP will not support it. The NDP wants to support the first nations people who the bill affects.

• (1315)

Mr. Rex Barnes (Gander—Grand Falls, PC): Madam Speaker, listening to the hon. member who just spoke, he outlined some areas and some organizations that are totally opposed to the manner in which this has taken place. When we talk about negotiations to come to a deal to satisfy groups of people, we negotiate to satisfy the majority of the people.

From what I see here, the bill has definitely angered a lot of people within the organization. As a result of that, we in the Progressive Conservative Party will not be supporting it. We firmly believe that these are not negotiations that have transpired. This is the government saying that this is what it wants, rather than what the people want.

The minister has stated that there are 550 claims in the system right now, which will take approximately 30 years to do under the current procedures, and he believes that the new system would resolve 80% of them. If 80% of the outstanding land claims are easy to resolve, why have they not been resolved?

Government Orders

I know the claims may be complex, but if the government does not sit at the table and negotiate with all the groups it will never get done. However, we need to have open negotiations. We need to listen to the first nations people. It cannot be all one way. Right now it is all one way. It is the government's way or no way.

The minister also stated that the first claims policy statement arose out of the Supreme Court decision in 1973. Since 1973 it has been the same old story. We are still waiting for first nations to have their land settlements resolved, which is unfortunate.

We cannot continue in that way. We need to make peace with our first nations people. We need to make sure that the court ruling is upheld. They are entitled to their land claims. Let us settle these claims now and get them over with so we can work as a nation. However we all know that is not what the government wants to do.

My hon. colleagues before me mentioned many points. One of the things is that after an initial review of Bill C-6 we identified a number of departures from what was agreed upon in the 1998 joint task force report, which may compromise the new body to assist in resolving claims in a fair, expeditious and impartial manner.

Where are we going with this? We need to have impartiality. We need to make sure that it is done in a certain timeframe so that the system works for everyone. We cannot continue to say that if it does not work we will put it into the courts to take care of the larger issue. If the smaller issues were resolved, then the big issues sometimes take care of themselves by sitting down to negotiate and talking sensibly.

There is a big concern about a conflict of interest. It has to have independence. We cannot have the government appointing people to do certain things because then it is not impartial.

A lot has been said about this issue and a lot will continue to be said. What we need to do is to get back to the table to settle the land claims, to sit down and speak to our first nations people and to all the people to whom we need to speak, so we can move forward to make sure that the best deal is given, not only to the aboriginal people but also that it be fair to the government.

I do not see that happening because there are two sets of rules, one for the people and one for the government. We need to make sure that it is good for the country and good for the people. The government cannot get its own way all the time.

• (1320)

As a result, the bill does not answer a lot of the concerns of the first nations people. The Assembly of First Nations had a lot of concerns. I have seven of them here, most of which were addressed today: the cap up to \$7 million; the patronage appointment process; the lack of first nations input; no significant increase in the budget for the new process; conflicts of interest; and the minister's role in managing the process.

The other item that was of great concern had to do with the compromises built into the new body that was done in the joint task force of 1998.

There is so much that is unsettled with this new bill that the parties in the House cannot support it. I would recommend that the minister

go back to the table, go back to the people and speak to the committee. I know the committee members were upset. I am not a member of the committee but I spoke to members of the committee who were very concerned about the direction in which the bill goes.

I know the minister has the greatest of intentions to make sure that the land claims are all settled and that first nations people get what they rightly deserve but if the bill becomes law it will not give them what they deserve. It will cause major fighting, major bickering and major unsettling of our people.

I firmly believe that the minister should go back to square one and listen to the people. Yes, we need to compromise but in negotiations. He talked about his past negotiating skills but I can tell him right now that in negotiations we give some and we take some. It is a compromise. However, when it is all finalized and we come away from the table, both parties should be happy and settled with it. If not, in the real world, if it were union negotiations, they would be on strike.

Right now we could almost say that the people who are opposed to this are on strike. We need to get back to the table, sit down and discuss this reasonably and rationally and, most important, let us get a deal that is good for the country, good for the people and one in which all Canadians will benefit greatly.

• (1325)

Mr. Maurice Vellacott (Saskatoon—Wanuskewin, Canadian Alliance): Madam Speaker, I was wondering if my colleague across the way would elaborate a little more with respect to how fair a process it is when it is only the government that decides who sits on the commission and on the tribunals.

What is the record in his part of the country, elsewhere in the country, nationally, in terms of when the process is totally controlled by the government and there is no proper and valid input from first nations people on appointing those members? What does that leave us open to?

Mr. Rex Barnes: Madam Speaker, it has to be a fair process. If government is controlling the panels or controlling the whole process, then government will put in the people it wants in order to spread its word.

The process needs input from the first nations group. They need be involved in the process to make sure it will work. If there is no input and no concise message from the people we are concerned about, then the government gets its way because it is only putting forth its way.

Members of the first nations need to be involved in the process. The process will fail if they are not and we will be back to the beginning.

It seems that the government has left out this group of people but it needs their input. We need to make sure that their voices are heard and that they have input into the final decisions that are made.

Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island, Canadian Alliance): Madam Speaker, it is very important for us to resolve the issues of Bill C-6 in an equitable and fair way.

Private Members' Business

One of the things that the bill provides is for a tribunal which has a cap of some \$7 million on things that it can decide on. Beyond that, it is beyond its scope. So there is a limitation. If there were an impasse on a certain inquiry, then we would have the situation where the tribunal would not be able to solve the problem and we would have the same kind of impasse that we have had for the last 20, 30, 50 years.

I would like the member's comments on the cap and the tribunal process.

Mr. Rex Barnes: Madam Speaker, the government of course has placed a cap on the process. It expects that when there is a disagreement among the larger groups it will go to court. However the government has gone to court but it failed the people.

The government does not care about spending a wasteful amount of money on programs such as the firearms registry. If it were serious about settling the claims of our aboriginal people, it would move ahead and put the money in place. Whether it is \$8 million \$10 million or \$12 million, we should move ahead and do it.

Let us get peace back in the nation. If we do not settle these claims we will always have unrest and we will have people not getting their just reward. What we are telling the people is that we will cap these claims at \$7 million but that all other major decisions, if they are controversial, will go to court where they could be tied up for years.

Let us put the money where it is due. Let us get it over with. We have been at this for 30 or 40 years. Let us move to put it behind us so that we can bring Canada to a stronger position and a stronger global level in the years 2003, 2004 and 2005.

Mr. Philip Mayfield (Cariboo—Chilcotin, Canadian Alliance): Madam Speaker, I listened to the hon. member discuss the issue of negotiations and the fairness of those negotiations. From his point of view, how would he see those negotiations clarified and how would he see those negotiations conducted so that there is fairness throughout?

• (1330)

Mr. Rex Barnes: Madam Speaker, as with any negotiations, we sit down at the table with a selected group of people, the ones who can go back to their people and tell them what we will accept and what we will reject.

The key is to get back to the table with the major groups so we can have open dialogue and discussions. It is no good having people at the table who cannot go back to their people and tell them what deal was arrived at. We need to have people at the table who can make decisions. It is no good having people at the table who cannot make decisions.

I would say that we need to have a process whereby we could have people at the table from all sides with regard to the land claims. We would then be able to iron out our differences and come to a final conclusion so the people of the first nations could be given their just reward.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos): The hon. member will have another four and a half minutes to answer questions and comments when we come back to debate the bill.

[Translation]

It being 1.30 p.m., the House will now proceed to consideration of private members' business as listed on today's order paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[Translation]

SOLICITATION LAWS

The House resumed from November 18, 2002 consideration of the motion.

Ms. Madeleine Dalphond-Guiral (Laval Centre, BQ): Madam Speaker, I want to thank and congratulate our colleague who is raising an issue that can no longer be ignored. As ironic as it may seem, however, debating this issue is all too often avoided on the grounds that it concerns the social and personal values of individuals. I am therefore pleased that Motion No. 192 was declared votable, as we begin today the second hour of debate on this motion.

The motion reads as follows:

That a special committee of the House be appointed to review the solicitation laws in order to improve the safety of sex-trade workers and communities overall, and to recommend changes that will reduce the exploitation of and violence against sex-trade workers.

In recognizing the existence of sex trade workers, this motion shows both realism and responsibility. It is certainly not by putting our heads in the sand that we will contribute to the betterment of society. If we want to build a better world, we must face the facts. Prostitution is a fact, not a figment of our imagination. It is the world's oldest profession, as the saying goes, and it is definitely not about to disappear. But what exactly do we know about this profession?

Some will argue that I am going the wrong way on this issue. It is true that I enjoy straying from the beaten track. Yet it is very likely that we know less about this than we say we do. Besides the fact that prostitution can be classified as a service, in that money is paid in exchange for sexual favours, we really know very little about prostitution.

Nonetheless, we do know a few facts. For instance, solicitation for the purpose of providing sexual services is prohibited under the Criminal Code; at present, prostitution rings are run by the underworld; it is mostly women who are involved in prostitution; the women who make a living from this trade often do so in a context of violence and terror; while prostitution has been around since the beginning of time, it is still unregulated; and unfortunately, society is all too willing to turn a blind eye on anything that goes against its values and challenges its taboos.

Private Members' Business

I could go on almost indefinitely on what we have heard on this issue, what we can read in the newspapers and see on television. I hardly need bring up the tragic disappearance of 63 women who were prostitutes in downtown Vancouver. We know today that at least 15 of them were killed, and that the other 48 probably met the same fate.

It is worse than shameful that it has taken such a tragedy to open our eyes to the need to consider this issue, when we have known for a very long time that violence runs rampant in this environment. Can we tolerate such cruelty to women who, when it comes down to it, are merely trying to earn a living? As legislators, do we have the right to close our eyes to avoid dealing with such a sensitive issue? This is a question of the respect that is each person's due, the right to integrity without consideration for a person's job or values, as long as no one else is harmed.

The motion of the member for Vancouver East is quite reasonable since it is asking the House to appoint a special committee to review solicitation laws in order to improve the safety of sex-trade workers and communities overall.

● (1335)

Some studies are necessary. In fact, in 2000, the hon. member for Hochelaga—Maisonneuve chaired a working group that examined the various issues relating to prostitution and suggested possible solutions to these problems.

Without getting into details, the working group's first proposal stated that it is important to take prostitution out of the Criminal Code. Indeed, we should ask ourselves some serious questions about the relevance of criminalizing consensual sexual relations between two adults, even if one of the two partners offers money in return for services.

What is criminal in this arrangement other than the fact that the income is not declared for taxation purposes, thus making this undeclared work? However, the reason this income cannot be declared is because the government does not want to recognize that this trade exists, and it tries instead to eradicate it. This, as we know, is impossible.

In fact, during the first hour of this debate, the hon. member for Hochelaga—Maisonneuve rightly pointed out that it is not prostitution as such that is criminal but, rather, soliciting in a public place, to which people quite rightly object.

Like all of you, although everyone has their own little fantasies, I do not feel like being a captive spectator to someone else's fun. Likewise, it is unacceptable for sexual favours to be offered in a residential area, close to a school or at a church door. That is why prostitution should occur in designated zones.

Moreover, there is—and this is a known fact—much greater tolerance by the police for so-called hidden prostitution than for street prostitution. For example, if the police were really interested in locking up all sex-trade workers who do not work in the open, they would be guaranteed weeks and months of work. Look at the escort services section of the yellow pages; every phone call would be like winning the lottery.

I do not wish to explore any further the various solutions that could be put forward, but these few examples show that an in-depth review by a special committee could make a strong contribution to this debate.

We need to hear from sex-trade workers, stakeholders, law enforcement representatives and all the specialists in this area. We can then move on to the second part of the motion, which recommends changes that will reduce the exploitation of and violence against sex-trade workers.

How would this be done? What are the proposed recommendations? Only an informed debate could guide us. One thing is certain, forming a committee would allow us to address the issue without prejudice.

In conclusion, I would like to quote a small maxim:

We are all prisoners, but some of us are in cells with windows and some without.

Is it not time that we throw open our windows and give these workers the help they need and deserve?

● (1340)

Ms. Carole-Marie Allard (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Madam Speaker, as my colleague for Laval Centre has said, I am certainly very pleased to be able to open a little window of positivity on the matter we are addressing today, and to announce my support for the motion to strike a special committee of the House in order to recommend changes to reduce the exploitation of sex-trade workers and particularly to stop violence against these workers.

Our goal, and that of my colleague from Vancouver East, is to create safer communities for all, and we certainly share the same motivation.

In fact, I must congratulate my colleague from Vancouver East for presenting this motion. With it, she is reaching out a hand to a vulnerable sector of the Canadian population, the sex-trade workers, many of whom are prostitutes, and the very large majority of whom are women, it must be admitted.

They call prostitution the world's oldest profession. My colleague from Laval Centre just said that herself, before yielding the floor to me. We must admit that the passage of time has not improved the situation of those who prostitute themselves, nor the safety of the communities where there is a very active sex trade.

Today sex-trade workers are in very great danger of disease, violence, even death. The world of prostitution is a subculture of our society where people live and work and where the protection of the law and respect of basic human rights are largely absent.

There is nothing new about calls for social justice for prostitution, nor about the realization that the vulnerability and lack of security for sex-trade workers are linked to issues of gender equality and women's fundamental rights.

In 1910, political activist and feminist Emma Goldman said that, whether the reformers admitted it or not, the economic and social inferiority of women was responsible for prostitution.

Private Members' Business

[English]

There is great merit to what Mrs. Goldman said nearly a century ago. Today's statistics show that the vast majority of sex trade workers are women. They are women from the most vulnerable sectors of our society: aboriginal women, women raised and living in poverty, victims of violence, women with substance abuse problems, and women who have been trafficked from other countries.

On an ongoing basis the people of Canada express their growing concerns about the safety of prostitutes and the harm that the activities of the sex trade can cause to the community.

[Translation]

The hue and cry on these issues has risen with the growing awareness of the plight of the missing women of Vancouver's East Side, and of other vulnerable women in communities across this land. We must do something to address these issues.

Our government is committed to taking positive action for social justice in ways that can achieve lasting positive change for these individuals and communities, and others at risk.

In the Speech from the Throne, the Government of Canada expressed its commitment to helping poor families and children to break out of the welfare trap. We are committed to ending the cycle of poverty and dependency that prevents children from getting a good start, that makes families vulnerable to poverty and violence, and that limits women's opportunities for self-determination.

Toward these ends, it is important that we carefully consider prostitution-related criminal issues. This motion is admirable. It is consistent with the government's commitment to children and families. It tries to find a way to help vulnerable persons and communities that have consistently been marginalized.

Through the concentrated study and dialogue that a House committee would generate, we can more deeply explore issues, consult with Canadians and develop strategies for action.

As some hon. members of the House have pointed out, prostitution is a complex and multi-faceted problem. It must be addressed on many fronts, including through legislative reform, community supports, social interventions and other related areas.

● (1345)

[English]

It must also be addressed in collaboration with a wide range of partners. That is why my colleague, the Minister of Justice, is speaking to the issue today. We must have the collaboration of a number of partners including other federal government departments, provincial and territorial governments, and municipal jurisdictions across the country.

[Translation]

As a reminder, my government has committed \$32 million, that is \$32 million annually, to a national crime prevention initiative. It has also invested \$7 million in a family violence initiative.

[English]

In 2001-02 Status of Women Canada approved \$3.9 million in funding throughout our women's programs. This funding supports

initiatives that address the root causes of violence against women. A recent example includes Saskatoon Communities for Children, which my department supported as an initiative related to children involved in the sex trade. The goal was to generate legislative changes to ensure tougher action against sexual predators.

Other objectives include: developing strategies to raise public awareness about child sexual exploitation, forming partnerships to establish safe houses for youth, and enhancing efforts to open satellite homes for the rehabilitation of sexually exploited children.

[Translation]

Such efforts reach out and address the issues of some of the most vulnerable members of the population. They support and build on the safety and quality of life in affected communities. Working in partnership, we have created momentum that must be sustained if we are to make a difference for Canada and the people who live and thrive here.

I am therefore very proud to repeat that I am pleased to support this motion to establish a special committee of the House, which will develop recommendations and proposed changes to reduce the exploitation of and violence against sex-trade workers, and to create safer communities for all people in Canada.

Once again, in closing, I want to commend my colleague from Vancouver East on bringing this motion before the House.

● (1350)

[English]

Mr. Jay Hill (Prince George—Peace River, Canadian Alliance): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise this afternoon and speak to the motion put forward by the member from Vancouver East.

Motion No. 192 reads:

That a special committee of the House be appointed to review the solicitation laws in order to improve the safety of sex-trade workers and communities overall, and to recommend changes that will reduce the exploitation of and violence against sex-trade workers.

I certainly support that. I am pleased that the government is willing to strike a committee to look at this. I would like the issue to be expanded to look at the entire issue of prostitution in Canada.

I know the reason why I wanted to rise and speak to this is because it is of great concern to a number of communities in my huge rural riding of Prince George—Peace River, especially the city of Prince George. I have had some meetings with the town councils and with concerned citizens who are particularly concerned about the problems to the community and to the sex trade workers themselves by what is called residential prostitution and the problems that arise from that. Perhaps it is an overlooked or neglected area of the justice portfolio.

Private Members' Business

All of us who have spent much time in this place recognize that there is a myriad of issues of great concern to Canadians in the justice portfolio. It seems like there is never enough time to properly address all of them.

I know as a past member of the justice committee that it is one standing committee of the House of Commons that is constantly bogged down, not only with legislation, but with study. The amount of work for that committee to do just never seems to end. It really points to the depth of the problems that our country faces in our justice system or with changes needed to our justice system and the difficulty, in all fairness, of dealing with some of these issues because we certainly have a wide range of opinions on them.

I believe this is one of those areas that has been overlooked. It is high time that we as Parliamentarians take a long, hard look at this whole issue of prostitution and everything that goes with it.

One of the areas, of course, that is closely connected to the sex trade is drug abuse. A number of members have already mentioned that. We cannot look at one without looking at the other because as has been said, in many situations, sex trade workers fall prey to substance abuse as drug addicts. If we are going to look at their safety we must look at that particular aspect of it as well.

What can be done? Part of this is under provincial jurisdiction. One of the things I was looking at is that obviously we need more services available to address the problem. We need to ensure that we have proper enforcement at the local levels and the proper resources for our police forces, and for our social workers who are trying to help these individuals.

There is a program in the city of Prince George conducted by the RCMP and it deals with trying to identify those who prey, the so-called Johns, on the sex trade workers themselves. It is called the deter and identify sex trade consumers (DISC) program. Unfortunately, the program is underfunded as are so many programs of the RCMP. That is one area that we could look at to ensure that our law enforcement has enough revenue to properly address the issue.

As I said, it is an area under provincial jurisdiction and I recently wrote a letter to the hon. Geoff Plant, Attorney General of British Columbia, on this issue of residential prostitution specifically in the city of Prince George.

• (1355)

I know for a fact that my colleague from Edmonton Centre-East has raised this issue in connection with his community of Edmonton on a number of occasions and has done a considerable amount of research on it. I commend him for the work that he has done in that respect. I know he continues to work on it because it is a serious problem in that city as well.

If this committee is struck and seriously looks at the issue, research would show that it is a serious issue in communities large and small all across our nation.

In my letter to the Attorney General of British Columbia I made note of what the province of Manitoba had done to deter residential prostitution. Manitoba amended its highway traffic act so that it could seize the vehicles of Johns involved with picking up sex trade workers.

Another unfortunate reality that has been pointed out by the parliamentary secretary is the exploitation of children. There are a couple of things we can do about this. The Canadian Alliance is pushing for the age of sexual consent to be raised to the age of at least 16 from 14 years, and perhaps even higher following a good debate in the country.

I made another suggestion in my letter to the Attorney General of British Columbia regarding the fact that many of our young children are getting lured into the sex trade. I wrote:

Too many of our young children get lured into the sex trade. In 1999, the Alberta Government enacted legislative measures under the Protection of Children Involved in Prostitution Act. This law allows police officers to hold sex trade workers under the age of 16 years for up to 96 hours at a protective safe house. During this time, these children are provided with counselling, health care treatment, and an opportunity for a better life.

I suggested in my letter that perhaps British Columbia could take a look at that piece of legislation from Alberta and consider incorporating it into the laws of B.C.

In dealing with this issue we must go well beyond just looking at the single issue of safety. As other speakers have noted, it is sad that it took a tragedy the scope of what is unfolding in Vancouver to draw attention to this problem. As someone noted, 63 prostitutes went missing and now DNA from at least 15 of them has been found on a farm. A trial is underway in Vancouver to hopefully hold those responsible accountable for those horrendous acts.

I support the thrust of the motion before us today. Perhaps my only criticism would be that it does not go quite far enough. Once the committee is up and running I suspect it would be mandated to look at the issue. It would go in a lot of different directions.

I particularly want to support the part of the motion that talks about improving the safety of communities overall. In other words, not just looking under a microscope at only the safety of sex trade workers themselves, but everyone else who comes in contact with them, whether citizens on the street, their families, their loved ones, or people who care about them. This is a big issue and it is not just about the prostitutes themselves.

Mr. Pat Martin (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am very pleased on behalf of my constituents of Winnipeg Centre to join in this debate brought to the House of Commons by the member for Vancouver East with her presentation of Motion No. 192. It is a very thoughtful motion and a timely issue for us as members of Parliament to be dealing with today.

The motion states:

That a special committee of the House be appointed to review the solicitation laws in order to improve the safety of sex-trade workers and communities overall, and to recommend changes that will reduce the exploitation of and violence against sex-trade workers.

Private Members' Business

I am particularly pleased to point out to the House the tireless dedication to this issue demonstrated by my colleague, the member for Vancouver East. The member for Vancouver East, my NDP colleague and House leader for the NDP, represents a community that is very troubled in many ways, in that it has been the site of horrific incidents pertaining to sex trade workers and street people and in that 66 women have disappeared in recent years, on the face of it at the hands of a mass murderer. Charges have been laid and the outcome remains to be seen, but certainly there has never been a more graphic illustration of violence toward or the exploitation of sex trade workers than what we have witnessed in recent years in the hon. member's riding.

I should point out as well that the member is not new to this issue. As city councillor for that same region for almost 20 years prior to becoming a member of Parliament, the same hon. member was an outspoken advocate and champion for the rights of those disadvantaged people who find themselves in the sex trade on the streets of Vancouver.

I welcome this debate because it is important that Canada get its mind around the laws pertaining to prostitution and the sex trade. I argue that the federal laws pertaining to solicitation are hypocritical, so to speak, because as a nation we are willing to tolerate the idea of a sex industry provided that we do not see it on our streets. Very little is said and done until it becomes a visible social problem evident on the streets of our major cities. It is a contradictory and I believe hypocritical view, which accentuates the good reason for bringing this issue before the justice committee so that it can be dealt with more thoroughly.

I point out that Canada has been seized of the issue before. In 1985 the Fraser commission did a thorough review of Canada's laws pertaining to solicitation and the sex trade. It was at that time that recommendations were made and changes were made to the federal law pertaining to communicating for the purposes of soliciting. Since that time, the review of that law has shown that there has been no substantial change from those actions from the point of view of increasing either safety or law and order in local communities. Again it is time to revisit this issue.

I am particularly pleased that the hon. member gave us this opportunity because my own riding of Winnipeg Centre has many similarities and parallels to the inner city of Vancouver. It is a core area riding with many of the predictable consequences of chronic long term poverty, one of which, as was pointed out very ably by the parliamentary secretary, is certainly the issue of prostitution.

I would like to pay tribute to and recognize in my address some people in the inner city of Winnipeg who are making a difference and who will be very pleased to see that the House of Commons is seized of this issue. Gloria Enns, who was recently awarded the Queen's jubilee medal, runs an organization called Sage House, which advocates on behalf of street sex trade workers. I believe that the emphasis in her work, as has been stated, is harm reduction, taking the morality, so to speak, out of the issue of the sex trade industry and dealing with the more urgent issue of the safety and well-being of many of the people, predominantly women, who find themselves in this situation. Also, the Mount Carmel Clinic in Winnipeg has been a tireless advocate and has done yeoman's work in terms of providing a refuge for people in the sex trade industry.

● (1400)

The point has been made that there is an inexorable link between the sex trade industry and poverty for those who find themselves in that industry. The economic and social inequality of women is largely responsible for the situation as we see it today. It is an issue of gender equality and an issue of human rights as much as it is an issue of criminal law.

It was pointed out as well that those most likely to be engaged in this dangerous activity in the street sex trade industry are: aboriginal women, already disadvantaged in the lowest socio-economic group in the country; substance abusers, those who are addicted; and new arrivals from other countries. We are sensitive to the issue that many people engaged in the sex trade industry find it their only avenue of recourse to deal with the compounded problems that they face in society already.

I know that the member for Vancouver East has done a great deal of research on this issue. Even before this motion came up for debate in the House of Commons, she sent a letter to the justice minister urging the minister to begin an immediate review of the federal laws, as is dealt with in the motion. She stated that the "review of the federal laws...should include two key objectives: to improve the safety of street level sex trade workers and communities, as well as to recommend changes that will reduce exploitation of and violence against prostitutes".

She does not refer to specific changes that need to be made, but wisely we will leave it up to a subcommittee of the justice committee, hopefully, to hear witnesses, travel across the country and develop recommendations.

One of the things what she suggests will likely come up as the study is undertaken is that consideration should be given to the decriminalization of the sex trade workers altogether. We believe that it is time for a frank and open dialogue about the sex trade and what can be done to reduce the harm, both to individual workers and to the communities impacted by the sex trade industry.

As I have said, we need to change the mindset of Canadians in relation to workers in the sex trade. We need to leave the morality issue to the side and deal with the practical issues of harm reduction, both for the individuals involved and for the community at large.

In the few minutes I have left I would like to draw attention to a tragic issue in my riding of Winnipeg Centre to illustrate that this issue is not limited to Vancouver's east side. I have with me a newspaper article. Just a few days ago in Winnipeg, Theren Adelina Silva was the latest victim in a series of killings of Winnipeg prostitutes, many of whom do their business in the immediate area of my office, at Sargent and Elice Avenues, in the core area of Winnipeg. We are all touched, no matter where we live in Canada, by the tragedies associated with this event.

Madam Speaker, because I am running short of time I would like to raise this issue. I think you would find broad support for the following amendment to the hon. member's motion. I move:

That the motion be amended by deleting the words "a special committee of the House be appointed" and by substituting therefor the words "the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights be ordered to".

Private Members' Business

•(1405)

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos): The amendment is acceptable.

Mr. Ken Epp: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I believe according to the new rules a private member's motion cannot be amended without the approval of the mover of the motion. Has that been done?

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos): It is actually applicable to supply day motions, not to private members' business. However, the hon. member who moved the motion might like to indicate that she does approve of it.

Ms. Libby Davies: Madam Speaker, I do agree with the amendment.

•(1410)

Mrs. Marlene Jennings (Parliamentary Secretary to the Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is a true honour to have this opportunity to speak to Motion No. 192 put forward by the hon. member for Vancouver East.

I would like to congratulate the member for Vancouver East for her sensitive approach to the complicated issues surrounding the sex trade. When a motion such as this, dealing with an extremely vulnerable segment of society, is before us, I believe it is incumbent upon us to take careful notice.

The motion, now with the amendment, calls on the House to order the justice committee to review the criminal law governing offences related to prostitution. The objective of this review, according to the motion, would be to better protect sex trade workers from exploitation and violence and to ensure the well-being of the communities around them.

My colleague, the hon. Parliamentary Secretary for the Minister of Justice, has already put forward his lucid support for the intent of the motion. It is a position that I share. Indeed, from a justice and law enforcement standpoint, there is every reason to continue refining and modernizing our laws so that the people who are already victims of very difficult circumstances are not further victimized by the justice system.

My colleague outlined the extensive committee work and Criminal Code amendments that have sought to focus criminal sanctions on the true targets: those who would harm and exploit sex trade workers.

However, I suggest to my colleagues in the House that there is another dimension to street solicitation that is equally important: the issue of the health and safety of sex trade workers. Ours is a society that cares deeply about the physical and mental well-being of all our citizens, particularly the most vulnerable. Surely we can agree that the women, the men and, most of all, the boys and girls who are trapped in the sex trade are among the most vulnerable of all.

This is an exceptionally dangerous line of work. At the extreme there are the chilling disappearances and slayings of so many sex trade workers in Vancouver and in other cities across Canada. Even under the more ordinary circumstances, prostitution is associated with physical violence, including rape, sexually transmitted diseases, unwanted pregnancies and often psychological abuse. Where there is

prostitution, there is often drug and alcohol abuse, along with hepatitis and HIV infections that come from sharing contaminated needles. There is also the psychological burden of a business that is degrading, isolating and stigmatizing.

Permit me, Madam Speaker, to share with you and my colleagues in the House some sobering facts. Experts estimate that the sex trade in Canada generates some \$400 million a year. Money is of course a powerful inducement, drawing prostitutes into danger that they might otherwise avoid. For example, it is not uncommon for sex trade workers to be paid a premium by their clients to engage in unprotected sex. Indeed, unprotected sex, in combination with multiple sex partners each year and the use of injection drugs, puts at extraordinary risk the health and safety of sex trade workers. Infectious diseases such as hepatitis, tuberculosis, herpes, syphilis, gonorrhoea, chlamydia and AIDS are growing increasingly common.

Sex trade workers who do not seek medical attention risk further complications. Even chlamydia, gonorrhoea and syphilis, which are readily treated with antibiotics, can develop into serious and sometimes even fatal conditions. Left untreated, sexually transmitted diseases also contribute to the spread of the deadly AIDS virus.

It is painful to contemplate these harsh realities for any Canadian living on the streets. It is unbearable to think that teenagers, even children, are engaged in such dangerous work, but they are.

Health Canada's "Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect", the only national study of its kind, turned up 645 confirmed or suspected reports of child exploitation, which includes using children for pornography or prostitution. Released in 2001, the study was conducted in collaboration with provincial and territorial child welfare and social service agencies.

•(1415)

Health Canada's enhanced surveillance of Canadian street youth project shows that more than one-fifth of all our street youth report trading sex for money, food, shelter and drugs. This puts this very population at great risk of contracting sexually transmitted diseases, HIV and hepatitis. Girls and young women living on the street are particularly vulnerable to sexual exploitation and injection drug use.

Health Canada's division of sexual health promotion and STD prevention and control launched the project in 1998 to study this hard to reach population. The division is collaborating with governments at all levels as well as non-governmental organizations in an ongoing national surveillance effort to monitor the rates and risk factors for sexually transmitted diseases and hep B and hep C among street youths. These findings will help us better understand the correlations between sexual abuse, exploitation and disease.

Health Canada's centres of excellence for women's health program also generates new knowledge about the most vulnerable groups of women living in Canada. The program has produced several studies on the sex trade, its impact on the health of women and children and better ways to protect them.

Private Members' Business

For now though we should acknowledge that we do not have all the answers. There is much we do not know about why women, men and children turn to prostitution. In this as in any other population, we need to better understand the links between the health, gender and socio-economic circumstances of sex trade workers.

With a clear grasp on the factors that lead people into the trade, we can better help them get out and protect those who remain. There is therefore a need for more community based research on the sex trade. Solid knowledge would help inform public policy and improve the health and safety of sex trade workers.

This kind of research, if it is to be meaningful, must be broad based. It would have to consider a wide range of issues. It would also have to include federal, provincial and municipal departments and non-governmental organizations with an interest in women and children's health. Most of all it would have to include the sex trade workers themselves. Only they can describe the reality of life on the streets.

Canadians will not tolerate the exploitation of women and children. The government shares that view and is committed to protecting the health and safety of all Canadians, especially the most vulnerable members of our society. We will continue to work with our partners at all levels to address the needs of sex trade workers, to help those who want to leave the street and to protect those who wish to remain.

Prostitution is a complex problem. Its health impacts must be addressed on a variety of fronts. Those include occupational health and well-being, personal safety, risk behaviours and short and long term physical and mental health.

That means we need to work with our partners on appropriate and sensitive health services, community supports and social interventions. We also need the research and knowledge base to make sure we fully understand the problems and are doing the right things to help correct them.

Therefore, I support the intent of the motion before us. Should it be the will of the House, and I hope it will be, to order the justice committee to review the solicitation laws with an eye to enhancing the safety of sex trade workers and their communities, I would certainly support such an initiative. It is, after all, more than a matter of social justice and human rights. It is also a question of health.

I commend the member for Vancouver East for bringing the issue to the House.

• (1420)

Ms. Sophia Leung (Vancouver Kingsway, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to address private member's Motion No. 192 proposing the establishment of a special committee of the House to review the solicitation laws. The committee's overall goal would be to improve the safety of sex trade workers and the community and to recommend changes that would reduce the exploitation of and violence against sex trade workers.

I congratulate the hon. member for Vancouver East for moving this motion. Through this initiative, I want to address public concerns around prostitution related activities and the concerns in the community.

Over the years, in partnership with provincial and territorial governments, the federal government has undertaken various initiatives to address the issues linked to prostitution, the safety of sex trade workers and the reduction of harm to communities. Today in supporting this motion, I will support some of those initiatives and support the establishment of a committee of the House which could help in addressing prostitution related issues.

In 1997 the government passed Bill C-27 which amended the Criminal Code to create the new offence of aggravated procuring. The intent of the amendment was to facilitate the use of police decoys so that authorities could apprehend the clients of prostitutes under the age of 18. This amendment also made available special protections to young persons who testified against their exploiters, for example, through the use of a screen, closed-circuit television or videotaped evidence.

The Department of Justice has also supported a number of initiatives related to crime prevention and community based projects, particularly through phase two of the national strategy on community safety and crime prevention. This entailed a \$32 million commitment each year to a program for safer communities.

For example, one initiative was the production of *Stolen Lives: Children in the Sex Trade*. This video documents the difficult lives of young sex trade workers in Vancouver and Calgary. Another example is the department's funding of close to half a million dollars to Victoria's Capital Region Action Team to address problems linked to youth prostitution in that area.

More recently in October 2002, Canada acceded to the optional protocol to the United Nations convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women, or CEDAW. Canada has supported this UN convention since it was ratified in 1981.

In November 2000, along with the British Columbia child welfare services, Justice Canada co-hosted a national meeting of justice and child welfare officials. Action which has resulted from this meeting includes the establishment of a network of justice and child welfare officials to allow for the prompt sharing of information on all issues related to children and youth involved in prostitution.

The Department of Justice will continue to build on past achievements and to work with all its partners, including provincial, territorial and municipal government departments and agencies involved in justice related issues, social services and child welfare issues.

I therefore support this motion to establish a special committee of the House to review solicitation laws. We must find innovative ways to address the issues and deal with the problems. To do that we need discussion, brainstorming, strategizing and solutions. Our hope for achieving those things lies in establishing a committee of the House where representatives of people of every region of Canada could gather to serve the best interests of their constituents and communities.

•(1425)

In closing, let us work together with the hon. member for Vancouver East. I will support her initiative.

Mr. Svend Robinson (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP): Madam Speaker, I will be brief because I hope there is a disposition in the House this afternoon to agree that this very important subject should in fact be studied at the earliest possible time by the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights. I commend my colleague from Winnipeg Centre for his motion to that effect.

I also want to pay tribute to my colleague, the member for Vancouver East, for the leadership and the courage that she has shown in speaking out on this issue so tirelessly and so effectively on behalf not just of her constituents in the downtown east side, but on behalf of all those who are affected by this motion. I know that the hon. member has been working on this issue from the days that she was a member of Vancouver city council many years ago and has continued tirelessly to advocate changes in this area of the law.

I too agree that the law must be changed. In fact I think the current law is steeped in hypocrisy.

As John Lowman, a respected criminologist at Simon Fraser University in my constituency has noted in a major paper that he published in 1998 on prostitution and law reform in Canada, the Criminal Code is currently very hypocritical. It tolerates off-street prostitution—and all we have to do is go to the phone book to see that with pages and pages of ads for escort agencies—but when it comes to street prostitution, there is still a glaring double standard.

Too many women are in unsafe conditions and are not treated with dignity and respect. The criminalization in this area has caused all sorts of tragedies, not the least of which was the disappearance of over 50 women from the downtown east side of Vancouver.

I am probably the only member in the House this afternoon who was in the House in the mid-1980s when the law was toughened. It was called Bill C-49. I fought against those changes at that time and said then that I believed that they would lead to a terrible injustice and I believe that again today.

Therefore I am pleased to support the hon. member's motion. In the couple of minutes that remain, I want also to ask the committee to consider, if it is possible to do so, another element of the law in

Private Members' Business

this area. That is Canada's bawdy house laws in the same area of the Criminal Code.

These are laws which are archaic, which are outdated and are too often open to serious abuse. We have seen that recently in the case of the Goliath's raid by the Calgary police. I would hope that it would be recognized that these bawdy house laws too have no place on the law books of Canada. I urge the committee to study this area as well.

I call on all members of the committee to join with the member for Vancouver East in sending this very important subject to the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights for the serious study that it deserves and hopefully to recommend that these laws be fundamentally changed, be decriminalized once and for all.

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

Some hon. members: Question.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos): The question is on the amendment. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the amendment?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos): I declare the amendment carried.

(Amendment agreed to)

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos): The next question is on the main motion, as amended. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the main motion, as amended?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Bakopanos): I declare the motion, as amended, carried.

(Motion, as amended, agreed to)

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Bakopanos): It being 2:30 p.m., the House stands adjourned until Monday next at 11 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 2:30 p.m.)

APPENDIX

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

CHAIR OCCUPANTS

The Speaker

HON. PETER MILLIKEN

The Deputy Speaker and Chairman of Committees of the Whole

MR. BOB KILGER

The Deputy Chairman of Committees of the Whole

MR. RÉGINALD BÉLAIR

The Assistant Deputy Chairman of Committees of the Whole

MS. ELENI BAKOPANOS

BOARD OF INTERNAL ECONOMY

HON. PETER MILLIKEN

HON. ANDY MITCHELL

MR. BILL BLAIKIE

MS. MARLENE CATTERALL

MR. BOB KILGER

MR. JACQUES SAADA

MR. DALE JOHNSTON

MR. JOHN REYNOLDS

HON. DON BOUDRIA

MR. LOYOLA HEARN

MR. MICHEL GUIMOND

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

First Session—Thirty Seventh Parliament

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Abbott, Jim	Kootenay—Columbia	British Columbia	CA
Ablonczy, Diane	Calgary—Nose Hill	Alberta	CA
Adams, Peter	Peterborough	Ontario	Lib.
Alcock, Reg	Winnipeg South	Manitoba	Lib.
Allard, Carole-Marie, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage	Laval East	Quebec	Lib.
Anders, Rob	Calgary West	Alberta	CA
Anderson, David	Cypress Hills—Grasslands	Saskatchewan	CA
Anderson, Hon. David, Minister of the Environment	Victoria	British Columbia	Lib.
Assad, Mark	Gatineau	Quebec	Lib.
Assadourian, Sarkis, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	Brampton Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Asselin, Gérard	Charlevoix	Quebec	BQ
Augustine, Hon. Jean, Secretary of State (Multiculturalism) (Status of Women)	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	Ontario	Lib.
Bachand, André	Richmond—Arthabaska	Quebec	PC
Bachand, Claude	Saint-Jean	Quebec	BQ
Bagnell, Larry	Yukon	Yukon	Lib.
Bailey, Roy	Souris—Moose Mountain	Saskatchewan	CA
Bakopanos, Eleni, The Acting Speaker	Ahuntsic	Quebec	Lib.
Barnes, Rex	Gander—Grand Falls	Newfoundland and Labrador	PC
Barnes, Sue	London West	Ontario	Lib.
Beaumier, Colleen, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Revenue	Brampton West—Mississauga	Ontario	Lib.
Bélaire, Réginald, The Acting Speaker	Timmins—James Bay	Ontario	Lib.
Bélangier, Mauril	Ottawa—Vanier	Ontario	Lib.
Bellemare, Eugène	Ottawa—Orléans	Ontario	Lib.
Bennett, Carolyn	St. Paul's	Ontario	Lib.
Benoit, Leon	Lakeland	Alberta	CA
Bergeron, Stéphane	Verchères—Les-Patriotes	Quebec	BQ
Bertrand, Robert	Pontiac—Gatineau—Labelle	Quebec	Lib.
Bevilacqua, Hon. Maurizio, Secretary of State (International Financial Institutions)	Vaughan—King—Aurora	Ontario	Lib.
Bigras, Bernard	Rosemont—Petite-Patrie	Quebec	BQ
Binet, Gérard	Frontenac—Mégantic	Quebec	Lib.
Blaikie, Bill	Winnipeg—Transcona	Manitoba	NDP
Blondin-Andrew, Hon. Ethel, Secretary of State (Children and Youth)	Western Arctic	Northwest Territories	Lib.
Bonin, Raymond	Nickel Belt	Ontario	Lib.
Bonwick, Paul	Simcoe—Grey	Ontario	Lib.
Borotsik, Rick	Brandon—Souris	Manitoba	PC
Boudria, Hon. Don, Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell	Ontario	Lib.
Bourgeois, Diane	Terrebonne—Blainville	Quebec	BQ
Bradshaw, Hon. Claudette, Minister of Labour	Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe	New Brunswick	Lib.
Breitkreuz, Garry	Yorkton—Melville	Saskatchewan	CA
Brien, Pierre	Témiscamingue	Quebec	Ind.

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Brison, Scott	Kings—Hants	Nova Scotia	PC
Brown, Bonnie	Oakville	Ontario	Lib.
Bryden, John	Ancaster—Dundas— Flamborough—Aldershot	Ontario	Lib.
Bulte, Sarmite	Parkdale—High Park	Ontario	Lib.
Burton, Andy	Skeena	British Columbia	CA
Byrne, Hon. Gerry, Minister of State (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency)	Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Caccia, Hon. Charles	Davenport	Ontario	Lib.
Cadman, Chuck	Surrey North	British Columbia	CA
Calder, Murray, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for International Trade	Dufferin—Peel—Wellington—Grey	Ontario	Lib.
Cannis, John	Scarborough Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Caplan, Hon. Elinor, Minister of National Revenue	Thornhill	Ontario	Lib.
Cardin, Serge	Sherbrooke	Quebec	BQ
Carignan, Jean-Guy	Québec East	Quebec	Lib. Ind.
Carroll, Aileen, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs	Barrie—Simcoe—Bradford	Ontario	Lib.
Casey, Bill	Cumberland—Colchester	Nova Scotia	PC
Casson, Rick	Lethbridge	Alberta	CA
Castonguay, Jeannot, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health	Madawaska—Restigouche	New Brunswick	Lib.
Catterall, Marlene	Ottawa West—Nepean	Ontario	Lib.
Cauchon, Hon. Martin, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada	Outremont	Quebec	Lib.
Chamberlain, Brenda	Guelph—Wellington	Ontario	Lib.
Charbonneau, Yvon	Anjou—Rivière-des-Prairies	Quebec	Lib.
Chatters, David	Athabasca	Alberta	CA
Chrétien, Right Hon. Jean, Prime Minister	Saint-Maurice	Quebec	Lib.
Clark, Right Hon. Joe	Calgary Centre	Alberta	PC
Coderre, Hon. Denis, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	Bourassa	Quebec	Lib.
Collenette, Hon. David, Minister of Transport	Don Valley East	Ontario	Lib.
Comartin, Joe	Windsor—St. Clair	Ontario	NDP
Comuzzi, Joe	Thunder Bay—Superior North	Ontario	Lib.
Copps, Hon. Sheila, Minister of Canadian Heritage	Hamilton East	Ontario	Lib.
Cotler, Irwin	Mount Royal	Quebec	Lib.
Crête, Paul	Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup— Témiscouata—Les Basques	Quebec	BQ
Cullen, Roy	Etobicoke North	Ontario	Lib.
Cummins, John	Delta—South Richmond	British Columbia	CA
Cuzner, Rodger, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister	Bras d'Or—Cape Breton	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Dalphond-Guiral, Madeleine	Laval Centre	Quebec	BQ
Davies, Libby	Vancouver East	British Columbia	NDP
Day, Stockwell	Okanagan—Coquihalla	British Columbia	CA
Desjarlais, Bev	Churchill	Manitoba	NDP
Desrochers, Odina	Lotbinière—L'Érable	Quebec	BQ
DeVillers, Hon. Paul, Secretary of State (Amateur Sport) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	Simcoe North	Ontario	Lib.
Dhaliwal, Hon. Herb, Minister of Natural Resources	Vancouver South—Burnaby	British Columbia	Lib.
Dion, Hon. Stéphane, President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs	Saint-Laurent—Cartierville	Quebec	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Discepola, Nick	Vaudreuil—Soulanges	Quebec	Lib.
Doyle, Norman		Newfoundland and Labrador	
	St. John's East		PC
Dromisky, Stan	Thunder Bay—Atikokan	Ontario	Lib.
Drouin, Hon. Claude, Secretary of State (Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec)	Beauce	Quebec	Lib.
Dubé, Antoine	Lévis-et-Chutes-de-la-Chaudière	Quebec	BQ
Duceppe, Gilles	Laurier—Sainte-Marie	Quebec	BQ
Duncan, John	Vancouver Island North	British Columbia	CA
Duplain, Claude, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food	Portneuf	Quebec	Lib.
Easter, Hon. Wayne, Solicitor General of Canada	Malpeque	Prince Edward Island	Lib.
Efford, R. John	Bonavista—Trinity—Conception	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Eggleton, Hon. Art	York Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Elley, Reed	Nanaimo—Cowichan	British Columbia	CA
Epp, Ken	Elk Island	Alberta	CA
Eyking, Mark	Sydney—Victoria	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Farrah, Georges, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	Bonaventure—Gaspé—Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Pabok	Quebec	Lib.
Finlay, John	Oxford	Ontario	Lib.
Fitzpatrick, Brian	Prince Albert	Saskatchewan	CA
Folco, Raymonde	Laval West	Quebec	Lib.
Fontana, Joe	London North Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Forseth, Paul	New Westminster—Coquitlam—Burnaby	British Columbia	CA
Fournier, Ghislain	Manicouagan	Quebec	BQ
Frulla, Liza	Verdun—Saint-Henri—Saint-Paul—Pointe Saint-Charles	Quebec	Lib.
Fry, Hon. Hedy	Vancouver Centre	British Columbia	Lib.
Gagnon, Christiane	Québec	Quebec	BQ
Gagnon, Marcel	Champlain	Quebec	BQ
Gagnon, Sébastien	Lac-Saint-Jean—Saguenay	Quebec	BQ
Gallant, Cheryl	Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke	Ontario	CA
Galloway, Roger	Sarnia—Lambton	Ontario	Lib.
Gaudet, Roger	Berthier—Montcalm	Quebec	BQ
Gauthier, Michel	Roberval	Quebec	BQ
Girard-Bujold, Jocelyne	Jonquière	Quebec	BQ
Godfrey, John	Don Valley West	Ontario	Lib.
Godin, Yvon	Acadie—Bathurst	New Brunswick	NDP
Goldring, Peter	Edmonton Centre-East	Alberta	CA
Goodale, Hon. Ralph, Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians	Wascana	Saskatchewan	Lib.
Gouk, Jim	Kootenay—Boundary—Okanagan	British Columbia	CA
Graham, Hon. Bill, Minister of Foreign Affairs	Toronto Centre—Rosedale	Ontario	Lib.
Grewal, Gurmant	Surrey Central	British Columbia	CA
Grey, Deborah	Edmonton North	Alberta	CA

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Grose, Ivan, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs	Oshawa	Ontario	Lib.
Guarnieri, Albina	Mississauga East	Ontario	Lib.
Guay, Monique	Laurentides	Quebec	BQ
Guimond, Michel	Beauport—Montmorency— Côte-de-Beaupré—Île-d'Orléans	Quebec	BQ
Hanger, Art	Calgary Northeast	Alberta	CA
Harb, Mac	Ottawa Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Harper, Stephen, Leader of the Opposition	Calgary Southwest	Alberta	CA
Harris, Richard	Prince George—Bulkley Valley	British Columbia	CA
Harvard, John	Charleswood —St. James— Assiniboia	Manitoba	Lib.
Harvey, André, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Cooperation	Chicoutimi—Le Fjord	Quebec	Lib.
Hearn, Loyola	St. John's West	Newfoundland and Labrador	PC
Herron, John	Fundy—Royal	New Brunswick	PC
Hill, Grant	Macleod	Alberta	CA
Hill, Jay	Prince George—Peace River	British Columbia	CA
Hilstrom, Howard	Selkirk—Interlake	Manitoba	CA
Hinton, Betty	Kamloops, Thompson and Highland Valleys	British Columbia	CA
Hubbard, Charles, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development	Miramichi	New Brunswick	Lib.
Ianno, Tony	Trinity—Spadina	Ontario	Lib.
Jackson, Ovid	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound	Ontario	Lib.
Jaffer, Rahim	Edmonton—Strathcona	Alberta	CA
Jennings, Marlene, Parliamentary Secretary to the Solicitor General of Canada	Notre-Dame-de-Grâce— Lachine	Quebec	Lib.
Johnston, Dale	Wetaskiwin	Alberta	CA
Jordan, Joe	Leeds—Grenville	Ontario	Lib.
Karetak-Lindell, Nancy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources	Nunavut	Nunavut	Lib.
Karygiannis, Jim	Scarborough—Agincourt	Ontario	Lib.
Keddy, Gerald	South Shore	Nova Scotia	PC
Kenney, Jason	Calgary Southeast	Alberta	CA
Keyes, Stan	Hamilton West	Ontario	Lib.
Kilger, Bob, The Deputy Speaker	Stormont—Dundas— Charlottenburgh	Ontario	Lib.
Kilgour, Hon. David, Secretary of State (Asia-Pacific)	Edmonton Southeast	Alberta	Lib.
Knutson, Hon. Gar, Secretary of State (Central and Eastern Europe and Middle East)	Elgin—Middlesex—London	Ontario	Lib.
Kraft Sloan, Karen	York North	Ontario	Lib.
Laframboise, Mario	Argenteuil—Papineau— Mirabel	Quebec	BQ
Laliberte, Rick	Churchill River	Saskatchewan	Lib.
Lalonde, Francine	Mercier	Quebec	BQ
Lanctôt, Robert	Châteauguay	Quebec	BQ
Lastewka, Walt	St. Catharines	Ontario	Lib.
Lebel, Ghislain	Chambly	Quebec	Ind.
LeBlanc, Dominic, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence	Beauséjour—Petitcodiac	New Brunswick	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Lee, Derek	Scarborough—Rouge River	Ontario	Lib.
Leung, Sophia	Vancouver Kingsway	British Columbia	Lib.
Lill, Wendy	Dartmouth	Nova Scotia	NDP
Lincoln, Clifford	Lac-Saint-Louis	Quebec	Lib.
Longfield, Judi	Whitby—Ajax	Ontario	Lib.
Loubier, Yvan	Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot	Quebec	BQ
Lunn, Gary	Saanich—Gulf Islands	British Columbia	CA
Lunney, James	Nanaimo—Alberni	British Columbia	CA
MacAulay, Hon. Lawrence	Cardigan	Prince Edward Island	Lib.
MacKay, Peter	Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough	Nova Scotia	PC
Macklin, Paul Harold, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada	Northumberland	Ontario	Lib.
Mahoney, Steve, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport	Mississauga West	Ontario	Lib.
Malhi, Gurbax, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Labour	Bramalea—Gore—Malton—Springdale	Ontario	Lib.
Maloney, John	Erie—Lincoln	Ontario	Lib.
Manley, Hon. John, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance	Ottawa South	Ontario	Lib.
Marceau, Richard	Charlesbourg—Jacques-Cartier	Quebec	BQ
Marcil, Serge, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry	Beauharnois—Salaberry	Quebec	Lib.
Mark, Inky	Dauphin—Swan River	Manitoba	PC
Marleau, Hon. Diane	Sudbury	Ontario	Lib.
Martin, Keith	Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca	British Columbia	CA
Martin, Pat	Winnipeg Centre	Manitoba	NDP
Martin, Hon. Paul	LaSalle—Émard	Quebec	Lib.
Masse, Brian	Windsor West	Ontario	NDP
Matthews, Bill	Burin—St. George's	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Mayfield, Philip	Cariboo—Chilcotin	British Columbia	CA
McCallum, Hon. John, Minister of National Defence	Markham	Ontario	Lib.
McCormick, Larry	Hastings—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington	Ontario	Lib.
McDonough, Alexa	Halifax	Nova Scotia	NDP
McGuire, Joe	Egmont	Prince Edward Island	Lib.
McKay, John	Scarborough East	Ontario	Lib.
McLellan, Hon. Anne, Minister of Health	Edmonton West	Alberta	Lib.
McNally, Grant	Dewdney—Alouette	British Columbia	CA
McTeague, Dan	Pickering—Ajax—Uxbridge	Ontario	Lib.
Ménard, Réal	Hochelaga—Maisonnette	Quebec	BQ
Meredith, Val	South Surrey—White Rock—Langley	British Columbia	CA
Merrifield, Rob	Yellowhead	Alberta	CA
Milliken, Hon. Peter	Kingston and the Islands	Ontario	Lib.
Mills, Bob	Red Deer	Alberta	CA
Mills, Dennis	Toronto—Danforth	Ontario	Lib.
Minna, Hon. Maria, Beaches—East York	Beaches—East York	Ontario	Lib.
Mitchell, Hon. Andy, Secretary of State (Rural Development) (Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario)	Parry Sound—Muskoka	Ontario	Lib.
Moore, James	Port Moody—Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam	British Columbia	CA

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Murphy, Shawn	Hillsborough	Prince Edward Island	Lib.
Myers, Lynn	Waterloo—Wellington	Ontario	Lib.
Nault, Hon. Robert, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development	Kenora—Rainy River	Ontario	Lib.
Neville, Anita	Winnipeg South Centre	Manitoba	Lib.
Normand, Hon. Gilbert	Bellechasse—Etchemins— Montmagny—L'Islet	Quebec	Lib.
Nystrom, Hon. Lorne	Regina—Qu'Appelle	Saskatchewan	NDP
O'Brien, Lawrence	Labrador	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
O'Brien, Pat	London—Fanshawe	Ontario	Lib.
O'Reilly, John	Haliburton—Victoria—Brock	Ontario	Lib.
Obhrai, Deepak	Calgary East	Alberta	CA
Owen, Hon. Stephen, Secretary of State (Western Economic Diversification) (Indian Affairs and Northern Development)	Vancouver Quadra	British Columbia	Lib.
Pacetti, Massimo	Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel	Quebec	Lib.
Pagtakhan, Hon. Rey, Minister of Veterans Affairs and Secretary of State (Science, Research and Development)	Winnipeg North—St. Paul	Manitoba	Lib.
Pallister, Brian	Portage—Lisgar	Manitoba	CA
Pankiw, Jim	Saskatoon—Humboldt	Saskatchewan	Ind.
Paquette, Pierre	Joliette	Quebec	BQ
Paradis, Hon. Denis, Secretary of State (Latin America and Africa) (Francophonie)	Brome—Missisquoi	Quebec	Lib.
Parrish, Carolyn	Mississauga Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Patry, Bernard	Pierrefonds—Dollard	Quebec	Lib.
Penson, Charlie	Peace River	Alberta	CA
Peric, Janko	Cambridge	Ontario	Lib.
Perron, Gilles-A.	Rivière-des-Mille-Îles	Quebec	BQ
Peschisolido, Joe, Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs	Richmond	British Columbia	Lib.
Peterson, Hon. Jim	Willowdale	Ontario	Lib.
Pettigrew, Hon. Pierre, Minister for International Trade	Papineau—Saint-Denis	Quebec	Lib.
Phinney, Beth	Hamilton Mountain	Ontario	Lib.
Picard, Pauline	Drummond	Quebec	BQ
Pickard, Jerry	Chatham—Kent Essex	Ontario	Lib.
Pillitteri, Gary	Niagara Falls	Ontario	Lib.
Plamondon, Louis	Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet— Bécancour	Quebec	BQ
Pratt, David	Nepean—Carleton	Ontario	Lib.
Price, David	Compton—Stanstead	Quebec	Lib.
Proctor, Dick	Palliser	Saskatchewan	NDP
Proulx, Marcel, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport	Hull—Aylmer	Quebec	Lib.
Provenzano, Carmen	Sault Ste. Marie	Ontario	Lib.
Rajotte, James	Edmonton Southwest	Alberta	CA
Redman, Karen	Kitchener Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Reed, Julian	Halton	Ontario	Lib.
Regan, Geoff, Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	Halifax West	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Reid, Scott	Lanark—Carleton	Ontario	CA
Reynolds, John, West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast	West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast	British Columbia	CA

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Ritz, Gerry	Battlefords—Lloydminster	Saskatchewan	CA
Robillard, Hon. Lucienne, President of the Treasury Board	Westmount—Ville-Marie	Quebec	Lib.
Robinson, Svend	Burnaby—Douglas	British Columbia	NDP
Rocheleau, Yves	Trois-Rivières	Quebec	BQ
Rock, Hon. Allan, Minister of Industry	Etobicoke Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Roy, Jean-Yves	Matapédia—Matane	Quebec	BQ
Saada, Jacques	Brossard—La Prairie	Quebec	Lib.
Sauvageau, Benoît	Repentigny	Quebec	BQ
Savoy, Andy	Tobique—Mactaquac	New Brunswick	Lib.
Scherrer, Hélène	Louis-Hébert	Quebec	Lib.
Schmidt, Werner	Kelowna	British Columbia	CA
Scott, Hon. Andy	Fredericton	New Brunswick	Lib.
Serré, Benoît	Timiskaming—Cochrane	Ontario	Lib.
Sgro, Judy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services	York West	Ontario	Lib.
Shepherd, Alex	Durham	Ontario	Lib.
Simard, Raymond	Saint Boniface	Manitoba	Lib.
Skelton, Carol	Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar	Saskatchewan	CA
Solberg, Monte	Medicine Hat	Alberta	CA
Sorenson, Kevin	Crowfoot	Alberta	CA
Speller, Bob	Haldimand—Norfolk—Brant	Ontario	Lib.
Spencer, Larry	Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre	Saskatchewan	CA
St-Hilaire, Caroline	Longueuil	Quebec	BQ
St-Jacques, Diane, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources Development	Shefford	Quebec	Lib.
St-Julien, Guy	Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik	Quebec	Lib.
St. Denis, Brent	Algoma—Manitoulin	Ontario	Lib.
Steckle, Paul	Huron—Bruce	Ontario	Lib.
Stewart, Hon. Jane, Minister of Human Resources Development	Brant	Ontario	Lib.
Stinson, Darrel	Okanagan—Shuswap	British Columbia	CA
Stoffer, Peter	Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore	Nova Scotia	NDP
Strahl, Chuck	Fraser Valley	British Columbia	CA
Szabo, Paul	Mississauga South	Ontario	Lib.
Telegdi, Andrew	Kitchener—Waterloo	Ontario	Lib.
Thibault, Hon. Robert, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	West Nova	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Thibeault, Yolande	Saint-Lambert	Quebec	Lib.
Thompson, Greg	New Brunswick Southwest	New Brunswick	PC
Thompson, Myron	Wild Rose	Alberta	CA
Tirabassi, Tony, Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board	Niagara Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Toews, Vic	Provencher	Manitoba	CA
Tonks, Alan, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment	York South—Weston	Ontario	Lib.
Torsney, Paddy	Burlington	Ontario	Lib.
Tremblay, Suzanne	Rimouski-Neigette-et-la Mitis	Quebec	BQ
Ur, Rose-Marie	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	Ontario	Lib.
Valeri, Tony	Stoney Creek	Ontario	Lib.
Vanclief, Hon. Lyle, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food	Prince Edward—Hastings	Ontario	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Vellacott, Maurice	Saskatoon—Wanuskewin	Saskatchewan	CA
Venne, Pierrette	Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert	Quebec	Ind. BQ
Volpe, Joseph	Eglinton—Lawrence	Ontario	Lib.
Wappel, Tom	Scarborough Southwest	Ontario	Lib.
Wasylycia-Leis, Judy	Winnipeg North Centre	Manitoba	NDP
Wayne, Elsie	Saint John	New Brunswick	PC
Whelan, Hon. Susan, Minister for International Cooperation	Essex	Ontario	Lib.
White, Randy	Langley—Abbotsford	British Columbia	CA
White, Ted	North Vancouver	British Columbia	CA
Wilfert, Bryon, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance	Oak Ridges	Ontario	Lib.
Williams, John	St. Albert	Alberta	CA
Wood, Bob	Nipissing	Ontario	Lib.
Yelich, Lynne	Blackstrap	Saskatchewan	CA
VACANCY	Perth—Middlesex	Ontario	

N.B.: Under Political Affiliation: Lib. - Liberal; CA - Canadian Alliance; BQ - Bloc Quebecois; NDP - New Democratic Party;
PC - Progressive Conservative Party; Ind. - Independent

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS BY PROVINCE

First Session—Thirty Seventh Parliament

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ALBERTA (26)		
Ablonczy, Diane	Calgary—Nose Hill	CA
Anders, Rob	Calgary West	CA
Benoit, Leon	Lakeland	CA
Casson, Rick	Lethbridge	CA
Chatters, David	Athabasca	CA
Clark, Right Hon. Joe	Calgary Centre	PC
Epp, Ken	Elk Island	CA
Goldring, Peter	Edmonton Centre-East	CA
Grey, Deborah	Edmonton North	CA
Hanger, Art	Calgary Northeast	CA
Harper, Stephen, Leader of the Opposition	Calgary Southwest	CA
Hill, Grant	Macleod	CA
Jaffer, Rahim	Edmonton—Strathcona	CA
Johnston, Dale	Wetaskiwin	CA
Kenney, Jason	Calgary Southeast	CA
Kilgour, Hon. David, Secretary of State (Asia-Pacific)	Edmonton Southeast	Lib.
McLellan, Hon. Anne, Minister of Health	Edmonton West	Lib.
Merrifield, Rob	Yellowhead	CA
Mills, Bob	Red Deer	CA
Obhrai, Deepak	Calgary East	CA
Penson, Charlie	Peace River	CA
Rajotte, James	Edmonton Southwest	CA
Solberg, Monte	Medicine Hat	CA
Sorenson, Kevin	Crowfoot	CA
Thompson, Myron	Wild Rose	CA
Williams, John	St. Albert	CA
BRITISH COLUMBIA (34)		
Abbott, Jim	Kootenay—Columbia	CA
Anderson, Hon. David, Minister of the Environment	Victoria	Lib.
Burton, Andy	Skeena	CA
Cadman, Chuck	Surrey North	CA
Cummins, John	Delta—South Richmond	CA
Davies, Libby	Vancouver East	NDP
Day, Stockwell	Okanagan—Coquihalla	CA
Dhaliwal, Hon. Herb, Minister of Natural Resources	Vancouver South—Burnaby	Lib.
Duncan, John	Vancouver Island North	CA
Elley, Reed	Nanaimo—Cowichan	CA
Forseth, Paul	New Westminster—Coquitlam—Burnaby	CA
Fry, Hon. Hedy	Vancouver Centre	Lib.
Gouk, Jim	Kootenay—Boundary—Okanagan	CA
Grewal, Gurmant	Surrey Central	CA
Harris, Richard	Prince George—Bulkley Valley	CA
Hill, Jay	Prince George—Peace River	CA

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Hinton, Betty	Kamloops, Thompson and Highland Valleys	CA
Leung, Sophia	Vancouver Kingsway	Lib.
Lunn, Gary	Saanich—Gulf Islands	CA
Lunney, James	Nanaimo—Alberni	CA
Martin, Keith	Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca	CA
Mayfield, Philip	Cariboo—Chilcotin	CA
McNally, Grant	Dewdney—Alouette	CA
Meredith, Val	South Surrey—White Rock—Langley	CA
Moore, James	Port Moody—Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam	CA
Owen, Hon. Stephen, Secretary of State (Western Economic Diversification) (Indian Affairs and Northern Development)	Vancouver Quadra	Lib.
Peschisolido, Joe, Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs	Richmond	Lib.
Reynolds, John, West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast	West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast	CA
Robinson, Svend	Burnaby—Douglas	NDP
Schmidt, Werner	Kelowna	CA
Stinson, Darrel	Okanagan—Shuswap	CA
Strahl, Chuck	Fraser Valley	CA
White, Randy	Langley—Abbotsford	CA
White, Ted	North Vancouver	CA

MANITOBA (13)

Alcock, Reg	Winnipeg South	Lib.
Blaikie, Bill	Winnipeg—Transcona	NDP
Borotsik, Rick	Brandon—Souris	PC
Desjarlais, Bev	Churchill	NDP
Harvard, John	Charleswood —St. James—Assiniboia	Lib.
Hilstrom, Howard	Selkirk—Interlake	CA
Mark, Inky	Dauphin—Swan River	PC
Martin, Pat	Winnipeg Centre	NDP
Neville, Anita	Winnipeg South Centre	Lib.
Pagtakhan, Hon. Rey, Minister of Veterans Affairs and Secretary of State (Science, Research and Development)	Winnipeg North—St. Paul	Lib.
Pallister, Brian	Portage—Lisgar	CA
Simard, Raymond	Saint Boniface	Lib.
Toews, Vic	Provencher	CA
Wasylycia-Leis, Judy	Winnipeg North Centre	NDP

NEW BRUNSWICK (10)

Bradshaw, Hon. Claudette, Minister of Labour	Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe	Lib.
Castonguay, Jeannot, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health	Madawaska—Restigouche	Lib.
Godin, Yvon	Acadie—Bathurst	NDP
Herron, John	Fundy—Royal	PC
Hubbard, Charles, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development	Miramichi	Lib.
LeBlanc, Dominic, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence	Beauséjour—Petitcodiac	Lib.
Savoy, Andy	Tobique—Mactaquac	Lib.
Scott, Hon. Andy	Fredericton	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Thompson, Greg	New Brunswick Southwest.....	PC
Wayne, Elsie	Saint John	PC

NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR (4)

Barnes, Rex	Gander—Grand Falls	PC
Byrne, Hon. Gerry, Minister of State (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency)	Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte	Lib.
Doyle, Norman	St. John's East.....	PC
Efford, R. John	Bonavista—Trinity—Conception	Lib.
Hearn, Loyola.....	St. John's West	PC
Matthews, Bill	Burin—St. George's.....	Lib.
O'Brien, Lawrence.....	Labrador	Lib.

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES (1)

Blondin-Andrew, Hon. Ethel, Secretary of State (Children and Youth)	Western Arctic	Lib.
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NOVA SCOTIA (11)

Brisson, Scott	Kings—Hants	PC
Casey, Bill	Cumberland—Colchester	PC
Cuzner, Rodger, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister	Bras d'Or—Cape Breton.....	Lib.
Eyking, Mark	Sydney—Victoria	Lib.
Keddy, Gerald.....	South Shore	PC
Lill, Wendy	Dartmouth	NDP
MacKay, Peter	Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough	PC
McDonough, Alexa.....	Halifax	NDP
Regan, Geoff, Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	Halifax West.....	Lib.
Stoffer, Peter	Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley— Eastern Shore.....	NDP
Thibault, Hon. Robert, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	West Nova	Lib.

NUNAVUT (1)

Karetak-Lindell, Nancy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources	Nunavut.....	Lib.
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ONTARIO (101)

Adams, Peter.....	Peterborough	Lib.
Assadourian, Sarkis, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	Brampton Centre.....	Lib.
Augustine, Hon. Jean, Secretary of State (Multiculturalism) (Status of Women)	Etobicoke—Lakeshore.....	Lib.
Barnes, Sue	London West	Lib.
Beaumier, Colleen, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Revenue ...	Brampton West—Mississauga.....	Lib.
Bélair, Réginald, The Acting Speaker.....	Timmins—James Bay	Lib.
Bélanger, Mauril	Ottawa—Vanier	Lib.
Bellemare, Eugène.....	Ottawa—Orléans	Lib.
Bennett, Carolyn	St. Paul's	Lib.
Bevilacqua, Hon. Maurizio, Secretary of State (International Financial Institutions) ..	Vaughan—King—Aurora.....	Lib.
Bonin, Raymond.....	Nickel Belt	Lib.
Bonwick, Paul	Simcoe—Grey.....	Lib.
Boudria, Hon. Don, Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons.....	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell.....	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Brown, Bonnie	Oakville	Lib.
Bryden, John	Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Aldershot	Lib.
Bulte, Sarmite	Parkdale—High Park	Lib.
Caccia, Hon. Charles	Davenport	Lib.
Calder, Murray, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for International Trade	Dufferin—Peel—Wellington—Grey	Lib.
Cannis, John	Scarborough Centre	Lib.
Caplan, Hon. Elinor, Minister of National Revenue	Thornhill	Lib.
Carroll, Aileen, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs	Barrie—Simcoe—Bradford	Lib.
Catterall, Marlene	Ottawa West—Nepean	Lib.
Chamberlain, Brenda	Guelph—Wellington	Lib.
Collenette, Hon. David, Minister of Transport	Don Valley East	Lib.
Comartin, Joe	Windsor—St. Clair	NDP
Comuzzi, Joe	Thunder Bay—Superior North	Lib.
Copps, Hon. Sheila, Minister of Canadian Heritage	Hamilton East	Lib.
Cullen, Roy	Etobicoke North	Lib.
DeVillers, Hon. Paul, Secretary of State (Amateur Sport) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	Simcoe North	Lib.
Dromisky, Stan	Thunder Bay—Atikokan	Lib.
Eggleton, Hon. Art	York Centre	Lib.
Finlay, John	Oxford	Lib.
Fontana, Joe	London North Centre	Lib.
Gallant, Cheryl	Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke	CA
Galloway, Roger	Sarnia—Lambton	Lib.
Godfrey, John	Don Valley West	Lib.
Graham, Hon. Bill, Minister of Foreign Affairs	Toronto Centre—Rosedale	Lib.
Grose, Ivan, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs	Oshawa	Lib.
Guarnieri, Albina	Mississauga East	Lib.
Harb, Mac	Ottawa Centre	Lib.
Ianno, Tony	Trinity—Spadina	Lib.
Jackson, Ovid	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound	Lib.
Jordan, Joe	Leeds—Grenville	Lib.
Karygiannis, Jim	Scarborough—Agincourt	Lib.
Keyes, Stan	Hamilton West	Lib.
Kilger, Bob, The Deputy Speaker	Stormont—Dundas—Charlottenburgh	Lib.
Knutson, Hon. Gar, Secretary of State (Central and Eastern Europe and Middle East)	Elgin—Middlesex—London	Lib.
Kraft Sloan, Karen	York North	Lib.
Lastewka, Walt	St. Catharines	Lib.
Lee, Derek	Scarborough—Rouge River	Lib.
Longfield, Judi	Whitby—Ajax	Lib.
Macklin, Paul Harold, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada	Northumberland	Lib.
Mahoney, Steve, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport	Mississauga West	Lib.
Malhi, Gurbax, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Labour	Bramalea—Gore—Malton—Springdale	Lib.
Maloney, John	Erie—Lincoln	Lib.
Manley, Hon. John, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance	Ottawa South	Lib.
Marleau, Hon. Diane	Sudbury	Lib.
Masse, Brian	Windsor West	NDP
McCallum, Hon. John, Minister of National Defence	Markham	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
McCormick, Larry	Hastings—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington	Lib.
McKay, John	Scarborough East	Lib.
McTeague, Dan	Pickering—Ajax—Uxbridge	Lib.
Milliken, Hon. Peter	Kingston and the Islands	Lib.
Mills, Dennis	Toronto—Danforth	Lib.
Minna, Hon. Maria, Beaches—East York	Beaches—East York	Lib.
Mitchell, Hon. Andy, Secretary of State (Rural Development) (Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario)	Parry Sound—Muskoka	Lib.
Myers, Lynn	Waterloo—Wellington	Lib.
Nault, Hon. Robert, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development	Kenora—Rainy River	Lib.
O'Brien, Pat	London—Fanshawe	Lib.
O'Reilly, John	Haliburton—Victoria—Brock	Lib.
Parrish, Carolyn	Mississauga Centre	Lib.
Peric, Janko	Cambridge	Lib.
Peterson, Hon. Jim	Willowdale	Lib.
Phinney, Beth	Hamilton Mountain	Lib.
Pickard, Jerry	Chatham—Kent Essex	Lib.
Pillitteri, Gary	Niagara Falls	Lib.
Pratt, David	Nepean—Carleton	Lib.
Provenzano, Carmen	Sault Ste. Marie	Lib.
Redman, Karen	Kitchener Centre	Lib.
Reed, Julian	Halton	Lib.
Reid, Scott	Lanark—Carleton	CA
Rock, Hon. Allan, Minister of Industry	Etobicoke Centre	Lib.
Serré, Benoît	Timiskaming—Cochrane	Lib.
Sgro, Judy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services	York West	Lib.
Shepherd, Alex	Durham	Lib.
Speller, Bob	Haldimand—Norfolk—Brant	Lib.
St. Denis, Brent	Algoma—Manitoulin	Lib.
Steckle, Paul	Huron—Bruce	Lib.
Stewart, Hon. Jane, Minister of Human Resources Development	Brant	Lib.
Szabo, Paul	Mississauga South	Lib.
Telegdi, Andrew	Kitchener—Waterloo	Lib.
Tirabassi, Tony, Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board	Niagara Centre	Lib.
Tonks, Alan, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment	York South—Weston	Lib.
Torsney, Paddy	Burlington	Lib.
Ur, Rose-Marie	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	Lib.
Valeri, Tony	Stoney Creek	Lib.
Vanclief, Hon. Lyle, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food	Prince Edward—Hastings	Lib.
Volpe, Joseph	Eglinton—Lawrence	Lib.
Wappel, Tom	Scarborough Southwest	Lib.
Whelan, Hon. Susan, Minister for International Cooperation	Essex	Lib.
Wilfert, Bryon, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance	Oak Ridges	Lib.
Wood, Bob	Nipissing	Lib.
VACANCY	Perth—Middlesex	
PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND (4)		
Easter, Hon. Wayne, Solicitor General of Canada	Malpeque	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
MacAulay, Hon. Lawrence	Cardigan	Lib.
McGuire, Joe	Egmont	Lib.
Murphy, Shawn	Hillsborough	Lib.
QUEBEC (71)		
Allard, Carole-Marie, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage	Laval East	Lib.
Assad, Mark	Gatineau	Lib.
Asselin, Gérard	Charlevoix	BQ
Bachand, André	Richmond—Arthabaska	PC
Bachand, Claude	Saint-Jean	BQ
Bakopanos, Eleni, The Acting Speaker	Ahuntsic	Lib.
Bergeron, Stéphane	Verchères—Les-Patriotes	BQ
Bertrand, Robert	Pontiac—Gatineau—Labelle	Lib.
Bigras, Bernard	Rosemont—Petite-Patrie	BQ
Binet, Gérard	Frontenac—Mégantic	Lib.
Bourgeois, Diane	Terrebonne—Blainville	BQ
Brien, Pierre	Témiscamingue	Ind.
Cardin, Serge	Sherbrooke	BQ
Carignan, Jean-Guy	Québec East	Lib. Ind.
Cauchon, Hon. Martin, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada	Outremont	Lib.
Charbonneau, Yvon	Anjou—Rivière-des-Prairies	Lib.
Chrétien, Right Hon. Jean, Prime Minister	Saint-Maurice	Lib.
Coderre, Hon. Denis, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	Bourassa	Lib.
Cotler, Irwin	Mount Royal	Lib.
Crête, Paul	Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup— Témiscouata—Les Basques	BQ
Dalphond-Guiral, Madeleine	Laval Centre	BQ
Desrochers, Odina	Lotbinière—L'Érable	BQ
Dion, Hon. Stéphane, President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs	Saint-Laurent—Cartierville	Lib.
Discepola, Nick	Vaudreuil—Soulanges	Lib.
Drouin, Hon. Claude, Secretary of State (Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec)	Beauce	Lib.
Dubé, Antoine	Lévis-et-Chutes-de-la-Chaudière	BQ
Duceppe, Gilles	Laurier—Sainte-Marie	BQ
Duplain, Claude, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food	Portneuf	Lib.
Farrah, Georges, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	Bonaventure—Gaspé—Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Pabok	Lib.
Folco, Raymonde	Laval West	Lib.
Fournier, Ghislain	Manicouagan	BQ
Frulla, Liza	Verdun—Saint-Henri—Saint-Paul— Pointe Saint-Charles	Lib.
Gagnon, Christiane	Québec	BQ
Gagnon, Marcel	Champlain	BQ
Gagnon, Sébastien	Lac-Saint-Jean—Saguenay	BQ
Gaudet, Roger	Berthier—Montcalm	BQ
Gauthier, Michel	Roberval	BQ
Girard-Bujold, Jocelyne	Jonquière	BQ
Guay, Monique	Laurentides	BQ

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Guimond, Michel	Beauport—Montmorency—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île-d'Orléans	BQ
Harvey, André, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Cooperation	Chicoutimi—Le Fjord	Lib.
Jennings, Marlene, Parliamentary Secretary to the Solicitor General of Canada	Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine	Lib.
Laframboise, Mario	Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel	BQ
Lalonde, Francine	Mercier	BQ
Lanctôt, Robert	Châteauguay	BQ
Lebel, Ghislain	Chambly	Ind.
Lincoln, Clifford	Lac-Saint-Louis	Lib.
Loubier, Yvan	Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot	BQ
Marceau, Richard	Charlesbourg—Jacques-Cartier	BQ
Marcil, Serge, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry	Beauharnois—Salaberry	Lib.
Martin, Hon. Paul	LaSalle—Émard	Lib.
Ménard, Réal	Hochelaga—Maisonneuve	BQ
Normand, Hon. Gilbert	Bellechasse—Etchemins—Montmagny—L'Islet	Lib.
Pacetti, Massimo	Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel	Lib.
Paquette, Pierre	Joliette	BQ
Paradis, Hon. Denis, Secretary of State (Latin America and Africa) (Francophonie)	Brome—Missisquoi	Lib.
Patry, Bernard	Pierrefonds—Dollard	Lib.
Perron, Gilles-A.	Rivière-des-Mille-Îles	BQ
Pettigrew, Hon. Pierre, Minister for International Trade	Papineau—Saint-Denis	Lib.
Picard, Pauline	Drummond	BQ
Plamondon, Louis	Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet—Bécancour	BQ
Price, David	Compton—Stanstead	Lib.
Proulx, Marcel, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport	Hull—Aylmer	Lib.
Robillard, Hon. Lucienne, President of the Treasury Board	Westmount—Ville-Marie	Lib.
Rocheleau, Yves	Trois-Rivières	BQ
Roy, Jean-Yves	Matapédia—Matane	BQ
Saada, Jacques	Brossard—La Prairie	Lib.
Sauvageau, Benoît	Repentigny	BQ
Scherrer, Hélène	Louis-Hébert	Lib.
St-Hilaire, Caroline	Longueuil	BQ
St-Jacques, Diane, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources Development	Shefford	Lib.
St-Julien, Guy	Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik	Lib.
Thibeault, Yolande	Saint-Lambert	Lib.
Tremblay, Suzanne	Rimouski-Neigette-et-la Mitis	BQ
Venne, Pierrette	Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert	Ind. BQ
SASKATCHEWAN (14)		
Anderson, David	Cypress Hills—Grasslands	CA
Bailey, Roy	Souris—Moose Mountain	CA
Breitkreuz, Garry	Yorkton—Melville	CA
Fitzpatrick, Brian	Prince Albert	CA
Goodale, Hon. Ralph, Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians	Wascana	Lib.
Laliberte, Rick	Churchill River	Lib.
Nystrom, Hon. Lorne	Regina—Qu'Appelle	NDP

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Pankiw, Jim	Saskatoon—Humboldt	Ind.
Proctor, Dick	Palliser	NDP
Ritz, Gerry	Battlefords—Lloydminster	CA
Skelton, Carol	Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar	CA
Spencer, Larry	Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre	CA
Vellacott, Maurice	Saskatoon—Wanuskewin	CA
Yelich, Lynne	Blackstrap	CA
YUKON (1)		
Bagnell, Larry	Yukon	Lib.

LIST OF STANDING AND SUB-COMMITTEES

(As of February 7, 2003 — 2nd Session, 37th Parliament)

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS, NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

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David Chatters	Yvan Loubier	Anita Neville	Benoît Serré	
Stan Dromisky				

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André Bachand	Reed Elley	Gerald Keddy	Jean-Yves Roy
Claude Bachand	Ken Epp	Jason Kenney	Werner Schmidt
Roy Bailey	Brian Fitzpatrick	Robert Lanctôt	Carol Skelton
Rex Barnes	Paul Forseth	Gary Lunn	Monte Solberg
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Garry Breitkreuz	Jim Gouk	Philip Mayfield	Greg Thompson
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Chuck Cadman	Art Hanger	Rob Merrifield	Elsie Wayne
Bill Casey	Stephen Harper	Bob Mills	Randy White
Rick Casson	Richard Harris	James Moore	Ted White
Joe Clark	Loyola Hearn	Lorne Nystrom	John Williams
Joe Comartin	John Herron	Deepak Obhrai	Lynne Yelich
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AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

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Paul Steckle

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CANADIAN HERITAGE

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Bob Wood
Lynne Yelich

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Reed Elley

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Dominic LeBlanc

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Keith Martin
Philip Mayfield
Grant McNally
Val Meredith
Rob Merrifield
Bob Mills
James Moore
Deepak Obhrai
Brian Pallister
Charlie Penson
James Rajotte
Scott Reid

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Svend Robinson
Werner Schmidt
Carol Skelton
Monte Solberg
Kevin Sorenson
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Vic Toews
Suzanne Tremblay
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Rob Anders	Brian Fitzpatrick	Gary Lunn	Yves Rocheleau
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André Bachand	Paul Forseth	Peter MacKay	Werner Schmidt
Claude Bachand	Cheryl Gallant	Inky Mark	Carol Skelton
Roy Bailey	Peter Goldring	Pat Martin	Monte Solberg
Sue Barnes	Jim Gouk	Brian Masse	Kevin Sorenson
Colleen Beaumier	Gurmant Grewal	Philip Mayfield	Bob Speller
Leon Benoit	Deborah Grey	Grant McNally	Larry Spencer
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Bill Blaikie	Mac Harb	Rob Merrifield	Peter Stoffer
Rick Borotsik	Stephen Harper	Bob Mills	Chuck Strahl
Garry Breitkreuz	Richard Harris	James Moore	Greg Thompson
Scott Brison	Loyola Hearn	Shawn Murphy	Myron Thompson
Andy Burton	John Herron	Lorne Nystrom	Vic Toews
Chuck Cadman	Grant Hill	Brian Pallister	Tony Valeri
Rick Casson	Jay Hill	Pierre Paquette	Maurice Vellacott
David Chatters	Howard Hilstrom	Charlie Penson	Joseph Volpe
Joe Clark	Betty Hinton	Beth Phinney	Elsie Wayne
Paul Crête	Rahim Jaffer	James Rajotte	Ted White
John Cummins	Dale Johnston	Scott Reid	John Williams
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Rick Casson	Art Hanger	Réal Ménard	Myron Thompson
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Joe Clark	Richard Harris	Rob Merrifield	Maurice Vellacott
Paul Crête	Loyola Hearn	Bob Mills	Elsie Wayne
John Cummins	John Herron	James Moore	Randy White
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Norman Doyle	Howard Hilstrom	Pierre Paquette	Lynne Yelich

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Scott Reid
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Stockwell Day	Betty Hinton		

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Maurice Vellacott
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Rick Borotsik	Jim Gouk	Inky Mark	Darrel Stinson
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Scott Brison	Deborah Grey	Philip Mayfield	Greg Thompson
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Rick Casson	Richard Harris	Val Meredith	Judy Wasylcyia-Leis
David Chatters	Loyola Hearn	Bob Mills	Elsie Wayne
Joe Clark	John Herron	James Moore	Randy White
Joe Comartin	Grant Hill	Deepak Obhrai	Ted White
John Cummins	Jay Hill	Brian Pallister	John Williams
Madeleine Dalphond-Guiral	Howard Hilstrom	Charlie Penson	Lynne Yelich

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Paul Bonwick	Richard Harris	Dan McTeague	Monte Solberg
Chuck Cadman	John Herron	Réal Ménard	Peter Stoffer
Rodger Cuzner	Howard Hilstrom	James Moore	Yolande Thibeault
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Paul Forseth			

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Mauril Bélanger	Walt Lastewka			

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Mauril Bélanger	Joe Fontana	Andy Scott	John Williams	

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Vice-Chairs:
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(16)

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Stockwell Day			

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(16)

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