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OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)

Wednesday, February 9, 2005

—

Speaker: The Honourable Peter Milliken

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, February 9, 2005

The House met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

• (1400)

[English]

The Speaker: It being Wednesday we will now have the singing of O Canada, and we will be led by the hon. member for Essex.

[Members sang the national anthem]

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Mr. Andy Savoy (Tobique—Mactaquac, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in today's integrated education system, children with disabilities are usually able to achieve the same academic successes as other children. In years gone by, this was not so.

For that reason, Donna Giberson, legally blind and suffering from epilepsy and physical disabilities, struggled with her studies and eventually quit school in the seventh grade.

Now, at the age of 62, Ms. Giberson has re-entered the seventh grade in hopes of obtaining her high school diploma.

Ms. Giberson lives in Lakeville, New Brunswick, and studies by correspondence. She spends eight hours a day, six days a week, studying with the aid of a high resolution magnifying glass.

Her hard work is paying off. She recently achieved marks of 100% on two tests and she will finish the seventh grade in the very near future. From there, it is on to the eighth grade and so on, until she receives her high school diploma.

Donna Giberson's story is an inspiration to all those who believe that learning is a lifelong experience. She has made her church, her community and her member of Parliament very proud.

* * *

NATIONAL PARKS

Mr. Rob Merrifield (Yellowhead, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our national parks, including Jasper National Park in my riding, are being neglected by the government. Infrastructure is crumbling and

maintenance is suffering. Park employees are doing their very best with the little they have but the problems are only mounting.

All we have heard about parks from the government is that it wants more of them, but it is failing to care for the ones it has. More money is needed in the upcoming budget to maintain and improve the parks' crumbling infrastructure.

One question should be asked: Why is Parks Canada's budget being used to maintain interprovincial truck routes, like the Yellowhead Highway? If the federal government expects Parks Canada to continue to maintain the Yellowhead Highway out of its operating budget, it should increase Parks Canada's budget accordingly.

Jasper Park is a jewel of the Rockies and a national treasure. Let us keep it that way.

* * *

KROEGER COLLEGE AWARD

Mr. Derek Lee (Scarborough—Rouge River, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today at Carleton University, Mr. Gerald Vandezande of Toronto will be awarded the Kroeger College Award for Ethics in Public Affairs.

This award is given to an individual or organization that has provided an inspiring example of the importance of ethics and values in public life, and Gerald Vandezande is truly a well deserving recipient.

Named to the Order of Canada in 2001, Mr. Vandezande served for 35 years as executive director and national public affairs director for Citizens for Public Justice, an organization he helped found.

Since his retirement in 1998, Mr. Vandezande has continued to volunteer his time as spokesperson with the Campaign Against Child Poverty and the Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition.

On behalf of my constituents in Scarborough where he resides, I congratulate Mr. Vandezande for this recognition of his lifelong commitment to helping those less fortunate in our society.

S. O. 31

[Translation]

PIERRE-NICOLAS TANGUAY-LÉVESQUE

Mr. Jean-Yves Roy (Haute-Gaspésie—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ): Mr. Speaker, Pierre-Nicolas Tanguay-Lévesque, a young 14-year-old downhill skier from Saint-Anne-des-Monts, recently won the prestigious Taschereau Cup giant slalom ski race at Mt. Tremblant.

Pierre-Nicholas stood out in a field of some 160 elite skiers aged 13 and 14 from Quebec and Ontario clubs. This competition is the first step toward the top level of alpine skiing. Usually, the competitors who end up at the World Cup first ski the Taschereau Cup.

It is Pierre-Nicolas Tanguay-Lévesque's dream to take part in the 2010 Olympics. He intends to do whatever he has to do to get there. The determination of people from our region to face the greatest challenges is one of the qualities that defines us.

My sincerest congratulations, once again, to Pierre-Nicholas, from Sainte-Anne-des-Monts. He truly deserves this honour.

* * *

• (1405)

[English]

SONGWRITERS HALL OF FAME

Hon. Sarmite Bulte (Parkdale—High Park, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, last night I attended the second annual Songwriters Hall of Fame gala in Toronto, at which seven songwriters and twenty-two remarkable songs were inducted.

In addition, I had the opportunity to take part in the induction of our national anthem, *O Canada*, into the Canadian Songwriters Hall of Fame.

In 1980, *O Canada* was officially proclaimed our national anthem, but even then it is a song with a history. It had been composed 100 years earlier, in 1880, by Calixa Lavallée, with lyrics by Sir Adolphe-Basile Routhier. The song caught on, gained popularity and several English versions were produced.

In 1908, Robert Stanley Weir wrote the version on which today's anthem is based. The stirring melody and patriotic lyrics in both official languages still resound with all Canadians who, "with glowing hearts...stand on guard" for this great country.

I want to commend the Songwriters Hall of Fame for its recognition of our national anthem, *O Canada*.

* * *

BLIND CURLING BONSPIEL

Mr. Werner Schmidt (Kelowna—Lake Country, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Blind Curling Bonspiel, an event that is being held this week at the Ottawa Curling Club, has brought together some of Canada's finest curlers from the west coast to the east.

The exciting tournament launches White Cane Week 2005, hosted by the Canadian Council of the Blind to raise awareness for the blind and visually impaired in Canada. The bonspiel is a testament to determination and self-sufficiency, proving that blind and visually

impaired Canadians are equally active in their communities, equipped with many abilities, not disabilities.

I wish all the curlers, in particular the team from my constituency of Kelowna, a great week of competition and thank them for their efforts in raising awareness of the challenges facing the blind and visually impaired. What they may lack in sight, they do not lack in vision.

* * *

[Translation]

HEALTH

Mr. Bernard Patry (Pierrefonds—Dollard, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, over the past few months, this government has worked with provincial and territorial partners on the Canadian Healthy Living Strategy encouraging Canadians to eat a balanced diet and be more active.

I am pleased to highlight the initiative announced today by the Canadian restaurant industry. In fact, the major restaurant chains have made a voluntary commitment to apply the industry guidelines aimed at making nutritional information available to their clients.

The program will begin with 23 restaurant chains representing nearly 9,000 establishments throughout the country. And this is just a start. Other companies will be joining this initiative in the months that lie ahead.

By year's end, these restaurants will be providing brochures detailing the nutritional information on the main items on their menus.

The information will be provided in the same format as for food products sold in stores.

Some restaurants have already been providing nutritional information for years but now this information will be more accessible and consistent for clients.

I would like to congratulate the restaurant industry for this excellent initiative.

* * *

SAINT-HUBERT PEE-WEE HOCKEY TOURNAMENT

Mrs. Carole Lavallée (Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert, BQ): Mr. Speaker, on Sunday, February 6, the 25th Saint-Hubert provincial pee-wee hockey tournament got underway. By the time the final game is played on February 20th, more than 800 players on 52 teams from all over Quebec will have faced each other on the rinks of Saint-Hubert.

The theme of the tournament is winning fair and square. Over the next few weeks the tournament will welcome many sports and media personalities. In addition to supporting the development of minor hockey in Saint-Hubert, the various tournament activities will also be raising money for cystic fibrosis.

Credit for many successful years of this event goes to the organizing committee and the 250 volunteers who contribute to making this a memorable experience for these young athletes.

The Bloc Québécois wants to pay special tribute to the exceptional work of the 13th president, Mario Beaudoin.

* * *

TSUNAMI RELIEF

Hon. Eleni Bakopanos (Ahuntsic, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on December 26, we witnessed the destruction caused by the tsunami and the despair it left in its wake in South Asia.

[English]

Once again, Canadians from coast to coast showed their compassion and readiness to help those who lost everything.

That is why I rise here today, to pay homage to two of my constituents for their exceptionally hard work to help their fellow Sri Lankans. It is Mrs. Malarvilyhi and Mr. Ratnasamy Thevasigamany, as well as two leading members of the Sri Lankan community in Montreal, Ramani and Pery Balendra.

On my behalf and on behalf of all the members, I want to thank them. I also want to thank them for their input and comments which helped us to understand the pressing needs in the affected areas.

• (1410)

[Translation]

I want to add also that we were deeply moved by this tragedy. Once again Canada has demonstrated that its humanitarian reputation is well deserved.

* * *

[English]

BRUCE—GREY—OWEN SOUND

Mr. Larry Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this week Sean Edward Sprague, a 15 year old young man from Meaford, Ontario, received the Governor General's Medal of Bravery.

Sean helped rescue a teenager trapped under a wall that had collapsed in a house by digging the rubble with his bare hands for 40 minutes. I would like to commend Sean for his selfless act while putting himself in danger. Sean is a fine example of the youth of the country and the leadership of the future.

I would also like to pay tribute to the city of Owen Sound and the Owen Sound Police Services for securing the bid to host the 2007 Ontario Special Olympics Provincial Winter Games. More than 450 people will come to Owen Sound to compete in six sporting events from February 1 to February 4, 2007.

This is the first time a provincial games has been awarded to a community in the Bruce-Grey area and the first time a community the size of Owen Sound has been awarded the Ontario provincial games.

On behalf of my constituents, I would like to congratulate everyone involved in bringing the Ontario Special Olympic Winter Games to our community.

S. O. 31

OTTAWA CITIZEN

Hon. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, all of us in public office have a responsibility in what we do and say, not to use language that is hurtful or which can cause social unrest. The same applies to the media.

On January 13, the *Ottawa Citizen* headlined the following, "Clarence-Rockland hires language police". It was false. The city in question was merely passing a bylaw about commercial signage.

The following day the same newspaper headline was, "French revolution", an equally irresponsible message. Since then there have been bomb threats at city hall and at the day care centre in the municipality, police protection for municipal elected officials and hate messages to all of us in public office in the region.

I call upon the once proud *Ottawa Citizen*, on this its 150th anniversary, to issue a public front page apology to my constituents, and to its readers generally. Nothing less is acceptable.

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PAY EQUITY

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, on February 14, the Pay Equity Network, a group of national, provincial and local women's equality-seeking organizations, will launch a campaign, calling on the Liberals to introduce federal pay equity legislation.

The Pay Equity Network was established because of the government's inaction when it comes to ending the salary discrimination faced by women in the country.

The work has already been done. In May 2004 the federal pay equity report was issued. It concluded that pay equity was a fundamental right. Yet Canadian women are still waiting. The time has come for the government to take action and implement its own report.

The Pay Equity Network has requested meetings with the Ministers of Labour, Justice, the Minister responsible for Status of Women and the Prime Minister to present a call for action which has been endorsed by over 150 organizations across the country. I encourage the ministers and the Prime Minister to take time and meet with them.

The message to the Liberals is clear: this Valentine's Day, show her that they really care; give her equal pay.

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VAL O'DONOVAN AND KLAUS WOERNER

Mr. Gary Goodyear (Cambridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to two outstanding community leaders from my riding of Cambridge and the region of Waterloo who sadly passed away this week.

Val O'Donovan was the founder of Com Dev, a company based in Cambridge, and the largest Canadian-based designer and manufacturer of space hardware subsystems.

Oral Questions

Klaus Woerner, a personal friend, was the founder, president and CEO of ATS tooling of Cambridge. Klaus was a supporter of the arts and our education systems and an innovator in both tooling and solar power.

Both gentlemen immigrated to Canada with humble beginnings. They truly represented the epitome of the Canadian dream.

The world has lost two innovative business leaders. The country has lost two adventurous entrepreneurs. Our community has lost two generous philanthropists. And I have lost a friend.

I know the House will join me in my sincere condolences to their families.

* * *

[Translation]

MONIQUE FITZ-BACK

Mr. Bernard Bigras (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, we were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Monique Fitz-Back.

Trained as a teacher, she had worked as a co-operant in Africa and was long involved in the CSQ, but she mainly made a name for herself by co-founding the green schools program, Établissements verts Brundtland.

She spearheaded a real crusade to make these schools places where people think globally and act locally to protect our future and keep our ecosystems intact.

In 1999, she was inducted into the Cercle des Phénix de l'environnement and in 2002 she received Silver in the environmental learning category in the Canadian Environment Awards. In 2004 she was named one of the Coalition Eau Secours honorary water carriers.

The Bloc Québécois extends its most sincere condolences to the family and friends of Monique Fitz-Back.

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•(1415)

[English]

CHINESE NEW YEAR

Mr. Gurmant Grewal (Newton—North Delta, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today marks the start of the Chinese New Year, the Year of the Rooster. This is the biggest, most important festival of the year.

Chinese, Koreans, Vietnamese and other Asians around the world are celebrating the lunar new year with traditional festivities to ring in spring, until the full moon, with the Lantern Festival. It is an important time for fresh starts. It includes customs that date back thousands of years, from honouring ancestors to cleaning houses to colourful parades.

We should be mindful of the many contributions made by Chinese-Canadians, including to the Canadian railroads. We also remember the difficulties and discrimination they have endured, including the head tax and Canada's exclusionist immigration policy. This is a time for Canadians to appreciate all that multiculturalism

brings to this great nation and to remember that our diversity is an asset.

On behalf of the Conservative Party of Canada, I wish everyone a Happy New Year.

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INDUSTRY

Mr. Don Bell (North Vancouver, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on January 25, I was extremely pleased to announce, on behalf of Minister of Industry and Industry Canada, a contribution of up to \$4.2 million toward the refit and modernization of the Queen of Oak Bay ferry in my riding of North Vancouver. This financing support will be delivered through Industry Canada's structure financing facility, SFF, program, to Victoria-based ferry operator British Columbia Ferry Services Incorporated.

I am pleased to report that this work has already begun, and is scheduled to be completed in June.

The ferry transportation system on the west coast is a critical service to residents and to the tourism industry. By supporting this project, the Government of Canada is helping to create and maintain jobs for B.C. shipyard workers.

This project is valued at approximately \$40 million and will provide 214 person years of employment for the local industry.

It is this kind of commitment to one of our province's most vital industries that further highlights the government's steadfast commitment to creating prosperity in British Columbia.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM

Hon. Stephen Harper (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday Mr. Chrétien demonstrated contempt for the inquiry, for the truth and for taxpayers. He stonewalled. He showed no remorse. He took no responsibility. He gave flippant answers, and of course he had the support of everyone in the Liberal Party while he did it, cheering him on.

Does the Prime Minister condone this attitude of his predecessor?

Hon. Scott Brison (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday Mr. Chrétien appeared before the Gomery commission as an individual. As an individual, he has rights to defend himself before a judicial inquiry. I am appalled that the Leader of the Opposition does not understand the rights of individuals to defend themselves before a judicial inquiry.

Last week the hon. member asked the Prime Minister to involve himself in witness tampering, to tell Mr. Chrétien what to do in front of a judicial inquiry. It was inappropriate then. It is inappropriate today. We believe in the independence of the Gomery commission.

Oral Questions

Hon. Stephen Harper (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal Party showed its contempt for the judicial process yesterday, and the Prime Minister is showing his contempt by not being here to answer questions today, and he should be—

The Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition knows that it is improper to refer to the absence of members in the House. While he may wish to make that point, it is improper to do so in the course of debate in the House. If one member can refer to the absence of another, we will have a free-for-all on who is not here every day. This is quite out of order and I would ask the Leader of the Opposition to refrain from comments of that kind. He can refer to the fact that the Prime Minister perhaps did not answer the question, but that is about as far as he is permitted to go.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition will put his question.

• (1420)

Hon. Stephen Harper: Mr. Speaker, I guess his presence would not make any difference on that score.

Mr. Chrétien may not have provided much information, but he had no difficulty pointing the finger at his successor, saying that his successor had been part of approving all unity and sponsorship programs and partisan use of the money.

Let me read my question into the record. Is the Prime Minister saying that Mr. Chrétien lied to the inquiry?

Hon. Scott Brison (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as the Prime Minister has said previously, he was aware of the unity fund. In fact the unity fund existed going back to the early 1990s. It was created by the former Progressive Conservative government. When the Liberals came to power, there were reserves across the government, most of which have in fact been eliminated. The reserve was maintained in keeping with established accounting principles and budgetary practice. Our government has chosen a different approach, and consequently the unity reserve was eliminated in the last budget.

Hon. Stephen Harper (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, of course the Prime Minister only acknowledged the existence of the fund after he first denied it.

[*Translation*]

Yesterday, Mr. Chrétien said that in order to help the federal Liberal Party, millions of taxpayers' dollars could be used for Canadian unity.

Can the Prime Minister confirm that Mr. Chrétien's version is accurate?

[*English*]

Hon. Scott Brison (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am surprised that the member can even stand in the House and utter the word unity when in 1994, when Canada was teetering on the edge of the abyss before the referendum in Quebec, we had the Leader of the Opposition, at that time as a private citizen, giving a speech saying that he did not care whether Canada ended up with one national capital, two national capitals or three national capitals. He did not care about national unity then, and he does not care about national unity today.

Mr. Peter MacKay (Central Nova, CPC): Mr. Speaker, ironically, let us talk about where that member was. He was a member of this party and a vocal critic of the man he now defends every day in the House of Commons. What a hypocrite.

[*Translation*]

The Liberals' real post-referendum strategy was to keep Jean Chrétien quiet. The masquerade is not over. Every time he opens his mouth, he sows the seeds of discord and contempt for institutions.

Tomorrow, will the Prime Minister finally dissociate himself from this sabotage and work in good faith with the inquiry?

[*English*]

Hon. Scott Brison (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let us be clear. In 1994, I was a member of a moderate, centrist, progressive party. I still am a member of a moderate, centrist, progressive party. The hon. member is not.

Mr. Peter MacKay (Central Nova, CPC): And now, Mr. Speaker, he is a member of a corrupt—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order, please. Perhaps we could have a little order. I cannot hear a word that is being said. The hon. member for Central Nova has the floor.

Mr. Peter MacKay: Mr. Speaker, yesterday Jean Chrétien's highly publicized, highly scripted ball juggling routine at the Gomery commission revealed just how arrogant and corrupt this government is, and all efforts to get to the bottom of the ad scam will be averted.

Prior to embarking on his mad as hell tour, the Prime Minister repeatedly denied knowledge of the sponsorship or unity programs. Yet in testimony, Mr. Chrétien clearly stated that the Prime Minister was his ad scam partner, in charge of setting aside \$50 million annually. Why is the Prime Minister not—

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Public Works and Government Services.

Hon. Scott Brison (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again the Prime Minister has acted decisively, as has the government. We have appointed Justice Gomery to do his work. We have the special counsel on financial recovery who has made his recommendations. We are moving forward on that front. We have introduced whistleblower legislation.

In fact, we are making a real difference here, while on the other side of the House those members attack the positive changes we are making here in our government, based on the courage and the leadership of our Prime Minister, to defend taxpayers' interests at all times in the Government of Canada. That is the right thing to do and I am proud we are doing it.

Oral Questions

• (1425)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, Jean Chrétien has told the Gomery commission that following the referendum the entire cabinet was united in its determination to do what was necessary to fight Quebec sovereignty. Jean Chrétien added that the recommendations of the Massé report, which emphasized increasing Canada's visibility in Quebec, were all unanimously approved by cabinet.

Since they sat at the cabinet table, will the Prime Minister and some of his colleagues who were there admit that right from the start they were solidly in favour of operation unity, which led to the sponsorship scandal?

[*English*]

Hon. Scott Brison (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, all members of cabinet certainly stood up to defend Canada at a time when it was in crisis, at a time when unity was threatened.

Yes, the Government of Canada stood up to defend unity in Canada and we will continue to defend unity in this great multicultural masterpiece of Canada.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, it is amusing to hear that all the ministers stood up to defend Canada and to use taxpayers' money to buy Quebecers, while there are none here who will stand up to answer questions.

These ministers can no longer plead ignorance.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

[*English*]

The Speaker: Order, please. I point out that we are in question period now, not debate. Debate comes later in the day. We will have that anon. If members want to carry on a debate now during question period, I suggest they go out in the foyer and do it there.

[*Translation*]

The hon. leader of the Bloc Québécois.

Mr. Gilles Duceppe: Mr. Speaker, these ministers can no longer plead ignorance. They tried to distance themselves from Jean Chrétien when he left in order to please the new Prime Minister. Now Jean Chrétien has caught up with them and said, "You were all involved with me in this". Let them admit it.

[*English*]

Hon. Scott Brison (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again the hon. member is commenting on daily testimony. Why does he not wait for Justice Gomery to finish his work and to report back to Canadians with his recommendations? That is what he ought to be doing, because he and others in the opposition demanded a judicial inquiry. They got their judicial inquiry. Why are they trying to subvert the work of that same judicial inquiry today?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Michel Guimond (Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord, BQ): Mr. Speaker, in his appearance before the Gomery

inquiry yesterday, Jean Chrétien testified that, during his mandate, the former finance minister and present Prime Minister was in agreement with allocating \$50 million annually for the secret Canadian unity fund.

That being the case, how can the present Prime Minister deny that it was he, who by injecting \$50 million into the Canadian unity reserve year after year, funded the sponsorship scandal?

Hon. Scott Brison (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has already said that the fund dates back to the early 1990s, that it was set up by the previous government, and that, when the Liberals took over, there were funds all over Canada, most of which have since been eliminated.

[*English*]

The reserve was in keeping with the established budgetary practice of setting aside policy reserves for specific contingent purposes. Our government has chosen a different approach and, as such, the reserve no longer exists.

• (1430)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Michel Guimond (Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord, BQ): Mr. Speaker, yesterday Jean Chrétien stated that all sponsorship program expenditures were approved by the Treasury Board. Some half-dozen cabinet members were on the Treasury Board, including the present PM, who was vice-president.

Faced with such categorical statements, how can anyone, who was a member of the Treasury Board, and was financing the secret unity fund to the tune of \$50 million a year, still maintain that he was totally in the dark? No one is buying that. The Prime Minister did know.

[*English*]

Hon. Scott Brison (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the fact is again that the Prime Minister has said in the House he was aware of the unity reserve. This is not a big secret. In fact, it is part of the overall accounting practices of the Government of Canada that was made as part of a transparent budgetary process.

I do not know what the hon. member is talking about. The fact is, he does not know what he is talking about because he is commenting on daily testimony before a judicial inquiry. I know the Cons do not understand the independence of the judiciary, but I hope the Bloc really does.

* * *

TRADE

Mr. Jack Layton (Toronto—Danforth, NDP): Mr. Speaker, while we watch the spectacle of the inquiry into Liberal misdeeds, Canadian jobs are marching out of this country to other countries. More than that, they are doing it with the tacit encouragement of the Minister of Industry.

Oral Questions

Yesterday the Liberal Minister of International Trade said that outsourcing Canadian jobs was good, that it made sense for Air Canada to fix its planes in El Salvador instead of Vancouver, sense to make textiles abroad instead of in Winnipeg or Montreal, and that cars should be made in Mississippi, not Windsor.

It is a shipping tycoon's dream. Why pay a dollar when there is somebody in poverty who will take a dime? Is this official policy and why?

Hon. Jim Peterson (Minister of International Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what I said then, what I have said previously and what I will say today is that the best way to protect Canadian jobs and keep the Canadian job market growing is to be globally competitive. If we are not globally competitive, then we are inevitably going to lose jobs. This is the message we are taking to all Canadians.

We want Canadian companies to be globally competitive because that is the way the jobs are going to stay in Canada.

Mr. Jack Layton (Toronto—Danforth, NDP): Mr. Speaker, that answer is absolute fiction. Trade is good, but fair trade is essential. We cannot have fair trade while we are dealing with countries that use slave labour, countries that have fixed currencies, countries that do not respect human rights and countries that pay their workers pennies a day. That is not fair.

In fact, that kind of trade is open season on Canadian workers, communities and small businesses, and it has to stop. Under whose authority is the minister saying that somehow it is a good thing to fire Canadians and send their jobs offshore?

Hon. Jim Peterson (Minister of International Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is absolutely critical in our globalized economy that our Canadians have access to the very best inputs or they will not remain globally competitive. If they are not globally competitive, we are going to lose those jobs in Canada.

We have seen examples of how companies can source from various places around the world and still remain globally competitive and grow here in Canada, and Canada has the best job creation record in the G-7.

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NATIONAL REVENUE

Mr. Monte Solberg (Medicine Hat, CPC): Mr. Speaker, if this government would heed the advice of the Conservative Party and cut taxes, there would be jobs staying in Canada. It was Don Drummond who recently argued that the government must cut taxes and give Canadians a national pay hike, but the Prime Minister during the election campaign spoke in grave tones about how that would drive Canada into deficit.

That is what the Liberals said during the election campaign. Then they fought against our throne speech amendments to lower taxes for middle income and low income Canadians. When will the Prime Minister admit that he was wrong? When will he admit that Canadians need tax relief and the government can afford tax relief?

Hon. John McCallum (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this government is no stranger to tax cuts. The hon. member seems to have forgotten that in the year 2000 we had a \$100 billion tax cut, the largest in Canadian history. Is his memory so brief?

As for the future, he has two weeks to wait until the budget comes down.

• (1435)

Mr. Monte Solberg (Medicine Hat, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Don Drummond's report put the lie to that story we just heard from the revenue minister. The fact is that during the reign of the Liberals Canada pension plan taxes have gone through the roof, wiping out any of the good that was done by the tax cuts that the Liberals allegedly brought down.

The government said it had a surplus of \$1.9 billion. It turned out to be \$9.1 billion. We were right. The Liberals were wrong. When are we going to get tax relief for Canadians?

Hon. John McCallum (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has no choice but to wait until two weeks from today, at which time the budget will come down, but as I have said before, he seems to have forgotten the massive tax cut brought in by the Liberal government in the year 2000, the largest in Canadian history. It is evident that this government favours tax cuts, as our record demonstrates.

* * *

TRADE

Ms. Belinda Stronach (Newmarket—Aurora, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I find it absolutely shocking that the trade minister yesterday said he would not weep for Canadian jobs lost to cheap labour markets in China and India.

Essentially what the minister has said is that he does not care about the hard-working Canadian men and women who might lose their jobs because the government has not shown enough leadership to ensure that the jobs stay here in the first place. What is the minister going to do to keep jobs here in Canada and create new jobs here in Canada?

Hon. Jim Peterson (Minister of International Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the way that we keep the high paying, value added jobs here in Canada is to be globally competitive. The hon. member opposite who just asked this question knows very well that setting up plants in other parts of the world can be part of a Canadian strategy to keep the best jobs here in Canada.

Ms. Belinda Stronach (Newmarket—Aurora, CPC): Mr. Speaker, for over a decade Canadian productivity has been lagging behind that of our major trading partners. Today Canadian companies are facing even greater challenges competing in this global marketplace, and the trade minister's response is, "Too bad, so sad".

Oral Questions

Rather than lecturing Canadian companies that are doing their best to compete globally, when will the government come forward with an industrial strategy that lowers taxes, attracts foreign investment, promotes skills training and upgrades transportation and border infrastructure?

Hon. David Emerson (Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government has invested \$13 billion in science and technology over the last seven years. That is the fundamental way we are going to drive productivity and increase the competitiveness of the Canadian economy. We are dealing with border issues, we are dealing with infrastructure, and my hon. colleague is dealing with trade issues.

* * *

[Translation]

CLOTHING AND TEXTILE INDUSTRIES

Mr. Pierre Paquette (Joliette, BQ): Mr. Speaker, as we know the government ignored the motion that was passed to help the people of Mirabel whose land was expropriated. Yesterday, Parliament passed the Bloc Québécois motion calling on the federal government to substantially improve its aid package for the clothing and textile industries.

Can the government promise, for once, to respect the will of Parliament and do what is necessary to provide concrete help to the clothing and textile industry?

[English]

Hon. David Emerson (Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the textile industry, like other industries in this country and elsewhere in the world, is going through a tremendous transformation. This government has reduced tariff inputs for the textile and apparel industry. We put an additional \$50 million over five years into helping them to retool, to find new market niches and to put new capital and technology in place. We will have a competitive textile industry here in Canada.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Paquette (Joliette, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the minister's comments show that in addition to the people of Mirabel, older workers, the unemployed, young people and women, the government, through its inaction, is now getting ready to abandon clothing and textile industry workers as well.

Does the Minister of Industry realize that in addition to all the fine speeches, solid intervention is urgently needed to help the clothing and textile industries and to prevent the loss of thousands of jobs?

[English]

Hon. David Emerson (Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are ahead of the Bloc on this issue. We announced this policy before Christmas. The policy is being implemented. We have extended the duty remission plan. We are ready to take applications to help companies to transform their capital and their plants, and their technology, so those workers can have good paying, secure jobs well into the future.

• (1440)

[Translation]

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Mr. Yves Lessard (Chambly—Borduas, BQ): Mr. Speaker, most of the workers who are losing their jobs these days are older workers. Training programs do not respond to their needs. What they need is a program to make the transition between the end of their employment and retirement.

Instead of limiting its assistance to training alone, does the minister intend to set up a real assistance program for older workers to facilitate the transition toward retirement after they lose their job?

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are very aware of this difficulty faced by older workers when they are laid off, especially after working for many years in a manufacturing sector, and have a hard time re-entering the labour force. That is why we have had and still have, in partnership with the provincial governments, projects to help us find the best way to assist these workers. These projects are available right now.

Mr. Yves Lessard (Chambly—Borduas, BQ): Mr. Speaker, let us be clear. The POWA is the responsibility of the federal government. An older worker who loses his job a few years before his retirement may not necessarily need training. POWA demonstrated its usefulness in 1995. To lose one's job a few years short of retirement is as hard on workers today as it was in 1995.

Does the minister believe that the POWA is no longer useful? If not, does she intend to revive it immediately?

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I intend to continue working with my provincial counterparts, who are also responsible for certain programs. We are not talking only about manpower training. We are also talking about active measures for these people. Some want to stay in the labour market; those need to be able to adjust to new realities. It is in that context that we are pursuing projects with the provinces.

* * *

[English]

SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM

Mr. James Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what Jean Chrétien and this Liberal Party have not figured out about sponsorship is that taking money from taxpayers and giving it to friends in the Liberal Party is not national unity. It is a national disgrace.

Montreal has lost the aquatic games and taxpayers are on the hook for \$16 million with nothing to show for it, except lots of unanswered questions about how it was spent by the Prime Minister's fundraising friend Serge Savard.

When will the Liberals learn that supporting companies run by their friends is not the best way to attract important events to Canadian cities?

[Translation]

Hon. Jacques Saada (Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec and Minister responsible for the Francophonie, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada Economic Development did indeed have a contract with ISM. That contract was later renewed. Canada Economic Development bases its work not on the individuals who manage the business, but on the specific objectives of that business and the results achieved. We are now reviewing the results achieved by ISM and we will make a decision accordingly.

Mr. James Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Montrealers are sad and worried. The Liberals involved in the Internationaux du Sports de Montréal have vanished, like imposters.

Will the Minister of Transport order an inquiry on the use of the \$16 million poured into Serge Savard's empty pool?

Hon. Jacques Saada (Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec and Minister responsible for the Francophonie, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada Economic Development only pays a company or an organization such as ISM when bills are submitted. This means that all the amounts paid met the terms of the contract signed.

In the case of ISM, the answer is very clear. The contract ended in December and we rejected a request to extend it. We are reviewing ISM's file. Should ISM submit a claim later on, our assessment will be based on our findings as to whether or not the objectives were achieved.

* * *

[English]

PUBLIC WORKS AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Mr. Rahim Jaffer (Edmonton—Strathcona, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Public Works and Government Services is hiding behind WTO trade agreements as his excuse for selling off the Canadian flag. However, China is only an observer to the agreement on government procurement and, therefore, we are not bound by its terms when dealing with China.

Why does the minister still claim that he is bound by this agreement? Is it because he is too lazy to read the agreement? Maybe it is too complicated or maybe it has too many words.

Hon. Scott Brison (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his constructive, non-partisan question.

I would like to quote today from William Watson, an economist at McGill University, who said:

The public works minister followed with another sensible argument: We're a trading nation and if we want to sell our goods in other countries, we have to be open to buying theirs.

Further, Professor Watson said, "If we don't buy from the Chinese, the Chinese may not buy from us". If every country adopted that attitude, where would we be? How much wheat could Canadians

eat? How many Bombardier Challengers or Nortel switches or Chevy Impalas could we buy? Far fewer than we produce today.

• (1445)

Mr. Rahim Jaffer (Edmonton—Strathcona, CPC): Mr. Speaker, first the Prime Minister sells his flag to Barbados and now the public works minister has sold the Canadian flag to China. Of course, this is a minister whose own mother was once quoted as saying he would do anything to earn a little extra money.

Is it the policy of the Liberals or just this minister to sell off Canada to the lowest bidder?

Hon. Scott Brison (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my dear—

The Speaker: Order, please. The hon. Minister of Public Works and Government Services has the floor. We do not need everyone to pretend he is his mother.

Hon. Scott Brison: Mr. Speaker, my dear, sweet, 76 year-old mother would be delighted to think that she was brought up here on the floor of the House of Commons. In fact, she is very proud that all her children worked very hard to better themselves and do whatever they could, even as little children, working hard to do their best to get ahead and to help this country get ahead.

Beyond that, I will tell him one thing I would not do to earn a little money. I would not have a staff member pretend he was me on a radio show while I was selling coffee in my coffee shop.

* * *

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mr. Anthony Rota (Nipissing—Timiskaming, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, could the government please update the House on the status of the search and rescue operation now underway in the Baltic Sea for Canadian Forces Leading Seaman Robert Leblanc?

Hon. Keith Martin (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I regret to inform the House of the tragic incident that occurred yesterday in the Baltic Sea on the HMCS *Montreal*. Leading Seaman Robert Leblanc was lost at sea. On behalf of the government and indeed all members of the House, we extend our profound condolences to the Leblanc family and thank our allies for their efforts in trying to recover him.

* * *

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, our party extends its condolences to the family as well.

My question, to switch topics for a moment, is for the Minister of Natural Resources.

After more than a decade of dithering and stalling on the Kyoto plan, we now find ourselves scrambling at the 11th hour and the 11th minute. The Liberals have come up with a shopping list for the truly delusional.

Oral Questions

We are looking to buy hot air in Russia and spend billions of dollars there while Canadians choke on fumes here. We are looking at letting big polluters off the hook entirely for their responsibility for cleaning up the mess we are in now. We still provide subsidies to the oil and gas and coal industries while we ask Canadians to do less—

The Speaker: I do not know if there is a question there. Does the Minister of Natural Resources wish to respond?

Hon. R. John Efford (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Yes, Mr. Speaker. Very quickly and very simply, all the points that the hon. member just made are absolutely false.

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Wonderful, Mr. Speaker, some more dithering and stalling. I am wondering if the reason the Liberal Party has hired a Newfoundland comedian to promote its Kyoto plan is because the plan is a joke.

Will the minister stand in the House today and commit to Canadians that there will be no more stalling and no more dithering for an auto emission standard in this country that Canadians can believe in once and for all in order to answer our commitment to Kyoto?

Hon. R. John Efford (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me assure the hon. member that the government is not dithering and it is not stalling. The hon. member is doing a lot of dithering and stalling around, but we will deliver a Kyoto plan. We are working with all of the industries so all Canadians can be very proud.

• (1450)

Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the finance minister's solution to achieving the Kyoto targets is a robust plan of buying hot air from foreign countries. Here is a news flash. We could use a lot of that money for infrastructure here in Canada. We could use it for coal gasification, biomass development, geothermal co-generation of garbage and countless other technologies.

Why would the government buy hot air credits when there is plenty of homegrown technology here in Canada?

Hon. Stéphane Dion (Minister of the Environment, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I have already said to my colleague, the sole hot air that we have heard in the House has come from his party. It is not the plan of the Government of Canada at all to do that.

In the coming weeks we will come with a new plan for Kyoto. It will be very interesting to see what the opposition will say about it because I hope it will be at least a constructive opposition working with all Canadians to reach our Kyoto targets.

Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there are thousands of Canadians living near government owned toxic waste sites, thousands more have boil water warnings, our national parks are in disrepair, real air pollution chokes our cities, and the government wants to buy hot air credits offshore.

Will the minister today assure us that not one penny will leave this country to get to our Kyoto targets?

Hon. Stéphane Dion (Minister of the Environment, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this is the challenge. We will compare what I will receive from my finance colleague with the zero commitment that my colleague received from the finance critic of the Conservative Party.

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

Mr. Jim Prentice (Calgary Centre-North, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on the heels of Liberal mismanagement of the residential school claims, a disturbing CBC report now outlines another Liberal embarrassment. It is more money, more misery and more victims.

In Davis Inlet the Liberals spent \$350 million, \$400,000 per person, yet the results are clear. There are more pregnancies, more family violence and fewer children finishing high school. The basic programs have not been met.

What is the minister going to do about this?

Hon. Andy Scott (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member touches on probably one of the most difficult situations that exists for aboriginal people in Canada. It is a situation that has been 50 years in the making and it will not be fixed overnight.

Having said that, three weeks ago I met with the president of the Innu nation. I met with the chiefs in both Sheshatshiu and Natuashish. They recommended a course of action for both our government and that of Newfoundland and Labrador. We are looking at that because we are interested in positively affecting the lives of these people.

Mr. Jim Prentice (Calgary Centre-North, CPC): Mr. Speaker, perhaps the minister could tell the House what that course of action is because last night Canadians saw the face of Innu despair and hopelessness.

The government is failing aboriginal people in this country. Canadians have lost faith in the Liberal government to investigate mismanagement. After a shameful decade of all talk and no action, the government has nothing to show for it.

Will the minister commit to ask the Auditor General to review all of his department's expenditures?

Hon. Andy Scott (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to accept the challenge that the government has to deal with the questions of Natuashish and Sheshatshiu and I accept that responsibility; however, when that member says we are failing aboriginal Canadians, after the round table, after the Tlicho agreement, he has it all wrong.

Oral Questions

[Translation]

AEROSPACE INDUSTRY

Mr. Paul Crête (Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, BQ): Mr. Speaker, on October 28, 2004, the Ministers of Industry, International Trade and Transport announced amid great fanfare that the government was providing financial guarantees of up to \$1.5 billion to enable Bombardier to sell its regional jets to Air Canada. Although construction of the jets has already begun, the concrete terms of this loan guarantee have yet to be decided, and Bombardier is being left to its own devices.

Can the government tell us what it needs to get moving and finalize its loan guarantee? Some 13 planes have already been delivered to Air Canada.

• (1455)

[English]

Hon. David Emerson (Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the program is in fact in place. It is called the regional aircraft credit facility. We are negotiating with Bombardier at the moment. We are negotiating on appropriate terms and conditions that will protect the taxpayers of Canada and provide the appropriate assistance to the aerospace industry of Canada, and specifically in this case to Bombardier.

[Translation]

Mr. Paul Crête (Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I remind the minister that Bombardier has already commenced delivery of the jets for Air Canada. The ball is now in the minister's court.

Does he intend to act responsibly and honour his commitment to Bombardier, announced with great fanfare on October 28? Enough time has already gone by.

[English]

Hon. David Emerson (Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are committed to the aerospace industry in this country. We are committed to Bombardier. We will honour our commitment, but we are not going to shovel the taxpayers' money out without appropriate due diligence being done.

* * *

MIDDLE EAST

Mr. Ted Menzies (MacLeod, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is dithering over the international policy review and has handed it off to a Liberal academic. Despite claims in the House yesterday that the foreign affairs minister single-handedly spawned the entire Middle East peace process, yesterday all he could come up with was another fact finding mission.

Is it not true that when it comes to foreign policy, the minister is just making it up as he goes along?

Hon. Dan McTeague (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think that question was made up as it went along.

I want to assure the House that the nature of our policy review is both complex and very comprehensive. As the hon. member will know, because one of his members is attending the situation as it

unfolds in the Middle East, it is important to recognize that the idea of policy review with respect to foreign policy is important. It is comprehensive. Canadians were involved in this. It deals with a number of elements, including the right to protect in failing states, and of course the whole issue of globalization. These are critical issues and we take them seriously.

Mr. Ted Menzies (MacLeod, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have a foreign affairs minister cruising the world between pit stops to his pied-à-terre in Paris and a Prime Minister who has to get up extra early to choose which socks to wear.

Canadians expect the government to stop dithering, follow the leadership shown by Conservatives, and help establish a viable independent Palestinian state alongside a secure Israel.

Will the minister commit new funding for institution building in Palestine?

Hon. Dan McTeague (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am glad the hon. member finally got it and dealt with one of the issues that is important to all Canadians, indeed the world today, the issue of the Middle East. I think he was finally able to get it in the last part of his question.

On the subject of the Middle East, it is important to understand that we will work with our counterparts to ensure there is a lasting and just peace. Canada is there to help not only in terms of refugee settlement but we also believe it is important that Canada, given the large number of people who are from that region, may have an extremely important role to play in terms of ensuring that we have a lasting and sustainable peace in that region.

* * *

[Translation]

INTERNET PHARMACIES

Hon. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health. Advertisements are now appearing in the United States announcing a new way to empty Canada's medicine chest. So-called Canadian resellers are selling prescription drugs directly to American pharmacies, thus going around the Internet drugstores.

I would like to know what the Minister of Health intends to do about this new twist in the sad tale of the Internet pharmacies and their offspring?

[English]

Hon. Ujjal Dosanjh (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this development is just one more example of why we need to deal with protecting the pricing regime for Canadians and the affordable supply of drugs. We intend to do just that.

*Routine Proceedings***EQUALIZATION PROGRAM**

Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, no matter how you look at it, the Minister of Finance has clearly turned his back on the people of Saskatchewan with respect to equalization. Had Saskatchewan received the same deal as Newfoundland and Labrador and Nova Scotia, it would have meant an additional \$4 billion in revenue to the province over the past decade.

Rather than make excuses, will the Minister of Finance or his designate answer one question: Are you prepared to give the same deal to Saskatchewan that you gave to Newfoundland and Labrador and Nova Scotia?

• (1500)

The Speaker: The member knows he must address his remarks to the Chair, who of course does not hand out anything.

The hon. Minister of National Revenue I believe is going to answer the question.

Hon. John McCallum (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, while I cannot match the eloquence of the Minister of Finance on the subject of Saskatchewan, I would remind the hon. members who seem to have forgotten that Saskatchewan has only recently achieved the status of a have province. Instead of being mired in the world of have not clamouring for subventions, members should take on the positive attitude of a have province forging forward, as is the attitude of this government.

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AGRICULTURE

Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it has come to my attention that Agriculture Canada together with Equine Canada has decided that it is urgent to register horses in Canada, thereby creating a sequel to the Liberal gun registry. The facts are that most horse owners do not know about this proposal, nor are they members of Equine Canada.

I am curious as to why the minister has committed \$300,000 to this proposal. Could he enlighten the rest of Canada as to why he wants to register horses?

Hon. Wayne Easter (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food (Rural Development), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture is always interested in positive change for the industry and moving it forward. If we are to continue programming for the industry, we need to work with the industry in terms of how it wants to move forward. That is exactly what the minister is doing in this regard.

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[Translation]

MATHIEU LAFOND

Mr. Benoît Sauvageau (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, on December 26, 2004, Mathieu Lafond lost his life in the Asian tsunami. His body has been found but DNA evidence must be obtained before his body can be brought home. This procedure usually takes 48 hours. Forty-four days later, Mathieu Lafond's family is still waiting.

Is the government prepared to send a Canadian delegation, including a physician to Thailand to do the DNA test and speed up the repatriation of Mathieu Lafond's body?

Hon. Dan McTeague (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for raising this question about Mr. Lafond.

[English]

Out of respect for the privacy of the family, I cannot, unfortunately, discuss details of specific cases in public. I want to assure the hon. member that officials are indeed working with our officials both here in Ottawa and in Bangkok in order to ensure that the repatriation happens as soon as possible and is consistent, not only taking into account the privacy of the individual who is deceased, but also taking into account the importance of local laws as they relate to the matter.

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NATIONAL SECURITY

Mr. Wajid Khan (Mississauga—Streetsville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in a world where terrorism poses a threat, constituents in my riding understand we need security measures. However, they also expect the government to understand their concerns about the impact of policies and to ensure we get the balance right.

Earlier this year the government proposed a cross-cultural round table on security. Could the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness update the House on when this round table will be established?

Hon. Roy Cullen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for Mississauga—Streetsville for his continuing interest in this matter.

As the member knows, when our government introduced Canada's first national security policy, we committed to launch a cross-cultural round table on security. Yesterday the government announced the membership of that committee. Its first meeting will be in early March. The round table will serve as a forum to discuss the impact of national security policy on diverse communities. It is an important commitment as we move to safeguard Canada, and unlike the Leader of the Opposition, respect Canadian multiculturalism.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1505)

[Translation]

INTERPARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS

Mr. Bernard Patry (Pierrefonds—Dollard, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34(1), I have the honour to present to the House, in both official languages, the report of the parliamentary delegation of the Canadian Branch of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie, the APF, on the 10th Summit of La Francophonie in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso from November 23 to 27, 2004.

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

Hon. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present the 26th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs on parliamentary reform concerning the electronic filing of notification.

If the House gives its consent, I intend to move concurrence in the 26th report later this day.

* * *

[English]

CANADA ELECTIONS ACT

Mr. David Chatters (Battle River, CPC): moved for leave to introduce Bill C-324, an act to amend the Canada Elections Act (public information programs).

He said: Mr. Speaker, my private member's bill is designed to address an issue which took place in the last federal election whereby Elections Canada decided to institute a public education program targeted at a limited number of ridings. I objected to Elections Canada. I was not happy with the answer and therefore we drafted the bill.

I think it is unacceptable during the writ period for Elections Canada to get involved in a process that could skew the outcome of the election in a riding.

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

* * *

DIVORCE ACT

Mr. David Chatters (Battle River, CPC) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-325, an act to amend the Divorce Act (right of spouses' parents to access to or custody of child).

He said: Mr. Speaker, this private member's bill is designed to address an issue which I have been involved with for many years. It is the issue of grandparents' rights, grandparents' involvement with grandchildren in the case of divorce or separation.

Certainly from my experience and that of thousands of other grandparents across the country, grandparents work very hard to influence the lives of their grandchildren when a marriage falls apart and devastates the children. The bill is simply designed to recognize some rights for grandparents in the lives of their grandchildren when divorce happens.

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

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• (1510)

[Translation]

CANADA-ISRAEL FREE TRADE AGREEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACT

Mr. Pierre Paquette (Joliette, BQ) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-326, an act to amend the Canada-Israel Free Trade Agreement Implementation Act.

Routine Proceedings

He said: Mr. Speaker, today I am tabling a bill to limit the application of the Canada-Israel Free Trade Agreement to goods produced in territories recognized by the international community and the United Nations. Products from territories occupied by Israel since 1967 would not benefit from the advantages provided in the agreement signed in the mid 1990s.

I am certain that passing this bill, in keeping with Canada's policy of equal treatment of the parties, will contribute to reopening the roadmap to peace and will ensure a lasting peace between Israel and Palestine.

In closing, I want to thank the hon. member for Trois-Rivières for seconding my bill.

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

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COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

Hon. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if the House agrees, I move that the 26th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, presented to the House earlier this day, be concurred in. This report supports the electronic submission of notices.

The Speaker: Does the hon. member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell have the consent of the House to move the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Speaker: The House has heard the terms of the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

* * *

[English]

PETITIONS

AUTISM

Mr. Chuck Strahl (Chilliwack—Fraser Canyon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions to present today on behalf of constituents of British Columbia.

The first petition has to do with supporters of children with autism. They point out that the only treatment at this time for autism is for intensive behaviour intervention based on the principles of applied behaviour analysis.

They have asked that the Canada Health Act and corresponding regulations recognize that and that we not only accept that in the Canada Health Act, but we also create academic chairs at the university level to deal with this terrible disease.

MARRIAGE

Mr. Chuck Strahl (Chilliwack—Fraser Canyon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the second petition is signed by people within my riding. It concerns the definition of marriage.

Routine Proceedings

The petitioners believe that a marriage is a voluntary union of one man and one woman and they ask that Parliament use all possible legislative and administrative measures to preserve and protect that current definition of marriage.

AUTISM

Mr. Mark Warawa (Langley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I also have two petitions to present today.

The first petition is from hundreds of Langley residents also dealing with the issue of autism. They ask that the treatment of autism be considered a medically necessary treatment and require that all provinces provide this essential treatment. They also ask for the creation of academic chairs at universities in each province.

MARRIAGE

Mr. Mark Warawa (Langley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my second petition is on the definition of marriage. The petitioners call upon the House of Commons to enact legislation in support of the traditional definition of marriage being between a man and a woman.

Mrs. Rose-Marie Ur (Lambton—Kent—Middlesex, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present a petition on behalf of the Dresden Community Church members in the riding of Lambton—Kent—Middlesex who call upon Parliament to use all possible legislative and administrative measures, including invoking section 33 of the charter if necessary, to preserve and protect the current definition of marriage as between one man and one woman.

• (1515)

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Hon. Larry Bagnell (Yukon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I would like to table a petition from 29 Yukon residents who express their support for non-proliferation arms control and disarmament and reject any plans for weapons in space, including missile defence.

AUTISM

Hon. Larry Bagnell (Yukon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, the second petition, which was provided to me by the hon. member for Don Valley West, is from 26 people who, similar to a previous petition, want to amend the Canada Health Act and regulations to include intensive behavioural intervention therapy for children with autism as medically necessary treatment and to contribute to the creation of academic chairs to teach applied behavioural analysis and the resulting intensive behavioural intervention therapy for graduates and undergraduates in Canadian universities.

SUDAN

Mr. Tony Martin (Sault Ste. Marie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I would like to present a petition on behalf of approximately 3,000 people who say that the grievous situation in Darfur, Sudan has resulted in the deaths of at least 70,000 civilians, with more than 10,000 dying each month and close to two million forcibly displaced from their homes, and that action be taken to provide protection for the people of Darfur by bolstering the mission of the African Union and widening its mandate to include the protection of civilians.

Further, they call upon the Canadian government to exercise greater leadership in the United Nations to energize the international community to take seriously its responsibility to protect the people of Darfur.

TRANS FATS

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I have two petitions to present today. The first petition urges Parliament to implement the motion on eliminating trans fats from Canada's food supply.

AUTISM

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the second petition, as other members have noted, is a petition with respect to autism. The petitioners urge Parliament under regulations to implement the therapies and the academic chairs as outlined in the petition.

MARRIAGE

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have one petition to present to the House today.

The petitioners recognize that the best foundation for society, families and children is marriage in the traditional sense.

The petitioners ask that since it is the exclusive domain of Parliament to uphold the traditional definition of marriage, they want to ensure that marriage in federal law is defined as the union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others.

Mr. Leon Benoit (Vegreville—Wainwright, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions to present on behalf of Canadians who believe that in fundamental matters of social policy, it should be people elected to Parliament who make decisions on those issues.

The petitioners also support the current definition of marriage which is supported by a majority of Canadians. They urge Parliament to use all possible legislative and administrative measures to uphold the definition of marriage as the union of one man and one woman.

Mrs. Lynne Yelich (Blackstrap, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my constituents from Guernsey, Drake, Jansen, Watrous, Plunkett and Lanigan are asking us as parliamentarians to protect the definition of marriage.

The petitioners urge that the definition of marriage be defined as the lifelong union between one man and one woman. They state that it is the best foundation for families and for raising children.

The petitioners pray that Parliament will define marriage in federal law and that it be the lifelong union of one man and one woman.

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege for me to submit a large number of petitions from residents right across Canada with regard to the issue of marriage.

Routine Proceedings

The petitioners draw the attention of the House to the fact that the majority of Canadians believe that fundamental matters of social policy should be decided by elected members of Parliament and not the unelected judiciary; that the majority of Canadians support the current legal definition of marriage as the voluntary union of a single man and a single woman; and that it is the duty of Parliament to ensure that marriage is defined as Canadians wish it to be defined.

They therefore petition Parliament to use all possible legislative and administrative measures, including invoking section 33 of the charter if necessary, to preserve and protect the current definition of marriage as between one man and one woman.

Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I am also pleased to present a petition signed by a number of Canadians, including some from my own riding of Mississauga South.

The petitioners point out that the majority of Canadians believe that the fundamental matters of social policy should be decided by members of Parliament and not by unelected judges. They also point out that the majority of Canadians support the current legal definition of marriage as the voluntary union of a single male and a single female.

They therefore petition Parliament to use all possible legislative and administrative measures, including invoking section 33 of the charter, known as the notwithstanding clause, if necessary, to preserve and protect the current definition of marriage as between one man and one woman as two-thirds of Canadians agree.

• (1520)

Mr. Maurice Vellacott (Saskatoon—Wanuskewin, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this petition is from a number of people in my own riding of Saskatoon—Wanuskewin.

The petitioners draw the attention of the House to the fact that since the dawn of civilization marriage has been the union of one man and one woman, and that in 1999 Parliament voted in favour of an opposition motion that marriage is and should remain the union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others.

The petitioners therefore call upon Parliament to support the traditional, historic and sacred definition of marriage.

JUSTICE

Mr. James Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have three petitions.

I am pleased to present a petition signed by constituents from my riding of Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam and neighbouring communities.

The petition cites the Chinese detainment and torture of Falun Gong practitioner, Kunlun Zhang, who is a Canadian citizen.

The petitioners wish to draw Parliament's attention to the human rights abuses against Falun Gong practitioners in China and call upon the government to prosecute those who torture Falun Gong practitioners.

AUTISM

Mr. James Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in the second petition that I am pleased to

present, the petitioners cite children suffering from autism spectrum disorder as being among the weakest and most vulnerable citizens in Canadian society.

The petitioners believe that until a cure is found, children with autism can benefit from the provision of intensive behavioural intervention therapy treatment based on the principles of applied behavioural analysis.

Therefore the petitioners from my riding call upon Parliament to amend the Canada Health Act and regulations to include different forms of therapy as a medically necessary treatment and to require that provinces provide funding for this autism treatment, and to contribute to the creation of a university chair in order to provide this treatment.

CRIMINAL CODE

Mr. James Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my third and final petition from my constituents recognizes that date rape drugs, GHB and Rohypnol, as drugs used in common sexual assault.

They call upon Parliament to amend the Criminal Code to treat these drugs as date rape drugs, establish a national initiative to educate women on the dangers of date rape drugs and to establish a national task force to develop new guidelines in the collection and documentation of evidence in sexual assault investigations.

FISHERIES

Mr. John Cummins (Delta—Richmond East, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have a petition here today from residents of British Columbia concerned about the mismanagement of the Fraser River fishery in 2004 and the committee that the minister has appointed to investigate the mismanagement. The committee is not functioning as it should. The chairman has failed to disclose conflicts that he has which could affect the result of that review.

The petitioners are calling upon Parliament to require the minister to have a judicial inquiry into the mismanagement.

MARRIAGE

Mr. Rob Merrifield (Yellowhead, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to stand, pursuant to Standing Order 36, to present three petitions on behalf of the residents of Yellowhead.

The petitioners say that a strong family is the foundation of a strong country. They ask that the government preserve the definition of marriage as between a man and a woman.

All three petitions say the same thing and all are from very concerned citizens of Yellowhead.

*Government Orders***QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURNS**

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if Question No. 47 could be made an order for return, the return would be tabled immediately.

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[Text]

Question No. 47—**Mr. Yvon Godin :**

Since 1993: (a) what parcels of land owned by the Department of National Defence have been cleaned up; and (b) what were the clean-up costs for each parcel?

(Return tabled)

[English]

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc: I would ask, Mr. Speaker, that all remaining questions be allowed to stand.

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

• (1525)

[Translation]

MOTIONS FOR PAPERS

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I ask that all notices of motions for the production of papers be allowed to stand.

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS**QUARANTINE ACT**

The House proceeded to the consideration of Bill C-12, an act to prevent the introduction and spread of communicable diseases, as reported (with amendment) from the committee.

[English]

SPEAKER'S RULING

The Speaker: There are 14 motions in amendment standing on the notice paper for the report stage of Bill C-12.

[Translation]

Motion No. 2 will not be selected by the Chair as it is similar to an amendment defeated in committee.

Motions Nos. 3 and 4 will not be selected by the Chair as they require a Royal Recommendation.

Motion No. 13 will not be selected by the Chair as it could have been presented in committee.

[English]

All remaining motions have been examined and the Chair is satisfied that they meet the guidelines expressed in the note to Standing Order 76(5) regarding the selection of motions in amendment at the report stage.

Motions No. 1, 5 to 12 and 14 will be grouped for debate and voted upon according to the voting pattern available at the table.

[Translation]

I shall now propose Motions Nos. 1, 5 to 12 and 14 to the House.

[English]

MOTIONS IN AMENDMENT

Hon. Joe Comuzzi (for the Minister of Health) moved:

Motion No. 1

That Bill C-12, in Clause 5, be amended by replacing, in the French version, line 15 on page 3 with the following:

“professionnel de la santé qualifié à titre d'agent de”

Motion No. 5

That Bill C-12, in Clause 20, be amended by adding after line 7 on page 7 the following:

“(1.1) The health assessment shall be undertaken as soon as reasonably practicable but in any case within 48 hours after the quarantine officer requires the traveller to undergo it.”

Motion No. 6

That Bill C-12, in Clause 23, be amended by replacing line 6 on page 8 with the following:

“this right.”

Motion No. 7

That Bill C-12, in Clause 26, be amended by replacing, in the French version, line 1 on page 9 with the following:

“ordonner de se soumettre à un traitement ou à toute autre mesure visant à prévenir”

Motion No. 8

That Bill C-12, in Clause 33.1, be amended by replacing line 12 on page 12 with the following:

“authority of any province concerned if”

Motion No. 9

That Bill C-12, in Clause 33.1, be amended by replacing, in the French version, lines 35 and 36 on page 12 with the following:

“d) la façon dont il aurait contracté la maladie transmissible ou serait devenu infesté”

Motion No. 10

That Bill C-12, in Clause 40.1, be amended by replacing lines 28 to 30 on page 15 with the following:

“40.1 No person is required”

Motion No. 11

That Bill C-12, in Clause 40.1, be amended by replacing lines 28 and 29 on page 15 with the following:

“40.1 No operator of the conveyance, employee of an owner of the conveyance or employee of any person using it for the”

Motion No. 12

That Bill C-12, in Clause 40.2, be amended by replacing line 37 on page 15 with the following:

“public health authority of any province con-”

Motion No. 14

That Bill C-12, in Clause 57, be amended by replacing, in the French version, lines 11 and 12 on page 22 with the following:

“f) la façon dont le voyageur aurait contracté la maladie transmissible ou serait devenu infesté”

Government Orders

Hon. Robert Thibault: Mr. Speaker, prior to entering into debate, I would raise a point of order, and you may guide me as to whether this is the proper time to do it. In your ruling on which amendments were acceptable and which were not, you did not rule against Motion No. 14. It would be my opinion that Motion No. 14 was not contemplated by the original drafting instructions approved by cabinet, and therefore was not included in the royal recommendation, as it seeks to make compensation mandatory for damage or destroyed goods or conveyances.

The Speaker: We will look into the matter. I have put Motion No. 14 to the House. If there is an error, I will get back to the House in a moment. However, I note it is the minister's motion.

Hon. Robert Thibault: No, Mr. Speaker, this is not the minister's motion. This is a motion moved by the member for Nanaimo—Alberni.

The Speaker: I think the hon. member is working from a different notice paper. Motion No. 14, which I just put, was moved by the Minister of State for Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario for the Minister of Health. I think that disposes of the point of order. The parliamentary secretary may now wish to debate the collection of motions now before the House.

Hon. Robert Thibault (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I not only stand corrected, but I stand before the House to present Bill C-12, as amended and reported by committee. As members may recall, Bill C-36 was the first attempt to modernize one of Canada's oldest pieces of legislation, the Quarantine Act. This bill was introduced in the last parliamentary session on May 12, 2004, but died on the order paper when the election was called.

On October 8 of 2004, the Government of Canada introduced Bill C-12 into the House of Commons, the newly proposed Quarantine Act, an act to prevent the introduction and spread of communicable diseases arriving into Canada.

The Quarantine Act is an essential tool to prevent communicable diseases from entering the country, spreading throughout the population, and from spreading outside of our borders. That is why these amendments to the act, which have not been significantly modernized since 1872, are a priority at this time.

During the clause by clause review, members of the Standing Committee on Health made significant contributions toward strengthening the bill. During witness testimony, committee members listened to the issues raised by external stakeholders and put forward amendments to reflect their ideas or concerns. Common themes emerged throughout this process and in the spirit of collaboration, resolution was achieved, meeting the expectations of all parties. This comprehensive bill reflects the efforts and commitment of dedicated members and responds to the modern challenges of public health in the 21st century.

As we know, report stage provides the House with an opportunity to further refine Bill C-12. In response to this legislative review process, the Government of Canada has taken the liberty to introduce report stage amendments to the bill. These amendments are minor and technical in nature, but critical in terms of producing an optimal piece of legislation to protect the health and safety of Canadians.

They will add clarity to the bill and remedy drafting oversights largely due to the accelerated pace of this examination process.

In the spirit of collaboration, it is my wish that House members demonstrate ongoing support for the work and contribution made toward strengthening the bill on behalf of the Standing Committee on Health.

• (1530)

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the bill. We have been through the bill clause by clause, and it is an important bill to support.

There are a couple of concerns. We need to be very proactive around dealing with things like the SARS crisis, and perhaps the bird flu. We need to be very conscious about developing regulations around this. We have seen that it can be an incredibly slow and tedious process. Therefore, it is critical that we get off the mark on it.

The use of screening officers is a major concern. It appears that we will be forcing customs officers to take on another role, that of medical professional. This would be on top of their present duties, including enforcing the Customs Act, looking for potential terrorists and stopping material that could harm our flora and fauna. It is too much to expect one group to enforce that many rules effectively. We need close consultation with our colleagues at customs.

The Canadian Nursing Association pointed out that the emerging diseases often have unique symptoms. Screening officers will have to be continually trained and supported to ensure they know what to watch for. A bad cough is not only the sign of a potential epidemic. The bill does not explain how this system would be supported over time.

One lesson we learned from the SARS epidemic was the lack of coordination and official communication responsibilities during the crisis. Again, the Canadian Nursing Association recommends that the chief public health officer and the Public Health Agency of Canada should have a critical role in any epidemic or suspected epidemic. They were not included in the bill because enabling legislation to create that position and organization is still being written.

We urge the government to act quickly on the legislation. Everyone who spoke to the committee emphasized how important it was to have a clear authority.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Réal Ménard (Hochelaga, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak on behalf of the Bloc Québécois on Bill C-12 to update the Quarantine Act. Since this act dates back to the 19th century, the proposed amendments will modernize it and make it workable and more in line with today's various epidemiological contexts.

Government Orders

The Bloc Québécois supports the principles behind the bill, and raised a number of questions in committee. We need to realize first the ways epidemics spread in the 18th and 19th centuries are completely different the way they spread today. People were far less mobile, and if they did travel it was mainly by train. Nowadays, the major vectors in the transmission of epidemics include means of transportation such as aircraft. Certain provisions of the act will require all carriers to report any illness or death occurring on board before they arrive in Canada.

It is important to understand that the Quarantine Act has nothing to do with control mechanisms within the country. Those are the responsibility of the various public health agencies. Its purpose is rather to focus on the transmission of epidemics at the various Canadian entry and exit points.

In its present form, the bill requires travellers who have a communicable disease, or who have been in close proximity to a person who has a communicable disease, to present themselves to a screening officer or quarantine officer, so that a number of controls can be performed.

I must say that, throughout its proceedings, the Standing Committee on Health was concerned that the travellers who will be checked by a screening officer or a quarantine officer should have various forms of recourse available to them. For example, a number of committee members proposed amendments that were adopted to ensure that the controls performed by quarantine officers are carried out within a reasonable period of time. We felt that this period should be less than 48 hours.

As we know, the Quarantine Act gives to the Minister of Health the power to establish quarantine zones. We may think that these quarantine zones will be created primarily in airport facilities, but they will not necessarily be limited to these areas. If the Bloc Québécois has one regret, this is it. Even though we worked in relative harmony in committee, and even though the Bloc Québécois supports the objectives of this legislation, we would have liked the bill to clearly state that a quarantine zone and perimeter cannot be established without the approval of the health authorities involved.

Let us take the very specific example of the Dorval Airport. If, among a group of travellers arriving from Sri Lanka—I am giving this example to illustrate my point—a source of infection is identified, in this specific case, we would have liked the quarantine zone to be established only with the approval of the Quebec health and social services department.

This is why the Bloc Québécois proposed amendments which, unfortunately, were not adopted by the committee and, consequently, by the government.

We had many debates in committee, including on SARS. Although it is particularly relevant to Toronto and Ontario, the committee members asked specific questions. It is true that this bill will enable the minister to make regulations concerning a number of very important definitions and questions.

• (1535)

We considered whether it would be relevant to be able to offer compensation to people held in a quarantine zone and possibly prevented from returning to their work or families for 24, 48 or 72

hours. We wondered if it might not be a good idea to compensate those people.

Of course, it is not easy to set a standard. Some colleagues mentioned the average industrial wage. I think the minister should look into the question again.

Being in quarantine does involve some restriction of personal freedom and possibly being deprived of the right to work. However, the amendment on this was not adopted by the committee. I believe the chair did not want to agree to this kind of amendment in case it would commit public funds and thus require a royal recommendation.

We also looked at the responsibility of the operators of facilities, for example, an airport where quarantine has been declared. Obviously, an emergency is involved. The parliamentary secretary reminded us in committee that the Quarantine Act has not been used in the past 100 years. It is not therefore a everyday measure.

However, to the extent that the Quarantine Act is invoked, what responsibility should this government and Parliament assign to those running such facilities? In fact, they will have to give up their space, their equipment and collaborate with the government as is to be expected in socio-health crises. Personally, I must say that I agree with the idea of granting some type of compensation.

This is the fear, among others, of airline representatives. It must be recognized that often the airlines and their staff are the ones coming into contact with the passengers arriving at their facilities. Airports could be induced to give up part of their facilities. We are comfortable with the idea that there would be some compensation for this.

There is another provision in the bill, a schedule that cabinet will be able to review. This schedule lists a number of diseases that could result in quarantine. Some of the ones identified are viral. Others were added to the list based on changes in medicine.

In committee, we made sure, if it ever became necessary to add a disease or infection to the list in Schedule I of the bill, that the conditions were in place to allow this to be done quite quickly.

We therefore believe this is an exceptional bill in that it should be used in unusual situations. The aim of this bill is to make the Quarantine Act even more effective.

The Bloc Québécois will support this bill and the main amendments included in the notice paper. I believe that all the members did a good job in committee. In fact, we clearly understand that such a bill was essential in a world where germs and diseases can assume proportions that, today, require our vigilance as citizens and as parliamentarians.

Government Orders

• (1540)

[English]

Mr. Rob Merrifield (Yellowhead, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the people of Yellowhead and as vice-chair of the House of Commons health committee, it is a pleasure for me to speak at report stage of Bill C-12.

Bill C-12 is an important piece of legislation. It deals with individuals who may be carrying a communicable disease, travellers who are arriving by airplane or ship. It also deals with conveyances.

We have not really dealt with the Quarantine Act since 1872. This is the first time we have looked at it since that period of time, which was certainly long before air travel. We can imagine some of the changes that have transpired in our country since that time.

Bill C-12 is very important. The alarms went off with the spread of SARS in our country. When SARS first came into the nation we really did not know what it was. Canada was the nation that actually alerted the world to the threat of SARS. There was no name for it at the time; we really did not know what we were looking at.

It is interesting now when we see what actually transpired. We were very quick to realize that we are only a plane ride away from any communicable disease that perhaps is ravaging the world at any particular time. It is very important that we have a piece of legislation that can protect the nation from an onslaught of this type of disease.

There are other diseases such as the avian flu. We understand it began in poultry. I was at the agriculture committee yesterday. We had a review of the avian flu in birds which devastated the province of British Columbia. The World Health Organization is very concerned about the avian flu. It has now mutated. Dozens of deaths have occurred due to the avian flu in southeast Asia. We understand the potential of a global threat and perhaps a pandemic coming from a mutation of this one disease.

In light of SARS and in light of the advent of the onslaught of this disease around the world, it is very important that we look at this legislation. It was very important back when SARS hit, yet the government tabled the bill shortly before it decided to call an election. It was more important to play politics than it was to protect the nation.

My party believes that the number one thing a government can provide for its citizens is protection. That did not seem to be a priority back then, but it is a priority now. I am pleased that the health committee was able to seriously look at the legislation, review it, update it and offer some necessary changes.

There was good cooperation in the committee. I compliment the parliamentary secretary for his cooperative work on our concerns. The committee was able to achieve many amendments to this piece of legislation prior to report stage. From that aspect I think we are quite pleased with some of the things contained in Bill C-12. I am quite concerned with a couple of amendments that were deemed out of order.

For example, in clause 6 the bill talks about compensation for airports. I believe that after royal assent six airports will have to provide space for use by a quarantine officer. The airports will be

obligated to provide not only the space but also all the fixtures to go along with it, such as heating and electricity, free of charge.

It is interesting that the government would put this kind of an onus on the airport authorities across the country. At one time the airports were federally run and controlled but now that is not the case. The airports are controlled by airport authorities. The airport authorities are paying a significant amount of money into the federal coffers. It is actually a tax upon our airport system and there is a real debate in the country as to whether that is fair. It puts our airlines at a considerable disadvantage to other airlines and airports around the world.

• (1545)

I believe that last year alone the airport authorities paid \$235 million in rent for those facilities. As part of that rent they are providing services to the Canada Border Services Agency, the Department of Citizenship and Immigration, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, Health Canada, Transport Canada, the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority and the RCMP. That is part of the arrangement that is included in the package.

Now six airports will be called upon to provide extra space. They will have cough that up without being able to recoup the cost. We all know there is only one way to recoup the cost and that is to raise the price of airline tickets. We are quite concerned about that.

The Quarantine Act is used very seldom, and rightfully so. It should be used very seldom. It removes a tremendous amount of rights and privileges that citizens of this country have. When the act is applied and those rights are removed, they are being removed for a greater good, which is the safety of the nation.

We believe the act should be applied very seldom, but when applied it should be applied very aggressively. The Quarantine Act will only work as long as it is complied with. It is very important that be the way we proceed.

Another amendment we put forward addressed the issue of a hotel being quarantined and everyone setting up shop in it. The hotel owner would not be compensated under this piece of legislation. In fact, the legislation indicates that it may or may not be compensated. It is purely at the discretion of the minister. We think that is a power we could have addressed in the regulations.

We will certainly be looking at the regulations when they come forward. We want to make sure there is as strong an indication as possible that the "may" will be more than just a suggestion and that it will compel the government of the day to be fair with its citizens. We do not believe that any one individual should be on the hook for protecting the nation. When an individual protects the nation, the nation should also protect the individual. That becomes a principle of fairness which we believe the legislation should reflect.

I am quite disappointed that a few minutes ago the Speaker ruled these amendments inadmissible. We were not allowed to present them in committee. We wanted to present them at report stage. We think they are valid and would be accepted by individual members of the House. The parliamentary secretary and I have talked about this and he actually agrees with me.

Government Orders

It was the department that had difficulty with the wording. It did not want its hands to be tied behind a “may”. We felt that the wording should be “shall compensate in accordance with the regulations” and have those details worked out in the regulations. I am quite disappointed, but we will look at the regulations when they come forward.

In conclusion, the security of citizens is paramount. We in the House and the federal government can undertake to look after our citizens and keep them safe. The avian flu and SARS are, and will continue to be, serious threats. Perhaps the largest threat is yet to come. Hopefully we have learned some lessons over the last couple of years as we have dealt with some of the issues that have impacted our country and the world and we will be prepared for what is perhaps coming down the road.

This legislation is very timely. It is very important. We have worked collectively as a committee to provide the best legislation possible for the citizens of Canada. I am a little disappointed that some of the amendments have been deemed out of order, but I support the legislation. We will do everything we can to make sure the regulations are appropriate and in the best interests of the people of Canada.

• (1550)

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

Some hon. members: Question.

The Deputy Speaker: The question is on Motion No. 1. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

An hon. member: On division.

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried.
(Motion No. 1 agreed to)

• (1555)

The Deputy Speaker: The next question is on Motion No. 5. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

An hon. member: On division.

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried.
(Motion No. 5 agreed to)

The Deputy Speaker: The next question is on Motion No. 6. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

An hon. member: On division.

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried.
(Motion No. 6 agreed to)

The Deputy Speaker: The next question is on Motion No. 7. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

An hon. member: On division.

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried.
(Motion No. 7 agreed to)

The Deputy Speaker: The next question is on Motion No. 8. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

An hon. member: On division.

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried.
(Motion No. 8 agreed to)

The Deputy Speaker: The next question is on Motion No. 9. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

An hon. member: On division.

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried. I therefore declare Motion No. 14 carried.
(Motions Nos. 9 and 14 agreed to)

The Deputy Speaker: The next question is on motion No. 10. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

An hon. member: On division.

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried.
(Motion No. 10 agreed to)

The Deputy Speaker: The next question is on Motion No. 12. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

An hon. member: On division.

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried.
(Motion No. 12 agreed to)

Hon. Joe McGuire (for the Minister of Health) moved that:

Bill C-12, as amended, be concurred in, with further amendment, and read the second time.

The Deputy Speaker: Is it agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

An hon. member: On division.

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried.
(Motion agreed to)

* * *

[Translation]

DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE ACT

The House resumed from February 7 consideration of the motion that Bill C-31, an act to establish the Department of International Trade and to make related amendments to certain Acts, be now read the second time and referred to a committee.

Government Orders

Mr. Peter Julian (Burnaby—New Westminster, NDP): Mr. Speaker, as planned and agreed to by the leaders of the parties in the House, I will take the few minutes that were granted to the hon. member for Sackville—Eastern Shore to continue my presentation, which was interrupted by adjournment on Monday.

• (1600)

[*English*]

I am rising to speak to Bill C-31 and continue the intervention that I started on Monday. In giving a bit of the history around the bill at that time, I mentioned the fact that in 1982 Canada's Trade Commissioner Service was integrated into what was then called the Department of External Affairs. It took about 15 years for that integration to actually be effective.

In the mid-1990s that integration succeeded after both Conservative and Liberal administrations had some difficulty with the integration. That is why we were surprised when we saw Bill C-31 being presented. After integration having finally succeeded after a 15 year period, we are now wrenching apart those two ministries.

I mentioned at the time that a number of comments, questions and concerns had been raised in the community by people who understand vividly the importance of having an integration of international trade and other aspects of foreign affairs.

I would like to quote for the record from a number of interventions that have taken place and thus make sure that we as parliamentarians are all aware of legitimate concerns that have been raised about the bill and about the direction in which the government is going.

Previous speakers, as I did in my previous intervention in the House, have underlined the fact that we are now undergoing a review of the very structure of foreign affairs in this government. At the same time that we are undergoing this review, the government has already decided to wrench apart the two ministries and make one international trade and the other foreign affairs. It makes no sense that while the review is going on these two important functions would be wrenched apart. As previous speakers have mentioned, it also makes no sense to have international trade separated from important issues such as human rights, properly the focus of foreign affairs.

I want to quote what Bill Clarke, former ambassador to the Baltic Republics and Brazil said about this in *Diplomat and International Canada* in the January-February 2005 issue. As the federal government celebrated the one year anniversary of the announcement that the portfolios of foreign affairs and international trade would be split and henceforth go in two different directions, Bill Clarke said that "no one seems to know who made the decision—nor do they know why". He said, "Many observers are wondering why", adding that it is "questionable whether a good, open discussion was held".

Bill Clarke is one of the most distinguished diplomats in the Canadian diplomatic corps. He raises very legitimate concerns about the direction in which the government was going, about the why of splitting these two ministries in half, and about whether or not there were any legitimate and appropriate consultations. He raises very legitimate concerns about this entire process.

It is important to quote for the record remarks that were made by the president of the Retired Heads of Mission Association, a group of distinguished ex-diplomats, people who have been heads of missions and understand the function of foreign affairs and the function of international trade.

The association is composed of about 270 former Canadian ambassadors, high commissioners and consuls general. They are deeply concerned about the future of the Canadian foreign service. In the letter of December 8 that I will be quoting from, which was sent to the chairman of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade, the association's distinguished former ambassadors, high commissioners and consuls general said the following:

Recently, we have had to come reluctantly to the conclusion that our Foreign Service is being gradually dismantled. One clear manifestation of this happening is the recent decision to split the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT). As former diplomats and officials of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Commerce, Immigration and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), our members have personally experienced difficulties of integrating coherently these two crucial sectors of Canada's foreign policy. Thus, we believe that the decision to partition DFAIT is unfortunate and a step backwards.

• (1605)

They go on to mention other concerns about the foreign service and they say that unless these developments are reversed Canada will lose an essential tool of government. At the end of the letter, the Retired Heads of Mission Association, or RHOMA, requests permission to present its concerns and recommendations to members of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade at the earliest opportunity.

Therefore, we can see that concerns have been raised very widely about this particular approach, with people asking why the decision on splitting up these two ministries was made at this time when an ongoing review of foreign affairs is taking place. Why is it happening without broad consultation with people who understand the issue, who understand the essential linkage and integration between international trade and foreign policy?

The Retired Heads of Mission Association also mentioned in a previous letter that the separation of international trade from foreign affairs is another example of a measure which can only weaken the foreign service and make its management more incoherent.

An observer would wonder why the government is proceeding at this time. As previously quoted and as speakers have mentioned, it does not make sense at this time to proceed with this particular measure. To many observers who understand the situation, it does not make sense that this division, separation or partition is taking place between these two functions.

I think it is very important to underline that there is an incoherence, both when it comes to foreign policy and even more so when it comes to the direction that international trade has taken. We saw just this very morning some of the comments made by the Minister of International Trade.

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I will read just brief excerpts of some of the headlines from newspapers across the country. From *The Telegram* in St. John's, Newfoundland: "No tears; Liberals won't complain if business sends more Canadian jobs overseas". From the *Windsor Star*: "Job export is good: Minister". From the *Edmonton Sun*: "Job losses to offshore labour fine: trade minister".

Across the country, including such areas as here in Ottawa where the headline read "Grits Urge Biz to Offshore Jobs", we have seen Canadians waking up to the fact that the international trade minister, and in fact the international trade component of our national government, is now encouraging businesses to do this. The Minister of International Trade was quoted as saying that "businesses should feel free to send work offshore to wherever it can be done most cheaply, to help boost their bottom lines".

We have from the Minister of International Trade very clear direction that it is time to off-load jobs, that it is open season on Canadian workers and that jobs can be exported offshore. Just last week in the House, we saw the member for Timmins—James Bay raise the crucial question of the offshore manufacturing of our proudest national symbol, our Canadian flag lapel pins, which were actually being made offshore, thus off-loading Canadian jobs.

We are very proud that the hon. member for Timmins—James Bay raised that issue because this is increasingly the case. We have an international trade minister who is encouraging businesses to send jobs elsewhere. We have seen, as we did yesterday, debates in the House about the textile and clothing industry where there was a loss of 40,000 jobs. With softwood, we saw the loss of 20,000 jobs. In industry after industry we are seeing good jobs being exported, and as the Statistics Canada report from a couple of weeks ago clearly mentioned, the jobs replacing them are becoming more and more temporary or part time without pension benefits. For newer workers, those jobs are paying less and less in wages.

●(1610)

In this bizarre and inappropriate attempt to split up these two ministries, in this bizarre and inappropriate attempt of the trade minister to tell businesses to send their work offshore, to export those jobs and in this incoherence, this bizarre indecision and dithering of the government perhaps a pattern emerges. That pattern is: what is irresponsible is what is put forward; what is incoherent becomes government policy. It does not make sense for the main streets across the country who after 12 years of living with a Liberal government have more debt per individual family and less on their paycheque. In real terms, for most Canadian workers, their salary has slipped 60¢ an hour over the past 10 years. There are fewer social programs and fewer hospitals.

For that reason, this incoherence, this inappropriate decision and proposal will meet with opposition from this caucus. We will be voting against the bill.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Diane Bourgeois (Terrebonne—Blainville, BQ): Mr. Speaker, our colleague from Burnaby—New Westminster provided us with the pros and cons as well as observations by other people outside Parliament. As his party's critic, would he tell me—I did not understand since it was not clear—whether he is for or against splitting these two departments and why. I want this to be clear.

Mr. Peter Julian: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the hon. member's question. It was very nice of her. The matter is very clear to us. This division does not make any sense because foreign policy and the overall administration of foreign affairs are currently being reviewed. That does not make sense.

Also, since there has been no consultation with those more familiar with the community, it is clear that we are opposed.

In the area of international trade, the minister says that it is great, that it is fun, that it is appropriate to create jobs outside Canada. Clearly, there is a lack of consistency on the part of this government in its international trade policies and in its administration per se. We have seen this in several areas, including at the Treasury Board.

There are regulations which are supposed to prevent the squandering of public money. Still, it is allowed to go on, and we have cited several instances.

While the government ran a \$9 billion surplus, the number of children living in poverty and of homeless families in Canada still grew. Government policies lack consistency. Bill C-31 provides another example of the government's inability to improve the quality of life of Canadians.

As critic for my party, I oppose this bill, as does the NDP caucus. Debating this bill while foreign affairs is undergoing a review makes no sense. It also makes no sense for the minister to say that it is good to create international trade jobs outside Canada. It is very clear that there is a problem there, and it has to be resolved.

For all these reasons, we are opposed to the bill.

Mr. Pierre Paquette (Joliette, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I greatly appreciated the member's speech because it is along the same lines as the Bloc Québécois's position. I would like to hear his impressions of the contribution potential of the NGOs as far as international cooperation and solidarity are concerned, after this administrative split. We already have considerable difficulties having our social and environmental concerns, or those relating to democracy, heard with the present structure.

With a department for foreign affairs and another for international trade, does he think that NGOs would have better access to the minister?

●(1615)

Mr. Peter Julian: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for Joliette for his question. There is a definite problem with the present structure. In my opinion, however, things would be even worse if changes were made or these two departments were divided, which is precisely what the bill is about.

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The problem is that NGOs do not seem to get any hearing from the government, even if they do ask for help, and that is a pity. With a minority government, however, there is more chance of getting our opinions across, but the reality is that when human rights and the environment are on the agenda, not only in Canada but elsewhere, both international trade and foreign policy are involved.

We cannot have two different departments going in two different directions. With such a division, it would be even harder for the NGOs to make themselves heard.

Issues relating to human rights, the environment and social development involve aspects that are extremely important and ought to be looked at as a whole as far as foreign policy is concerned.

What is more, and this is something that ought to make all members here and all Canadians feel ashamed: yesterday 29,000 children died from disease, starvation and the lack of safe drinking water. Today, another 29,000 will die, as will that same number again tomorrow. This is a huge problem, and Canadians have a duty to set things in motion to improve this situation.

I believe that it will be harder to do this if there are two different departments going into two different directions.

[English]

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I do not want to be seen as taking exception to my hon. colleague, but I have to raise a question about his belief that the bill signifies a lack of coherence in government policy. I would suggest that it shows an extreme sense of coherence. The one thing I have seen from the government is it knows exactly where it is going in terms of international trade. It knows exactly where it is going with human rights.

Just last week we realized that with the Canadian flag. It is the symbol in which the government wraps itself every time members of the honourable opposition, mostly from the west, stand up to question the corruption. We understand now that the government sees the flag as though it were a symbol from the wallymart. If it can do it cheaper anywhere else, if it can bring in the cheapest deal, that is good for its so-called consumers.

Ms. Beth Phinney: That was outsourcing. We did not know that was going to happen.

Mr. Charlie Angus: The hon. member said they did not know that would happen. I was under the impression that the Liberals were very aware that it happened. A number of Liberals have talked to me about the fact that they have been outsourcing numerous symbols of Canada because they can do it cheaper. This brings me to the fundamental question I would like to ask.

Earlier this fall, we asked the government for assurances that when it allowed the sale of Noranda and Falconbridge to go ahead to the Chinese government, it would have a plan to ensure that certain fundamental benchmarks were addressed in terms of human rights and that certain fundamental benchmarks were in place to protect the copper mining communities, of which my region is one. Across Canada we have communities that are dependent on these resources. We could not get a straight answer from the government.

It is becoming very clear to me now that if we divide human rights into one department and trade into another department, it becomes very impossible for us to get a straight answer from the government. It makes it easier for the government to continue to say that it loves human rights, children, little dogs and ice cream, but it cannot do anything about it.

Does the hon. member think this is a lack of coherence or is it part of a much larger industrial strategy being pursued by the government, which is to take as many Canadian jobs as it can and outsource them to El Salvador, China, or wherever it can find the bottom of the barrel?

• (1620)

Mr. Peter Julian: Mr. Speaker, the member for Timmins—James Bay is absolutely right. There is a direction and that direction is south and offshore. The direction is loss of jobs. The direction is not respecting human rights and not pushing or having any sort of evaluation of foreign purchase of Canadian companies. We have seen 11,000 companies in Canada absorbed over the past 15 years, and they have been absorbed without any debate, without any sort of verification of whether it is in the interest of Canadians.

This is the sellout of Canada. He is absolutely right. There seems to be a direction, the selling out of jobs, the selling out of our resources, the selling out of our companies, and this has to stop. We will continue to raise these issues in the House.

[Translation]

The Deputy Speaker: It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 38, to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Calgary Centre-North, Aboriginal Affairs; the hon. member for Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, Aerospace Industry; the hon. member for New Westminster—Coquitlam, Citizenship and Immigration.

[English]

Hon. Mark Eyking (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade (Emerging Markets), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is great to stand here today and defend the bill. I am pleased to rise and support Bill C-31, an act to establish the Department of International Trade at second reading.

I proudly support the Prime Minister's decision to create International Trade Canada. Therefore, I support with enthusiasm the legislation introduced in December by the Minister of International Trade to formally establish the department in Canadian law.

This will enable Canada to succeed in our global economy. Canada's economic well-being is dependent upon this external sector. One in four jobs is connected in some way to international trade, and the export of goods and services is equivalent to 38% of our GDP in our economy.

Canada's innovative capacity and its productivity is driven by our capacity, not only to open new markets and keep them open, but to access capital, technology and skills on the global platform. Investment flows are a critical element of our efforts in this respect.

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The very nature of international commerce has shifted radically. Transactions occur in light speed. Business plans and business deals are developed less and less by and between single firms, and more and more through rapidly through partnerships, alliances and networks.

Production is organized through global supply chains, with research, manufacturing and distribution spread across many jurisdictions. Canada is part of this environment. Our task is challenging. Canadians are confronted with a far more complex business environment, one of opportunity, but a great deal of change and vulnerability as well.

The question is how does government integrate policies and programs to help the business sector succeed in this environment? How do we sustain the kind of success that grows our economy at home and that complements and reinforces our more specific objectives in sustaining the social progress and in strengthening the development in these regions?

One important, indeed critical dimension of this setting is the emergence of newly powerful economies. Until recently, many of these economic powers were developing countries at the margins of industrialization. Now they are growing at high rates year after year.

We often speak of these newly powerful economies in terms of China, India and Brazil. Clearly, these economies are formidable players in global growth, trade and finance. They are no longer simply sources of low cost labour and sites for the assembly of low value added goods. They are centres of growing industrial sophistication and a force in the global knowledge and the service economy.

These economies typically feature rapid urbanization and technological change, enormous energy and infrastructure pressures and rising middle classes with ever greater purchasing power. Together these economies, with their global reach, increasingly frame the competitive challenge here at home. They also raise the scope of opportunity for Canadians, the potential to create wealth for our own and for our future generations. We are a trading nation.

China alone has grown an average of 9% a year for the last decade and is already the world's fourth largest trader and the second largest investment destination. China, India and Brazil have also become significant forces in international institutions.

They are not alone. Other regions, such as central and eastern Europe, southeast Asia and South America, are becoming more powerful. Countries such as those I recently visited in the Middle East and Arabian Peninsula, with the hon. member for Calgary East, are advancing rapidly and presenting both Canada and our competitors with remarkable opportunities in oil and gas technology and services, in engineering and construction and in education.

Others, such as Korea and Mexico, while hardly what we would call emerging markets, are deeply integrated within regions of expanding opportunity which success reflects a regional reality.

•(1625)

I believe our businesses can succeed and they have been succeeding. However, whether it is in the high tech field, in the manufacturing sector or in the service industries, or whether it is in

energy and resources or in agriculture and fisheries, Canadians must operate in a complex global setting. This environment demands hard work and much homework.

It requires government to assemble a full range of trade promotion and intelligence, policy and investment tools, each tailored to specific issues capable of being adapted and applied to specific business challenges and organized for rapid deployment.

It will require resources. Government resources must be adequate to meet the challenge of intense international competition. In our view, they are best deployed at the front line in those markets or regions that are driving global economic growth. There is a lot of competition out there for that global economic growth. If we do not step up to the plate, somebody else will.

Success in the 21st century global economy requires integrated approaches, with solutions spanning from financial arrangements, to technology partnering and skills transfer, to an ability to source inputs at competitive prices. It challenges businesses above all, but it also challenges we as a government to offer services and policy support that adds value to these dynamic environments. We cannot be successful in this new setting by just selling things from one country to another. It is not that simple.

Over the years, we have acquired a world class trade commissioner service, bringing many skills and an astounding range of business expertise and country expertise to the table. We are developing state-of-the-art client service tools, both electronically and person-to-person.

In the future, as ever more complex business partnerships emerge, we will be developing capacity to advise on sources of the best possible legal and business advice. Intelligence, as I suggested, is critical.

The effort business makes, and we support, requires real time, accurate market intelligence covering not only export sales leads but on potential investment and knowledge of partners. We have seen this on our recent trip to China, with over 280 businesses and institutions, how those tools come into effect.

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For emerging markets with this blend of opportunity and risk, we need a well-crafted and targeted set of promotional and policy instruments. With investment so critical to positioning, we need agreements to protect our investment abroad. We need to be able to offer the best advice possible in ensuring intellectual property is safeguarded. We need to overcome regulatory constraints that impair our ability to compete effectively in trade or investment.

In some markets, our efforts to tap expanded travel and tourism will benefit from expanded air service accords and perhaps by looking at visa rules and procedures, and by working with all levels of government on issues of critical infrastructure. It is a multi-faceted approach from all different departments.

It is this diversity of requirements that we face and the integrated solutions that businesses need that makes this new Department of International Trade so valuable in present times.

We now have a department that would handle not only trade policy and trade promotion, but also investment, science and technology and integrated service delivery to Canadian businesses through regional offices across this country.

Beyond trade disputes and trade negotiations, and beyond trade promotion, the new department would incorporate a vigorous investment function by expanding marketing of Canada abroad and reinforcing the capacity of communities in Canada to attract and retain investment.

In addition the department will complement efforts at home to build a 21st century economy and to act on the international dimension of innovation. It will work to build knowledge partnerships that work to build productivity at home while showcasing Canadian excellence abroad.

● (1630)

These regional offices will ensure opportunities are learned about and expertise is brought to bear in communities across this country. When we travelled on our last couple of missions, we had companies and institutions from every province.

Moreover, through the legislation, we would be in a position to lead and coordinate the entire federal government in matters of international commerce. We would speak for Canada internationally on all trade matters and we would work to build a coherent, whole Canada approach through international commerce engaging all levels of government, the business community and other stakeholders outside both government and business.

Particularly in reference to emerging markets, I would note that one of our unique Canadian advantages is the cross-cultural skills of our communities right across this country.

Contrary to the fears of some, the legislation neither precludes nor impairs coordinated approaches in the international sphere. During my recent trip to the Middle East, I saw exceptionally talented and dedicated people from all programs at our embassies in the region. They are all working well together for a common purpose. We saw them in Qatar and in the United Arab Emirates. We saw them in Yemen and we also saw them in Syria, and other posts that we travelled to.

In my view, the new department is now uniquely positioned to work closely, not only with other international departments, but also, with gathering credibility, with our economic policy departments. This is not something new. This is happening in other countries. France and other European countries have separated their trade from foreign affairs. The United States is in its own silo; it does its own thing. It has a direct link to the White House. That is how important trade is for trading countries.

In this way the legislation would offer the Government of Canada and the people of Canada a chance to construct a valuable bridge between the pursuit of our goals at home and the opportunities beyond our borders. Domestic prosperity, from the perspective of the fisherman in P.E.I., the farmer out west, a manufacturing or engineering firm or a high tech startup, is reliant on international trade and investment, both to sustain and to grow in the future. When we were in China, we saw many deals signed. We even saw the Wheat Board sign a deal to sell grains to China.

I urge all hon. members in the House on all sides to support Bill C-31, and ensure it receives speedy passage.

● (1635)

Mr. Deepak Obhrai (Calgary East, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have travelled with the parliamentary secretary on two trade missions and what he just said was fine. I do not think that there is any doubt about what he just said about the importance of international trade, what has happened, and how Canadian businesses are out there engaging with the new realities of international trade and emerging markets.

However, today his subject is Bill C-31 and he completely missed the point. He completely ignored the questions that have been raised in the House. Why is there a need to break up these two departments, the Departments of Foreign Affairs and International Trade? He did not answer this question.

Was there a deeper analysis done to determine if it would be in the longer term interest of Canada if this department was by itself? He did not answer that.

When his Prime Minister came into power, he said there would be a foreign policy review. How come a decision was made before this foreign policy came about?

These are the questions and everybody is wondering if he will now leave his nice, flowery words, and get on with the business and answer these questions.

Hon. Mark Eyking: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for Calgary East and compliment him on his scarf. He makes a great choice in clothing and it is good to see in the House.

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The hon. member is a well travelled person. He has seen it in other countries and knows the competition we have. Whether it is competition from Australia or France, when we are dealing with these emerging markets or others, we need our trade department to stand on its own. We need to give it the wings to fly. That does not mean that we cannot have a whole government approach, where we work with CIDA, Foreign Affairs, and maybe with National Defence, on how we deal with regions. We can work in silos, but we can work together.

This century is going to be a lot different than the last one. China is emerging and we have to adapt to it. The United States will be a main player for our trade. With these emerging markets and global trends, we must be prepared as a government. We must be able to work with the business community to create policies and make things happen.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Diane Bourgeois (Terrebonne—Blainville, BQ): Mr. Speaker, no one can object to the fact that Canadian firms can and must become more competitive on the world market. However, there are questions to be asked on another aspect: we will be more competitive, but at what price?

A decade ago, a number of our Canadian firms set up in Mexico. With the approval of the Mexican government, they created what are called the maquiladoras. I believe there are also some in the Yucatan. Maquiladoras are free economic zones—areas where businesses can locate without paying duties or income taxes. On the premise that they get people working, governments leave them alone to do business. The maquiladoras we are familiar with are primarily around Ciudad Juarez on the Mexico-Texas border.

The Mexican maquiladoras now employ over 2 million workers. These people come from all over northern Mexico, Central America and South America. They work for \$1 or \$2 a day. There are Canadian firms—I know; I have seen them; I took pictures of them—located there, which have received assistance from the Government of Canada. At present the two departments, international trade and foreign affairs, are together. People are already being exploited without any attention being paid. Their working conditions are being negotiated downwards.

What is more, the Canadian government has not ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. It has not ratified the second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Right. It has not ratified the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families. It has not ratified the American Convention on Human Rights.

What will happen, then, in a world where international trade is on one side and human rights on the other? I would like the parliamentary secretary to explain to me how we are promoting the best interests of human beings through competition.

● (1640)

[*English*]

Hon. Mark Eyking: Mr. Speaker, we are facing a new challenge this century when it comes to trade and how our companies will adapt to it.

We bring up the issue of human rights with other governments when we attend bilateral meetings.

However we have to look at how our companies will adapt and how they will do in other regions. I used Husky Equipment as an example. Its head office is in Ontario and it has four plants worldwide. We visited its plant in Shanghai, which is one of the most modern factories. The company treats its employees properly and has been example for the whole region on how to treat workers and how to give them benefits.

We were also in Yemen where we visited Nexen, a company also located in the hon. member's riding of Calgary East. This company is making money and it is also impressing upon these countries workers' rights. It is being a good corporate citizen.

We cannot sit here and hope the world will be a better place. We have to get out there and do business. We can also show foreign countries the practices we have here in Canada, whether it is with respect to human rights, workers' rights or working with the community.

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have been listening to the hon. member's comments and I am still trying to find my way through the buzz words.

The issue here is not trade. The issue here is assuring Canadians that the government has a bottom line when it comes to fundamental issues, and that this is not a race to the bottom. Helping Canadian companies overseas is not the issue and is not what we are talking about here.

When a company is good in business it brands itself. That is a fundamental in business. We just need to look at Burger King. When it was a small company it came up with the phrase "Home of the Whopper". I know a lot of people think that is the phrase of the Liberal Party, but it is actually the trademark of Burger King.

When we had the Canadian lapel pins that were branded "made in China", the Liberals were perfectly proud of that until somebody found out and it then became a sense of embarrassment.

I would like to ask the hon. member a simple question which we asked earlier in the House but did not get any answer to. Air Canada, which is a symbol of this country, is a private company that has survived on millions of dollars worth of grants. It has just shut down jobs in Canada for maintenance and mechanical work and has shipped those jobs down south to El Salvador. From my history lessons in school, El Salvador was the land of death squads where Jesuits were murdered at the university. It has an horrific human rights record.

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If we are willing to brand ourselves and be proud of our trade, how would the hon. members feel about Air Canada having a slogan stating “Air Canada, maintained and brought to you by the sweat shops of El Salvador?” Is that what we are talking about?

• (1645)

Hon. Mark Eyking: Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member is stretching it a bit. It is a known fact that Canada has the best job record in the western world.

Yes, we do have communities that are going through challenges. His community is doing well with this global economy. The resource industry is doing well. It is not going to be easy because there will be ups and downs but we have to adjust to this new economy.

How is that going to happen? Canada is a trading nation. One in four jobs here relies on trade. We have to do business with the rest of the world. Yes, we do have to watch human rights and we do have to watch the deals we make, but at the end of the day the member's riding will benefit from this global economy. His riding will benefit from the division of this department and be more proactive in regions where his products will be sold worldwide.

Mr. Deepak Ohrai (Calgary East, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to speak to Bill C-31, which would create a department called International Trade Canada.

I am the critic for my party for emerging markets. The parliamentary secretary just gave an eloquent speech on how emerging markets are important for Canada. I have absolutely no bone to pick on why emerging markets are important for Canada. As he said, Canada is a trading nation. Over 40% of our GDP is based on trade. Over 80% of our trade is with our southern neighbours but we are looking at new and emerging markets offering us opportunities that we need to grab.

However what we are talking about is Bill C-31, a bill that would divide one department into two departments. The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade would be split into two departments. On that aspect we do have some concerns.

My colleague, the member for Newmarket—Aurora, our trade critic for the Conservative Party, spoke very eloquently to this bill some time back and expressed the concerns the Conservative Party has with this approach.

Being the trade critic involved here for a couple of years and being on the foreign affairs committee, let me go back and give my observations.

Canada's international relationships are run by two departments: the Canadian International Development Agency, CIDA, which takes care of the aid aspect; and the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade was joined together by the former Liberal Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau because he thought there would be a cohesive policy from Canada that would take Canadian strategic interests into account when dealing with foreign issues, which at that given time was thought to be the right approach to take.

However I now know for a fact that the Department of Foreign Affairs was following the same thinking and the same approach in reference to CIDA and it wanted to take over CIDA. From the time

when I was an international trade and development critic I know the mandarins in Foreign Affairs felt that if CIDA were brought under their umbrella they could again move into a more cohesive approach dealing with foreign aid, human rights issues and all these things, and make policies in Foreign Affairs that would reflect Canadian values.

However over a period of time the government resisted CIDA going under this umbrella for the simple reason that it was using CIDA as a department which it could “buy influence” overseas in countries where it went to work for Canada, and most important, we have records showing that CIDA was used as an agency that rewarded Liberal businesses very well.

I have been around the world and I have seen CIDA. CIDA officials are different from Foreign Affairs officials and trade officials. CIDA officials do not coordinate their efforts with others. CIDA marches to its own tune as does Foreign Affairs and yet we say that we have a cohesive strategy and that we work together for the interests of Canada. That is not true.

Let us take the example of China. CIDA is still today giving foreign aid to China when the parliamentary secretary just stood up in the House and said how good China was doing, 8% annually. If China is doing so well, why is CIDA giving it money? It did the same thing for India.

No, there is no cohesive policy out there when it comes to international relations. We now have the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. What we are wondering is why and how the Prime Minister of Canada decided that he needed to break these two departments and make them separate. We do not know. Nobody knows. He just decided to do it, despite the fact that this was a functioning department. What is the benefit? What is the cost analysis? Has anyone done it?

• (1650)

Where does CIDA fit into this picture? We now have CIDA and the new departments of trade and foreign affairs. How will they coordinate one policy for foreign affairs? The Prime Minister said there would be a foreign policy review. One would think that the government would do a foreign policy review first before coming to this kind of a conclusion, but, no, that did not take place.

We do not know whether the foreign policy review will come or what will happen. Decisions have been made without, what we think, is a proper analysis of whether it is in the best interest of Canada's foreign policy.

We in the Conservative Party believe we should send this bill to the foreign affairs committee where it can be studied properly and recommendations can be made as to whether this is the right approach in which to go in the long term interests of Canada. That should be a logical, common sense decision but it seems to be lost on the other side.

We have the parliamentary secretary making speeches about emerging markets but what we are talking about is whether this the right approach to take.

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I envision going overseas where we have these three officers, the ambassador from foreign affairs, the CIDA individual and the trade individual, sitting in separate rooms and going about their separate turf wars. Meanwhile, where would Canada's foreign policy be on the issues of interest to Canadians?

What will happen? Will we be coming back here and saying that we made a mistake and that we should bring it back? This is a very important decision and it is not one to be taken lightly.

We want to know whether this is the right approach to take. We do not know and therefore we will not be supporting the bill. We want the bill to go to the foreign affairs committee where it can do a thorough analysis of what this is all about.

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the hon. member's comments and words about the need to study this proposition from the government.

I wonder if, as part of that analysis, the member would consider the factor of acquisitions in Canada and the screen that we obviously need to put acquisitions through with respect to human rights in these emerging markets that he mentions.

Should we have some sort of forum in Canada so that when a country like China, or any of the other countries on the list of not the best representatives of international policy and diplomacy, tries to acquire Canadian companies, of which 11,000 have been acquired over the last number of years, we know its record on human rights? In this case, when we have a government buying one of our greatest mining companies, should human rights not be a factor in the decision around the acquisition of that company?

Under the Liberal government's advisement there clearly is no way to deny an acquisition of a Canadian firm. The door is simply open and the countries can pick and choose. The government clearly accepts every application that comes through. There have been no rejections in 11,000. Would human rights be one of the criteria that the hon. member would encourage to help these emerging markets into the new century?

• (1655)

Mr. Deepak Obhrai: Mr. Speaker, I forgot to advise you that I will be sharing my time with my colleague from Macleod.

The hon. member's question is precisely what I was talking about and why I raised the question about whether this was the right approach to take.

Human rights is one of those values that Canadians want to see in our foreign policy. Human rights is a very strong value that Canadians are looking for in our foreign policy. That will only come if we have a concentrated policy.

What we could have now, if the government breaks up these departments, is the new department of international trade deciding that trade is all together separate from human rights. It may go in the direction of only following trade and saying that trade and human rights are not linked.

This is a Canadian value and Canadians are concerned about human rights. Canadians would like human rights to be up in the forefront as does my party.

To answer the member's question, human rights is one of our concerns as well, which is why we are saying that we will not support the bill until it goes to the committee where these issues can be brought forward and addressed, and where we can hear what departmental officials and the government have to say about this.

What we have right now is the government's unilateral policy out there. It has decided this is the way it is going to go without any other questions being answered as were asked by the hon. member.

Mr. John Cannis (Scarborough Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will pick up on the comments made by the member for Skeena on that issue, but first I will make a comment before I ask a question.

We have been around this honourable House for well over a decade. We know very well that companies in other countries have come to Canada to invest, acquire, merge, or whatever. We know very well that there are provisions to make sure that investment does not jeopardize, impede or hurt us here in Canada. Unfortunately, or fortunately, we live in a global economy and these things happen.

My hon. colleague spoke so eloquently on this issue. There are trouble spots in some countries with child labour, labour laws being abused, human rights abuses and whatnot. Being aware from what we know and read that something like that exists in particular countries, is it wise to stay away, avoid the issue and turn a blind eye, or does it make sense that we do the best we can to engage with the countries? Knowing the wonderful society we have built here, we can build on that by being there and showing others that there is a better way to perform in society.

Mr. Deepak Obhrai: Mr. Speaker, the word is "engaged". Yes, we should engage. We cannot isolate them. We are pushing up the human rights abuses from what we see when we isolate countries. I agree with him that we should engage the countries. The issue is how to do it.

What is the most effective way to engage the countries when talking about child labour and all those other issues? The best way from my perspective is to tell them that if they do not change their laws, if they do not meet the ILO requirements and if they do not meet the international treaties that have been signed, then we will have a concern about dealing with them. We cannot just stick our heads in the sand and think nothing is going on around the world. I agree with the member, but which is the right way to engage the countries to get the best results?

Mr. Ted Menzies (Macleod, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague from Calgary East is very passionate about this issue, as are many of us.

We need to recognize the concerns that we have with the bill. I will be putting my support behind the bill simply because we need some answers and the only way we appear to get answers from the government is by asking witnesses to appear before our committees. We have some tremendously important questions that need answers.

The fundamental question in my mind is why we moved forward to divide the department and then decided we were going to finally have an international policy review. What is the policy review going to tell us? What if it tells us that we should not have divided the department, that it is not for the good of the country to have done this?

I have a rather long history of working with the trade department. I made some good friends in that department. In my former life I represented agrifood exporters and producers across the country. I was president of the Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance which represents 90% of the country's agrifood exports, not just products from the farm but products that have had value added to them. Canada is an export dependent country. We can never forget that. It is fundamental to our future and the businesses that fuel our economy.

I have worked with the trade department and also with foreign affairs. In my past life I have had a very good working relationship with the people in the trade department and the people in foreign affairs. I sense some very grave concerns within the Pearson building. I have spoken with good people who work hard for this country. They have been doing dual duty. They have been working for trade and foreign affairs. There are also those who have been working for CIDA. They all fit under this umbrella group. Later we will get into the funding questions.

Those people are very frustrated with the situation. They too are asking, "Who made this decision? Why were we, as participants in this, not asked our opinion?" How many Canadian businesses were actually consulted on this decision before it was made? Was it simply made, as we have heard on many occasions, to create another ministry? That is the question I would like to ask the ministers when they appear before the standing committee. If we do not approve the bill in principle and move it forward to the committee stage, we may never hear those answers.

I would like to see something in writing from the businesses that might have actually requested this. I would suggest there probably are not too many businesses that requested this to happen.

In recent months I have been in consulates in a number of different places: Hong Kong; Seoul, South Korea; Tokyo; Brazil; and Santiago, Chile. I heard the same concerns from the good people in the dual roles in these consulates. They did not know if they had a future and did not know what that future might be. They were concerned about the role they were going to be able to play.

• (1700)

Those people have worked supporting trade and foreign affairs and indeed they have roles within CIDA. They have worked well. It was very obvious they were concerned about their futures. I would be most interested when this bill gets to committee stage to bring some of those people to committee, provided they have whistleblower protection so they can actually make some serious comments about their futures and how their departments have worked in the past.

That is not to say this may not be a good thing for business, but let us sit down and look at it. Let us sit down and question all of the

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people who are involved. Let us find out the fundamental reason that this is being done.

In 1982 when the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade was formed, industry was part of it. We decided at that time to take industry out of it. In the back of my mind I am still questioning whether or not that was a good thing, because industry still is a big part of trade. We have too many departments and, pardon me for suggesting this, maybe we have too many ministries too. We wonder about all of the different ministers travelling around the world making conflicting statements that do not seem to put forward the agenda that is needed to make this country work better.

Regarding the splitting of the department, it would be very interesting to see the international policy review, if in fact we ever do see it. I am becoming skeptical as to whether we will actually see this in my lifetime, or shall I say in my career here in the House. I believe it was promised in November and there does not seem to be too much indication that it will be coming anytime soon. In fact we are hearing that it has been delayed once more.

The suggestion is that this is a housekeeping bill. It is far beyond a housekeeping bill. It is very critical that this type of discussion take place. It is critical for the future of businesses in this country. I also want to find out if it is simply a bill to divide the two departments to create more jobs for Liberals. I want to find out why there has not been the public consultation that is needed to determine whether or not this is the right way to go. We have some very serious questions and huge concerns about this.

We have other concerns not only about CIDA's role, but also about CIDA's funding. We are very concerned about the reaction to the tsunami. Hopefully this will be addressed in the international policy review process. Certainly we needed to support those people in that disaster as strongly as we could, but we are still uncertain where that money is coming from. Is it coming from the Department of National Defence? Is there money coming from the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade through CIDA that is going back to replenish the funds that we have taken out of defence? We have some very serious questions along those lines.

My hon. colleague on the other side of the House, my opponent, spoke about some of the contracts that were negotiated. There is one which I would like to mention once again. He and I have had this discussion. He was very excited about the fact that the Canadian Wheat Board had signed a contract during the last visit to China.

• (1705)

I would remind the hon. member that my terminology of a contract is there has to be a price and a delivery period involved. My understanding is that is not the case. It is more like a memorandum of understanding. The most exciting news I could deliver to my constituents is that we have sold some wheat. Unfortunately, I cannot tell them that at this time.

• (1710)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre Paquette (Joliette, BQ): Madam Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise to condemn this totally aberrant measure that is found in Bill C-31 and in Bill C-32. These two bills must, of course, be examined together.

Government Orders

This is an aberrant measure, because it lacks transparency. In fact, it was undertaken in an undemocratic fashion and in secret. Moreover, it is an attempt to present parliamentarians with a fait accompli, that is the splitting of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade into two entities, namely Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada.

It is also retrograde legislation in every respect, and I will get back to this later on. It is totally illogical. Indeed, it will be harmful to Canada's political and economic interests and, consequently, to Quebec's political and economic interests.

Therefore, hon. members will realize that, faced with a bill or a measure that is not transparent, undemocratic, illogical, retrograde and harmful, the Bloc Québécois will assume its responsibilities and vote against Bill C-31 and Bill C-32.

I will begin with the lack of transparency. On December 12, 2003, the governor in council quietly—if not secretly—issued an order pursuant to the Public Service Rearrangement and Transfer of Duties Act. That order split the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade into two entities, as I mentioned earlier, namely Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada.

Of course, the government did not draw attention to this decision. In fact, the process to split the department into two entities had begun. It was only on November 29, 2004, that the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade was informed of this new reality, when the Minister of Foreign Affairs appeared before it. So, this process was undertaken without consultations and without making use of the existing parliamentary structures, particularly the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs, who testified before the committee, was unable to explain where this decision came from and what was the logic behind it. It brings to mind Jeffrey Simpson's article in the *Globe and Mail*, which asked Hercule Poirot, the Agatha Christie character, to help Ottawa to identify the author of this idea. This idea is, as I mentioned, extremely detrimental to foreign affairs and international trade. Unfortunately, no one has been able to identify the father or perhaps the mother—I do not want to be guilty of sexism—of this idea. It is sometimes said that bad ideas are orphans. In this case, it is true. We still have not been able to identify the person responsible for the idea the Prime Minister has used.

The minister had stated in the House—and it is quite interesting to quote him, “—that there are always consultations. The government has always maintained communication with the major exporters associations and stakeholders in other economic sectors”. A little later he said, “This time, having discussed this matter with various people, the Prime Minister decided otherwise”.

These quotes are interesting, because we are being told that there were consultations. It is a bit strange that the order was issued on the very day the Prime Minister took his oath of office. We are not used to the Liberal government being so fast and efficient.

Members remember the people whose land was expropriated for Mirabel and Parliament's decision to help them. To date, no answer has been given, other than by the Minister of Transport, who said

that the government would not follow up on Parliament's decision. Since 2000, the unemployed have been waiting for an answer, after the repeated promises of Liberal ministers and the Prime Minister during the leaders debate. This reform still has not been implemented. We hope that, in the budget, there will finally be answers. We have been waiting for nearly five years now, and the unemployed are waiting for a reform worthy of the name employment insurance. Again today, I mentioned in the House that, after the House of Commons decided yesterday to adopt a Bloc Québécois motion to substantially improve assistance to the clothing and textile industry to save the thousands of jobs in these two manufacturing sectors, there still has been no reaction from the government, except to say that it will take action as a result of this decision.

● (1715)

At the moment, there is a dead calm.

I will not start talking about aerospace, where I could list numerous issues we have been discussing for years, and the government has been studying for years and on which no decisions have been forthcoming.

Oddly enough, the very day he was sworn in, the Prime Minister announced the plan to divide the departments. There must have been some discussion, but it must have been at lightning speed. We know very well that his mind was made up. Where did the idea come from? I am unfortunately not trained in psychology, and it is psychology more than logic that is involved here, so I cannot say.

The minister speaks of consultations. Whom did he consult? The Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade was not in the loop, except through the rumours and leaks from Foreign Affairs and International Trade.

As for the various groups—with whom my colleague for international affairs and myself are in constant contact—whether concerned with economics or international cooperation, no one there heard anything about this before they were asked about it.

So probably a few people, bosom buddies of the Prime Minister, were involved in the consultation. What is interesting is that, according to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, even those people advised the PM against this illogical division.

I will remind you of what the Minister of Foreign Affairs said: “The Prime Minister decided otherwise”. So even people close to the PM told him that this would not fly, for all manner of reasons, ones I do not have time to go into this afternoon.

As I said, it was a done deal. It is a mystery where the idea to do this came from. Perhaps someone like Hercule Poirot could come up with the answer, but the Minister of Foreign Affairs certainly will not. We have already tried that route.

This decision is therefore not transparent or democratic, and as the member for Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel has said, it is all a kind of who-dunnit. So much for the first aspect, the lack of transparency, of consultation, so much for the slighting of Parliament and its institutions, the totally anti-democratic nature of this undertaking.

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Now, for the retrograde aspect of the decision. I would like to share with all the hon. members an excerpt from a letter from the Retired Heads of Mission Association. I would like to read more of it. These former ambassadors, high commissioners and consuls wrote to the chair of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade on December 8, 2004, so the letter is fairly recent. The first paragraph says it all:

Our Association, which is composed of approximately 270 former Canadian Ambassadors, High Commissioners and Consuls General, is deeply concerned about the future of the Canadian Foreign Service. Recently, we have had to come reluctantly to the conclusion that our Foreign Service is being gradually dismantled. One clear manifestation of this happening is the recent decision to split the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT). As former diplomats and officials of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Commerce, Immigration and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), our members have personally experienced the difficulties of integrating coherently these two crucial sectors of Canada's foreign policy. Thus, we believe that the decision to partition DFAIT is unfortunate and a step backwards.

Why backwards? Because it runs counter to 30 years of efforts to integrate Canada's foreign policy with its trade policy and to make the latter an instrument for promoting its foreign policy.

That decision was not made overnight. It goes back to 1971. In the Trudeau era, it was decided to integrate all support staff in the missions abroad, who had until then been scattered among various departments, and to bring them all within the external affairs department. For example, the people from Immigration who dealt with refugees abroad were brought into the department. The functions of CIDA were also brought in at that time.

What happened 10 years later is extremely important. The trade commissioners, who were then in the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce, were taken into External Affairs. It is clear that there was administrative logic, consistency in personnel management, in order to ensure greater effectiveness of foreign policy, international trade, international assistance, and refugee policy.

• (1720)

There was also a concern in terms of financial effectiveness with being able to maintain a synergy among the various missions, while ensuring that ambassadors fulfil diplomatic, economic as well as human rights functions.

Between 1971 and 1982, it was decided to concentrate all these functions under the Department of External Affairs. This trend was never reversed by any subsequent government, be it Conservative or Liberal. Even during Mr. Chrétien's term of office, the importance of finding together under one roof all of Canada's international functions was never questioned.

Clearly, there is a problem. It is not to say that, at Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada, all was perfect. But the real source of the problems experienced by that department had nothing to do with the concentration of all these functions within a single department run by a minister of state and two associate ministers, one for international trade and one for international assistance, but rather with the drastic cuts made in the 1980s. These cuts started under the Conservatives and continued after the Liberals took office. In fact, the current Prime Minister was the one mainly responsible for these cuts, when he was the finance minister.

So, a number of international functions and missions—extremely important for a country that claims to be democratic and to want to play a role on the international scene, particularly with respect to international assistance, where major cuts have been made—and the Canadian presence in diplomatic missions for immigration and refugee processing were dropped. In these areas, because of lack of funding, the department has been unable to exercise all its responsibilities.

This was not an administrative problem, but rather a financial one. The solution to the problems experienced by the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade would have been to reinvest the resources necessary to assume our various responsibilities in diplomacy, international trade, international assistance and refugee processing.

Dividing the department into two separate departments is not only a step backward in terms of the strong trend of the past 30 years, but no solution, because no funding will be reallocated. At least, there is no indication from the government that there will be. This decision is therefore taking us back more than 30 years, beyond the 1970s.

As I was saying, the decision is illogical on every level. As for human resource management, it is certainly not by creating two administrative entities that we will have more efficient and more coherent management of our human resources on a diplomatic level. We are eliminating this vital interaction between foreign policy and trade policy, the latter serving as a tool for the former.

There is no way I will be convinced, speaking of coordination—this is mentioned in both bills—that this problem will be resolved. Coordination of economic relations is very clearly being taken away from the Department of Foreign Affairs and being given to the Department of International Trade. It is stated in subclause 7(2) of Bill C-32, which eliminates the coordination of economic and international relations.

Imagine what type of globalization Canada will defend. On one hand, we will have a Department of Foreign Affairs making a series of grand statements and great promises, internationally. On the other hand, we will have a Department of International Trade concerned only with developing Canada's international trade and seeking foreign investment in order to encourage investors to come to Canada and promoting Canadian investors in these countries.

Private Members' Business

●(1725)

What will the Minister of International Trade say when NGOs or civil society ask his department, or Export Development Canada, whether they took into account major Canadian values, whether democratic rights are respected when Export Development Canada supports a project and whether the department ensures that the working conditions of people hired in other countries are consistent with International Labour Organization conventions? He will say it is not part of his mandate and that he deals with international trade. He will say to go see the Minister of Foreign Affairs, who will say he understands, but he has no control over international economic relations.

These NGOs—who already have a hard time being heard in terms of international cooperation and solidarity—and most of civil society will no longer have any outlet for their concerns. This is extremely detrimental, because there will no longer be the necessary pressure on government, on Parliament, to ensure that Canada does more than talk and that it truly works for globalization that serves the people rather than large multinational companies.

We see that this plan is not in any way advancing what those opposite often refer to as the great Canadian values. It will be harmful to the development of democracy. It will prevent Canadian civil society and Quebec civil society from doing the necessary lobbying. Thus the bill is extremely harmful to the political and economic interests of Quebec and Canada.

It is non-transparent, backward, and illogical. I have gone into some of the aspects, but even on the economic level it makes no sense.

Canadian ambassadors are currently evaluated by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of International Trade. From now on, it will be by the Minister of Foreign Affairs only. So the whole economic policy aspect is an extremely important element of our foreign affairs policy.

When the Prime Minister went to Japan, he spoke about mad cow disease and about the Japanese having closed their border to us. That is trade-related. He spoke about the forthcoming G-8 summit on climate change. That is a matter of international trade and foreign affairs as well. We cannot carve it up as if it were some sort of sausage.

So, we will find ourselves in a situation where business people will no longer enjoy the support of the entire diplomatic apparatus, and they are very concerned about that. I had the opportunity to discuss this issue with them, and they feel that ambassadors will no longer be evaluated. This is indeed the case as regards their performance from a trade policy perspective.

As we can see, this legislation does not make any sense. Moreover—and this was pointed out by a number of participants, including some Liberals—what is the point of splitting the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, when we are told that, in a few weeks, the Department of Foreign Affairs will propose new directions for our foreign policy? This is truly putting the cart before the horse.

If, at the end of the process, we had said “Yes, perhaps we will be better served by splitting the department”, I would not be more in agreement, but at least we could say that there is a logic underlying the process. But here the government is making an administrative decision and then it will review the main focuses of our foreign policy. This obviously lacks any logic; the government is way out in left field.

I will conclude by quoting a former Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, who said in *The Globe and Mail*—as hon. members can see, I do read English newspapers—“If it works, why try to fix it?” It is exactly the same with the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. It works. We should invest more money in this department, but there is no need to repair it by splitting it in two.

●(1730)

Hon. Dan McTeague (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I thank you for giving me the floor. I listened carefully to the hon. member's speech from my office. It is interesting that he finds it unfortunate to split the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. He said that the fundamental issue was that this splitting would have a negative impact on our policy. I find this interesting, since the Bloc Québécois is a party that wants to split the country. Perhaps he is an expert in splitting and dividing.

Will the hon. member agree, like other members, that since the department's merger in 1981, there may have been times when this merger was justified, and times when it was not? Does he not think that this could be the subject of a debate in the committee on which he sits?

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[English]

FOOD AND DRUGS ACT

The House resumed from February 7 consideration of the motion that Bill C-206, an act to amend the Food and Drugs Act (warning labels regarding the consumption of alcohol), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

The Acting Speaker (Hon. Jean Augustine): It being 5:30 p.m., the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at second reading stage of Bill C-206 under private members' business.

Call in the members.

●(1805)

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

(Division No. 34)

YEAS

Members

Abbott
Alcock
Anderson (Victoria)
Asselin
Bains

Adams
Ambrose
André
Bagnell
Bakopanos

Batters
Bélanger
Bellavance
Benoit
Bevilacqua
Blaikie
Blondin-Andrew
Boivin
Bonsant
Bouchard
Boulianne
Breitkreuz
Broadbent
Brunelle
Cardin
Carrie
Carroll
Catterall
Chatters
Christopherson
Cleary
Comartin
Côté
Crête
Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley)
Cuzner
Davies
Desjarlais
Devolin
Dosanjh
Drouin
Duceppe
Easter
Emerson
Eyking
Fletcher
Fontana
Gagnon (Saint-Maurice—Champlain)
Galloway
Gauthier
Godfrey
Goldring
Grewal (Fleetwood—Port Kells)
Guay
Harris
Holland
Julian
Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Kilgour
Kotto
Laframboise
Lapierre (Lévis—Bellechasse)
Lavallée
LeBlanc
Lemay
Lévesque
Lukiwski
Lunney
MacKay (Central Nova)
Macklin
Maloney
Marleau
Martin (Winnipeg Centre)
Masse
McCallum
McGuire
McTeague
Menzies
Miller
Minna
Moore (Fundy Royal)
Myers
O'Brien
Oda
Pacetti
Patry
Phinney
Pickard (Chatham-Kent—Essex)
Powers
Proulx
Redman
Reynolds
Rodriguez

Beaumier
Bell
Bennett
Bergeron
Bigras
Blais
Boire
Bonin
Boshcoff
Boudria
Bradshaw
Brisson
Brown (Oakville)
Bulte
Carr
Carrier
Casson
Chan
Chong
Clavet
Coderre
Comuzzi
Cotler
Crowder
Cummins
D'Amours
Deschamps
DeVillers
Dion
Doyle
Dryden
Duncan
Efford
Epp
Faille
Folco
Frulla
Gagnon (Jonquière—Alma)
Gaudet
Godbout
Godin
Goodale
Guamieri
Guimond
Hiebert
Jean
Kadis
Karetak-Lindell
Khan
Komarnicki
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)
Lapierre (Outremont)
Lauzon
Layton
Lee
Lessard
Loubier
Lunn
MacAulay
MacKenzie
Malhi
Marceau
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)
Martin (Sault Ste. Marie)
Matthews
McGuinty
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)
Ménard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin)
Merrifield
Mills
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)
Murphy
Neville
Obhrai
Owen
Paquette
Peterson
Picard (Drummond)
Plamondon
Preston
Ratansi
Regan
Robillard
Rota

Roy
Sauvageau
Schellenberger
Scott
Siksay
Simard (Beauport—Limoulo)
Simms
Smith (Pontiac)
Solberg
St. Amand
Steckle
Szabo
Temelkovski
Basques)
Thibault (West Nova)
Thompson (Wild Rose)
Torsney
Ur
Valley
Vellacott
Volpe
Warawa
Watson
Williams
Yelich— 225

Saada
Scarpaleggia
Schmidt (Kelowna—Lake Country)
Sgro
Silva
Simard (Saint Boniface)
Skelton
Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul)
St-Hilaire
St. Denis
Stronach
Telegdi
Thibault (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les
Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)
Toews
Trost
Valeri
Van Loan
Vincent
Wappel
Wasylycia-Leis
Wilfert
Wrzesnewszky

Private Members' Business

NAYS

Members

Allison
Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands)
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)
Fitzpatrick
Gouk
Harrison
Jaffer
Nicholson
Pallister
Rajotte
Ritz
Tilson
Tweed

PAIRED

Members

Byrne
Demers
Dhalla
Ianno
Ménard (Hochelaga)
Perron
Poirier-Rivard
Zed— 16

The Acting Speaker (Hon. Jean Augustine): I declare the motion carried.

(Bill read the second time and referred to a committee)

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. It being 6:09 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's order paper.

* * *

● (1810)

PATENT ACT

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP) moved that Bill C-274, an act to amend the Patent Act, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Private Members' Business

He said: Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure today to rise and speak about the very important private member's bill that I first introduced in the House in November 2004. The bill is quite simple. The beginning of the bill provides certain definitional changes that are necessary for purposes of clarification, but the real essence of the bill is a small paragraph in bold at the very end, which states:

The Patented Medicines (Notice of Compliance) Regulations are repealed.

I hope that the spirit of cooperation on moving bills forward to committee will be extended to this very important initiative. I think Canadians deserve to know that the politicians they elect take issues seriously, especially when those issues hit them right in the pocketbook.

The cost of pharmaceutical products has been on the rise in recent years. The current regulatory regime puts an upward push on prices, which results in average Canadians not only paying more through their benefit plans or at the pharmacy counter, but also through their tax dollars that support our public, universal health care system.

Before going too far, I want to talk about what this bill is not about. The bill is not about reducing patent protection for innovative pharmaceutical companies. The bill is also not about taking sides in the ongoing war of words and actions between brand name and generic pharmaceutical industries and producers in this country.

This bill is about making sure that the pharmaceutical industry is treated like all other industries before the law. That is what will benefit Canadians most. Currently there are loopholes, which means that both industries can use a variety of tactics which keep lower cost generic drugs off the market longer than the patent period and encourage litigation and waste of money and time.

The amount of legal machinations that are employed as a result of these regulations is sickening because of the money that is wasted, money that could be better spent on development and innovation, on getting generic versions to the market, and lastly, on getting people the medications they need to treat their illnesses.

Ensuring fair competition is an important public policy of this country. However, our drug regulation regime fosters anti-competitive behaviour. The end result is that Canadians suffer en masse.

Drugs are the fastest rising cost component in our health care system. I believe that we all have a duty in this Parliament to try to address this in the larger context of improving the affordability of our public medicare system. In fact, I believe it is part of saving it in order to ensure that we pass on this national treasure and heritage to our children and our children's children.

Consumers pay more for their drugs than they should have to, particularly for some of the drugs most needed by Canadians. When drug monopolies are extended past the 20 year patent period, consumers, patients, governments and our health care system pay more for drugs, because generic drugs are priced on average 40% to 55% lower for the same brand version of a drug. It has been estimated that the various legal techniques used have cost close to \$1.5 billion since the regulations came into effect just over 10 years ago.

No other Canadian industry has similar regulations. This is isolated and alone and exceptional, so how does this happen? Why

has the Liberal government allowed \$1.5 billion of Canadians' money to go into the pockets of the mostly multinational pharmaceutical companies?

It happens because the regulations, known as the patented medicine notice of compliance regulations, or PM(NOC) regulations, allow it. Even though they legally are abusive and generally damaging, these regulations have been in place in their existing form for over seven years. To date the government has not changed those regulations.

The purpose of the regulations was and continues to be to develop a balance between the competing interests of the brand and generic industries. Unfortunately, they have the ability to do the exact opposite. Successive Liberal and Conservative governments have chosen to sweep this important public policy issue under the carpet and also keep Parliament in the dark.

Let me give members a little bit of history. The regulations we are talking about now are relatively new in a Canadian context. They took their first form in 1993 with Bill C-91 and have been the subject of several regulatory changes since that time.

In the past, the Canadian government saw a key role for itself in limiting market monopolies in pharmaceutical products. Compulsory licensing was used, which meant that a generic could compete with the lower priced versions. In 1985, a federal commission of inquiry known as the Eastman commission, set up by Trudeau's government, concluded that: the use of compulsory licensing had saved hundreds of millions of dollars, no adverse impact on the research of the pharmaceutical industry happened, and nor were the decisions of multinational drug companies regarding investment in research and development affected by this regime.

But with pressure from the U.S. around the 1988 and the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement and NAFTA in 1994, Bill C-22 and Bill C-91 radically altered the way Canada deals with pharmaceutical patents. The 17 year patent protection became 20 years. Products, not just processes, could be patented, and compulsory licensing was completely removed with Bill C-91.

• (1815)

A federal commission of inquiry today would likely find the opposite of the 1985 findings to be true. The radical shift in government policy, largely the result of pressure from the United States in negotiating free trade deals, has undermined the possibility for our government to retain some element of real control over pharmaceutical prices to ensure Canadians have access to affordable pharmaceuticals at the pharmacy counter and in our public health care system.

Private Members' Business

What do the regulations do? The easiest way to describe the regulations from a consumer's perspective is that through a variety of legal techniques which even the government itself has tried to stop but has failed in the courts, brand companies are able, if they choose, to delay generic drugs entering the market. How does this happen?

The Liberals would like us to believe it is a very complicated system that is best left to the bureaucrats. I would say it is only complicated if we believe that the bureaucrats are the best people situated to make decisions on behalf of the country. The truth of the matter is that the industry that regularly ranks first among all Canadian industries in terms of profitability, whose main operation is to repackage drugs that are actually researched, developed and manufactured in other countries, continues to get its cake and eat it too.

The regulations got off to a very bad start in the dying days of the Mulroney government when Bill C-91 was rammed through Parliament when the PM(NOC) regulations were instituted without any public consultation through the normal gazetting period. All of the changes since have been regulatory. This means that the representatives of the people in the House had no opportunity to debate them in a binding way. As a result, generic manufacturers have been kept off the market in a couple of different ways through what is known as evergreening and automatic injunctions.

Automatic injunctions allow brand companies to allege patent infringement when a generic applies for a notice of allegation. This process in and of itself would be relatively harmless if the real problem of determining what kinds of patents are allowed to be listed on the patent register were clear, but they are not.

A brand name can list many different patents for the same product by claiming different uses, patenting different forms, such as capsules or tablets, changing the name of the drug, or in the past, the name of the drug company. There sometimes are numerous patents that can hold up a generic from entering the market. In addition, the courts have interpreted that the regulations allow brands to list all of these multiple patents even though in one case the judge reported that it was "opposite to logic".

Although the generics eventually win in 75% of these cases, they are on average kept off the markets between 15 and 21 months when the automatic stay is applied for. However, when we look at a few blockbuster drugs, we can see that when it is more profitable, brands have been able to maintain their monopoly for up to four years on average by applying for automatic injunctions on patents that it is fairly obvious have been strategically registered to maintain their monopoly and maximize profits, at the expense of consumers and our drug industry.

Is rewarding an innovative manufacturer with strong patent protection such a bad thing? No it is not, but that is not what we have with the PM(NOC) regulations. Instead we have a system that continues to add virtual patent extensions without accompanying results in research and development or domestic manufacturing.

It is important to note that not all brand companies employ such abusive tactics and are not actually in keeping with good business principles and the spirit of the regulations. The problem, however, is that it does not stop all those and a certain amount of patent

infringements or claims have delayed generic versions in some of the worst situations costing hundreds of millions of dollars.

In 2003 the Patented Medicine Prices Review Board, the primary independent policy tool available to Canadians to examine how brand companies operate, reported that of 103 patents added to the patent register, only 16 were new active substances. Patents are being registered for uses not approved by Health Canada, for new coatings, and changes to active ingredients. This is not innovation; this is just delay.

The brand companies promised us innovation when the PM(NOC) regulations were first introduced. They continue to maintain that they are the only way to allow them to do innovative R and D in this country. Even with the favourable regulations today, which the brands actually do support, they have been failing to meet the commitment they made to Canadians of a ratio of 10% R and D to sales for the last three years.

In 2003 brand spending on research and development fell to its lowest level since 1989. Spending on basic research continues to be the smallest portion of R and D. In 2003 it actually fell by over 9%. Over half of the R and D spending was on clinical trials. Meanwhile they spend tons of money and an exorbitant amount of resources on marketing and advertising to people.

• (1820)

In a 2003 study by Research Infosource a generic company placed high, ranking at number 13 of Canada's top 100 corporate R and D spenders. This is the first time a generic company has ranked higher than a brand company. This clearly indicates it is not just the brand companies that can make exclusive claims to R and D expenditures as a justification for the system.

The president and COO of that highly ranked generic company made a presentation at the June 2003 industry committee hearings. That person in favour of a review, in favour of eliminating the automatic injunctions and the need for stronger regulations to prevent evergreening and argued that more R and D would happen on the generic side if the situation resolved.

Why should automatic injunctions and evergreening concern us here?

Private Members' Business

Drug prices are the fastest rising component of our health care system. The average price of a drug produced by a brand company increased by 75% in the decade between 1993 and 2003. In the same time period generic drug prices only increased by 42%. Generic drugs are part of the solution to keeping drug prices under control.

The system and the regime needs to change. Recently there have been many calls from a variety of sources not only for a review of the regulations but also to make sure that regulations allow for accelerated access to non-patented drugs.

We must make a real effort to improve this situation. Those who can least afford it are suffering the most because of the abusive strategies that are legally used under the PM(NOC) regulations.

Canadians, benefit plan workers, benefit plans themselves, employers and all levels of government that purchase pharmaceutical products for delivering public health care are hurt the most under the current regulatory regime. In fact, it often leads to labour disputes because benefit packages are one of the most contentious issues among organized workforces and their employers. Generic companies which may be prevented from entering markets and thus are losing potential revenue at least have an opportunity to sue for damages when they are put off in the market, but the Canadian public does not.

Brand drug companies can be investigated by the Patented Medicine Prices Review Board and if they are found to be selling at excessive prices, they are asked if they will voluntarily pay back the money. This is called a voluntary compliance undertaking, known as VCU. There is, however, no mechanism for this money to be reimbursed to consumers, drug benefit plans, or even provincial governments. All the money simply goes back into the Liberals' general coffers. There is not even a guarantee that the money will be spent on health care.

The consumers at the most vulnerable state overpay for drugs; the companies pay that money back and it goes to the government, not back to them. That is unconscionable and it should be corrected.

The PM(NOC) regulations are above and beyond what we is required in terms of patent protection for the pharmaceutical industry.

Public policy objectives must be more important than pressure from multinational companies. Any changes to the regulations must address the most important public policy objective when it comes to pharmaceuticals: making sure that Canadians and our publicly funded health care system have access to affordable drugs.

Just last September the Liberals promised to work with the provinces. The first ministers task force on developing a pharmaceutical strategy has as one of its nine key components to accelerate access to non-patented drugs. In order for that to happen the PM (NOC) regulations in their current form have to be eliminated.

Some independent sources have reviewed this issue over the last several years. One of the more interesting ones came from stock analyst Hemant Shah from the *Wall Street Journal*:

The anti-generic strategy by pharmaceutical companies has probably the highest rate of return of any business activity they do right now.

That shows the demonstrated awareness of Wall Street on what the practices of the industry have been through these regulations to maximize their profits at the expense of people.

I will conclude with the following quote from Dr. Marcia Angell, who is former editor-in-chief of the *New England Journal of Medicine*:

Nothing drug companies do is as profitable as stretching out monopoly rights on their blockbusters. Extending that privileged time by a variety of stratagems is the most innovative activity of big pharma. For blockbuster drugs, it is certainly the most lucrative.

The health and welfare of Canadian citizens, and with an aging population, the requirement of access to drugs and medicines to treat their illnesses is a paramount issue not only for our generation but also for the future of Canada and saving its medicare system. Let us stop the abuse and make sure that we innovate and do not litigate.

● (1825)

Hon. Dan McTeague (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for sponsoring the bill. As he knows, many of us have worked a lot of overtime to put this issue in its proper perspective and come up with a regime that would at least constructively deal with regulations which, by all accounts, have not been very favourable to either innovation or to the welfare of consumers in this country.

I would like to point out that the hon. member for Windsor West and my colleague, the hon. member for Edmonton—Leduc were helpful in terms of our experience. This is a very important issue for the parliamentary secretary as well. He has seized upon the issue and will be introducing, hopefully in the next few months, a formal understanding of what the regulations will look like.

The Supreme Court of Canada has indicated that the current regulations are draconian. I wonder if the member could give an illustration how costly the current regime, without amendments, will be to Canadian consumers, particularly as it relates to our balance of trade.

Mr. Brian Masse: Mr. Speaker, the member for Pickering—Scarborough East pioneered this issue long before I came to Parliament. He made sure it was at the table in the industry committee when I arrived in 2002. That was the first time this issue had a serious review. It did not reach the floor of the House of Commons for a vote, but it at least made it to that stage and I congratulate the member for that.

I can give the member a couple of examples of the cost to Canadians. The anti-depressant drug called Paxil had nine patents on it. The original 20 year patent was due in 1999. The drug did not get on the market until 2003 because of evergreening. There was a delay of 1,442 days which cost Canadians \$114 million alone.

Another drug known as Losec was due to enter the market in 1999 but it took until 2004. There are still some outstanding issues regarding this drug. This one particular drug had a loss of \$443 million. This is money that is lost to our economy.

Private Members' Business

The important thing we need to recognize is that Canada is an export country. Almost all our manufacturing and our industries are in surplus situations. We have a surplus in the United States. This is one of the few industries where we have a massive trade deficit. The industry itself no longer calls itself a manufacturer because it does mostly packaging.

Mr. James Rajotte (Edmonton—Leduc, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I note that my colleague is recommending that we eliminate the NOC regulations, but he is not recommending that we eliminate the early working provisions. According to the Industry Canada officials who presented at committee, early working provisions and the NOC regulations are flip sides of the same coin. My colleague obviously disagrees with that.

Could the member explain to Canadians what are the early working provisions? Why does he not see them as flip sides of the same coin? Why is he recommending eliminating the NOC regulations but leaving in the early working provisions which certainly favour the generic industry in Canada?

Mr. Brian Masse: Mr. Speaker, the early working provisions allow generic drugs to be manufactured and tested and put on the market after the 20 year period. I have not put that in the bill because I wanted to sharpen the debate on this issue. I am certainly open to amendments if that is the balance that is required. If my bill receives support and gets to committee, I would encourage that.

It is important that the bill get to committee. If it does not, we are telling the government that it is okay for this to be done through regulations and that parliamentarians have no business whatsoever in the debate on this issue. This is the opportunity. One member of the Bloc Québécois has a bill which addresses part of these issues too. We are open to amendments. Early working provisions could be part of them.

Some of the issues also relate to additional costs. We are certainly open to discussing that issue as well.

• (1830)

Hon. Larry Bagnell (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the member could outline how the new provisions will compare with other major competitors once the new regime has been set up. In order not to put brand name companies out of business, how will this compare with other major competitors?

Mr. Brian Masse: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for Yukon who, when I arrived in 2002, was raising very serious questions about how to deal with this issue.

In the United States, for example, this is amazing. George Bush is a progressive in this field because only one automatic stay of injunction is allowed in the U.S., so the Americans have addressed this. We know the influence of the industry in the United States, but at the same time, there was enough recognition of the problem and this leaves Canada alone in the world with such a regime.

Hon. Jerry Pickard (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the member for Windsor West for bringing the issue forward and colleagues who have spoken in the House who are very concerned about the balance that we are trying to create in Canada.

This is a unique balance in public interest. When we look at the implications of intellectual property in the pharmaceutical industry, the government must maintain a delicate balance between two important and competing policy objectives. On the one hand, we must encourage advancements in medicine by providing effective patent protection for new drugs on all fronts, and on the other hand, we must ensure that versions of drugs are able to move forward.

Bill C-274, introduced by the member for Windsor West, seeks to disrupt this balance by repealing the patented medicines notice of compliance regulations. The regulations together with the early working exemption under the Patent Act are two pillars of the government's balanced drug patent policy. The early working exception allows generic companies to use a patent drug for the purpose of seeking approval to market a generic version of a brand name drug.

Normally, the conduct of this would constitute patent infringement, but the early working exception allows a generic drug company to compete with Canada's health regulatory and approval process while the equivalent brand name drug is still under patent.

It is then possible for a brand name drug company to be in a position to enter the market as soon as possible after patent expiry. The generic pharmaceutical industry estimates that early working can accelerate the market entry of its products in Canada by three to five years.

While early working is intended to promote the timely market entry of generic drugs, the regulations are necessary to ensure that this exception to the patent infringement is not abused by generic companies who are seeking early product approval.

Patent protection is an important incentive in encouraging investment and promoting research and development of new and better medical therapies. The regulations provide incentives by ensuring that brand name drugs enjoy secure, stable, uninterrupted periods of market exclusivity prior to the eventual and irreversible arrival of generic competition.

If passed, the bill would seriously undermine Canada's balanced drug patent policy by effectively stripping brand name drug companies of the most effective patent enforcement mechanism that presently exists at their disposal.

Repealing the regulations would prompt the brand name pharmaceutical industry to withdraw its considerable R and D investments from Canada with a corresponding loss in research-intensive employment here. It would also compromise Canada's access to the latest medical therapies as brand name drug companies would no longer have any incentive to seek the Canadian market promptly.

Private Members' Business

Industry Canada and Health Canada are aware of the concerns of the member for Windsor West regarding the regulations and his reasons for advancing Bill C-274. In recent years representatives of the generic pharmaceutical industry have been increasingly vocal in allegations that brand name companies are abusing the regulations to unfairly delay generic competition, a practice they refer to as evergreening.

The government remains convinced however, that regulations are a vital part of this industry and Canada's balanced drug patent policy is important. Generic drug companies continue to challenge brand name patents early and often. And so, without the protection of regulations, infringing generic drugs could enter the market soon after the innovator and well before the expiry of the original product's patent.

That said, the government recognizes that there have been instances of behaviour compliance by the generic pharmaceutical industry. We have therefore developed a package of regulatory amendments intended to restore the original balanced policy intent behind the regulations.

• (1835)

The amendments, which were pre-published in the *Canada Gazette* Part I, on December 12, 2004 will facilitate the market entry of generic versions of brand name drugs immediately following expiry of relevant patents as the bill originally intended, while at the same time allowing brand name companies to duly promote improvements to the original form of the drug that are genuinely accepted.

If passed, this package of amendments would approve Canada's competitiveness as an investment location and would establish more predictable and stable rules relating to the intellectual property of pharmaceuticals. It is my hope that the member for Windsor West will support these amendments and, in so doing, support Canada's efforts to ensure that we continue to have a balanced drug patent policy regime that will continue to be the leading choice of investment for our pharmaceutical industry.

Mr. James Rajotte (Edmonton—Leduc, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I too want to commend my colleague from Windsor West for bringing this issue forward. I know it is an issue very near and dear to him.

I am pleased to speak to Bill C-274, an act to amend the Patent Act. This bill would seek to repeal the notice of compliance regulations and reduce the extent of patent protection. It was actually a former Conservative government that introduced these regulations in the first place that this bill seeks to amend. The Conservative Party today continues to believe that the intent of a pharmaceutical policy should be to achieve a balance that encourages the development of new drugs and treatments for Canadians, and at the same time provide those drugs to Canadians at an affordable price.

What this means is that the Conservative Party supports regulations that respect property rights and encourages research and development into new drugs by brand name companies. At the same time we support regulations that allow generic manufacturers to offer similar medicines at a lower price after a reasonable period of time. We also support the existing system now where the Patented Medicine Prices Review Board regulates the prices of brand name

drugs here in Canada, which actually does not happen with the generics, and that is an important point we should make here.

I want to identify two types of pharmaceutical manufacturers. It is important, especially for viewers watching this, to be aware of this.

The first is what is called the brand name or the research-based pharmaceutical company like Pfizer, GlaxoSmithKline, AstraZeneca, Merck Frosst, et cetera. These companies do the basic research and create drugs from scratch. These drugs are certainly expensive to research and develop, and they are one side of the pharmaceutical industry.

The second type of manufacturer is the generic manufacturer. In Canada, basically the two largest are Apotex and Novopharm. The generic companies copy a brand name drug after its patent expires, although as the question I asked the member earlier indicates, through the early working provisions they actually research that so that they are able to go to market as soon as the 20 year patent expires. It is important to note though that they copy certain drugs. The generic industry copies the drugs which are generally the most lucrative, and that obviously makes economic sense to them, but they do not copy all the drugs, especially the ones that do not in fact raise a lot of revenues.

As written, Bill C-274 in our view would seriously harm the brand name pharmaceutical industry in Canada by removing all the protection regulations currently provided to the brand name companies. The stated objective of the bill is to exclude drugs from the scope of the regulation-making power provided for in subsection 55.2(4) of the Patent Act, while making other amendments to reduce the extent of patent protection for medicines. The bill would achieve its objective in part through appeals in the notice of compliance regulations.

In our view, the bill would ignore our obligation under the TRIPS agreement, under these multilateral agreements, to provide 20-year patent protection for brand name pharmaceutical companies. The fact is that no other country treats pharmaceutical patent issues the same way it treats patents for cars, telescopes or other industries. For example, and I know the member in his speech mentioned this, the pharmaceutical industry does have patent rules that are particular for that industry, but that is the same as in other countries.

The fact is that if a generic manufacturer ignored a patent and put its product on the market before the patent had expired, it would take years for a brand name pharmaceutical company to go through the regular court system and a full infringement action. If the brand name won, it would likely never gain back the market it lost to the generic company because that is how quickly people would switch because of difference in price. It would take more time to recoup damage costs.

Private Members' Business

Our concern is that if this bill were passed companies like Merck Frosst and GlaxoSmithKline would likely remove themselves as much as possible from Canada. I know some people do not see this as a concern. Speaking personally as a member from Edmonton, I know that these companies invest a lot into R and D of infectious diseases, for instance, Dr. Lorne Tyrrell, the former dean of medicine at the U of A, is researching into hepatitis B and hepatitis C at the U of A.

These are the companies that are investing the money into trying to research and create new drugs to lengthen or to certainly improve human life. Canada's brand name industry spends roughly \$1 billion on R and D. It hires extremely well educated Canadians, most obviously with post-secondary degrees, and it produces some truly amazing drugs such as the asthma drug Singulair in Montreal.

• (1840)

I acknowledge that there are problems with litigation on certain drugs which have multiple patents. I support efforts to reduce the litigation, at which I know the government is currently looking. I support the member for Windsor West in making an effort to bring those regulatory changes open, whether it is before a committee or before the House.

However, we want to seek to preserve that balance. It is important on the patent issue to make this known. In the hearings we have had, both Health Canada and Industry Canada pointed out that most drugs had either one or two patents. It is the big, blockbuster drugs like Paxil or Losec that have eight patents, which is the big cause of most of the litigation between the generic and the brand names in Canada. That is an important point to make. In our view the bill shifts the balance away from that precious balance to entirely in favour of the generic manufacturers.

In our view the generation and development of new scientific knowledge is pivotal to the growth and the prosperity of the Canadian economy. The Conservative Party would like to see the brand name manufacturers invest more money in R and D. We have asked them to do that and we will push them to do that, and to hire even more well-educated Canadians.

If the bill were passed, it would have quite the opposite effect on the industry, and it would have a negative effect on the Canadian economy.

I understand fully that the pharmaceutical industry is litigious, but even as former industry ministers from the government side have pointed out, will this ever stop? I think the changes in the regulations that the government is looking at now will certainly reduce that. The fact is with the amount of money around the industry, it is likely to be litigious long into the future.

I would like to explain some of the issues relating to patents and how the automatic injunction and early working provisions work. Normally a patent is exclusive. A patent cannot be broken before it expires. However, the notice of compliance regulations allows generics to copy and conduct clinical trials of drugs still under patent as part of a system called "early working".

To use plain English and to use a specific example, before its 20 year patent expires, the generics can create a copy of the asthma drug, Singulair, for mass production. They can conduct their human trials on the copy and they can get Health Canada to review and approve their copy before the original patent on Singulair, which is owned by Merck Frosst, has expired.

The problem is that once this copy has been approved, the generics do not want to wait until the patent expires, especially if it is a blockbuster drug like the ones I mentioned, the anti-depressant Paxil or the ulcer drug Losec. Generics, according to the testimony from Health Canada, challenge patents to get on the market earlier. They will take the brand name companies to court and argue that the patent does not apply to their specific copy of the drug.

As members before me mentioned, the Standing Committee on Industry in June 2003 conducted hearings on this matter. We asked Industry Canada if it was common for generics to attempt to break brand name patents before the patent has expired.

To quote the question my colleague from Yellowhead asked at the time of Industry officials, "Have the generics challenged the 20 years? Have they tried to put a product on [the market] before the 20 year period [has expired]?" The resounding answer from officials was yes. To quote them, "Yes, I'm not aware of a drug where they haven't".

Make no mistake, early working provides the generic companies with a distinct competitive advantage over the patent holders and over other countries where early working does not exist, such as the United States. Thus, there is a counterbalancing measure in the notice of compliance regulations which is called an automatic injunction. It is also known as linkage regulations by the brands.

When a generic wants to copy a brand name drug, it must inform the brand. The brand has 45 days to advise the generic company as to whether or not the brand believes the generic is infringing on its patent rights. If the patent holder agrees that patent has expired, then the generic is given permission to go to market. This happens repeatedly once the patent is not contested.

However, if the brand believes their patent would be infringed by the introduction of a generic product, the brand is granted an automatic injunction. The brand goes to the federal court and is granted 24 months for the case to proceed.

The generics call this practice evergreening. Their argument is that the brand gets its 20 years plus the 24 months, so at least 22 years. However, what this fails to disclose is the fact that the generics can actually introduce in year 17, 18 or 19 and the 24 month period can actually be within the 20 year patent. If the generic tries to get on the market in the 20th year of the patent and the brand is granted an automatic injunction, in that case it extends the life of the patent.

Private Members' Business

We, in this party do not support the bill because we believe it upsets the balance between the research companies and the generic companies.

• (1845)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Paul Crête (Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, BQ): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to speak on this bill. First, a historical overview is important.

We must remember that Canada wanted a system that would allow for an industry researching new medicines, based in large part on a model adopted by Brian Mulroney's Conservative government. An agreement was reached with the research industry. As a result, if the government assured it stable conditions over a number of years, the industry would, in return, commit to investing in research. In fact, both parties kept their commitment, which allowed the establishment of a very sound research industry, particularly in Quebec.

In addition to the federal government's conditions, the Quebec government implemented proposals and ways to protect such medicines. Today, we see the numerous and significant spin-offs of this. In the greater Montreal area, many people are making a good living from this industry, thanks to generous salaries. This phenomenon has also spread to the Quebec City region.

Today, the bill before the House proposes to set aside what we call the linkage regulations, which corresponds to the compromise developed to create a balance between research companies developing new products, which have to invest significant funds to do so, and the generic companies copying drugs, which want to ensure their availability to the most people possible. The balance that we have tried to create is extremely fragile. In fact, for quite some time, each party, both the generic drug manufacturers and the manufacturers of new drugs resulting from indepth research, has been trying to ensure that the conditions regulating this sector are to its advantage.

I have been sitting on the Standing Committee on Industry, Sciences and Technology for two or three years, and my predecessors in the Bloc Québécois did so for 10 years. The fact of the matter is that we have always been confronted with the same reality. Whenever we are listening to the arguments by one side or the other, we find some parts acceptable and some questionable. Ultimately, one constant emerges: what is most detrimental to research and development is the desire for constant change. This has adverse consequences. In the drug manufacturing industry, competition can be seen not only between research companies, but also within the companies, according to the country where they are established. For example, in Canada, when the regulatory environment is changed, the head office in the United States or Europe stands to benefit if we make regular changes and let it be known that these changes will be detrimental to these research companies.

This is the case to some extent with the bill before us. It reflects the vision of the member who introduced it, which is that, whether the drugs are research-based or generic, tough competition among drug manufacturers should be encouraged in order to maintain prices at a minimum. But the bill overlooks an important consequence: this

would very significantly disrupt the current job structure in the industry. I find it difficult to believe that this is an appropriate solution.

It is important that this debate be a public one. The public has to be aware of the consequences of the choices made by governments. In this sense, it would be interesting if all angles of dealing with the issue could be presented in this House.

At the same time, we in the Bloc Québécois obviously cannot support such an approach, as it would have too great a negative impact on the economy.

When we look at how drug pricing works in Canada, there are other solutions which have to be considered as well, to determine their relevance. The fact should also be taken into account that, at present, the Department of Industry, in cooperation with the Department of Health, is conducting consultations on a proposed amendment to the linkage regulations. These consultations are continuing until February 24.

We have already heard from the generic companies to the effect that they will reject the proposed amendments as drafted. It is possible that when the consultations and negotiations are over, by February 24 or a few days later, we will be able to reach a compromise solution. That is what I want. For the moment, that is where these companies stand.

As for the research-based companies, we do not yet know their official position. The proposed amendments to the linkage regulations may be acceptable to young companies just beginning to develop products.

• (1850)

However, they may not appeal to the older companies that have well-established products. The inverse may also be true. The analysis is not yet complete on that side.

Nevertheless, it must be said that many of the realities of pharmaceutical manufacturing do change over time. Thus, 25 years ago pharmaceuticals did not have the mission they have today, of prevention and insurance. For example, the cost of a drug to lower blood cholesterol rates, which the patient has to pay for, may seem significant, but the cost for society is much less than if it had to pay for surgery. There are financial costs and also human costs related to this.

Thus, it must be studied very thoroughly and very carefully. At present, I am leaning much more in favour of an approach that would try to ensure that the consultation being carried out by the departments of industry and health is done properly and done transparently enough that, in the end, if we do eventually amend the linkage regulations in a way that is acceptable to both parties, we will be resolving an important issue.

I do not think, however, that doing away with the linkage regulations today would solve anything. I am sure that there would be a great deal of opposition in this House against it. It would be worthwhile seeking the opinion of international experts who would not have to issue opinions on drug quality per se, but only on the economic impact of such a decision. This would enable us to see immediately that this was inappropriate for the economy of Quebec and of Canada in general.

There is so much being put into creating research structures for training academics, who must have opportunities available to them in the end. It would not be to the advantage of the people of Quebec and of Canada to become nothing more than consumers of the most economical drugs. We also need people who produce drugs, not just experimental drugs, but also generic drugs under reasonable conditions.

The linkage regulations have been through so much over the past 10 years that now we have identified the gaps and areas that need work. I do not think it is necessary to start from scratch. Instead we could see whether the government's proposed amendments are acceptable or not.

The most concrete example, albeit very complicated, that I can give is that during the creation of a new drug by a company, the generic company can ask for permission to reproduce the drug and the research company that created the drug can ask for an injunction. Under the current act and regulations, there can even be multiple injunctions, which means the generic product will never enter the market.

There may be a way to refine this so as to reach a solution that limits the number of injunctions that can be made. There will be a mechanism that will help continue to create jobs, which is what we want.

I hope this bill will not be passed by the House. It was tabled with many good intentions regarding the impact on the availability of cheaper drugs. However, when we look at all the data, the economic repercussions and the quality of the drugs, we realize that we have to make sure that this is handled properly.

We realize that other problems have surfaced because of online pharmacies. We realize that some prices of generic drugs in Canada are much higher than they should be while prices of drugs and research products are controlled on the market. We realize there are also implications for the provinces.

For all these reasons, I think the route proposed in the bill is not appropriate.

• (1855)

[*English*]

Mr. Roger Valley (Kenora, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Windsor West for bringing this issue forward and giving us all a chance to make some comments on it.

In order to foster growth and create high quality, well paying jobs, the government has set, as one of its core priorities, the building of a 21st century economy. In furtherance of this, the government must continue its work to support sound marketplace framework laws.

Private Members' Business

A fair, efficient and competitive marketplace, combined with an effective regulatory framework, creates a business environment that is supportive of innovation, investment and economic growth.

To foster an efficient and competitive marketplace in the pharmaceutical sector, it is necessary that the government's drug patent laws strike an appropriate balance between encouraging pharmaceutical investment and innovation by providing effective patent protection for innovative medical therapies while, at the same time, facilitating the earliest possible entry of non-infringing, lower cost generic pharmaceutical products.

The patented medicines, notice of compliance) regulations, or the PMNOC regulations, and the "early working exception" under the Patent Act are both integral to the maintenance of this balance, a balance Bill C-274 will most certainly undermine, if passed, given that it calls for the outright repeal of the PMNOC regulations.

In the pharmaceutical industry, the early working exception allows generic drug manufacturers to use a patented innovative drug for the purpose of seeking approval to market a competing version of that drug.

Normally, conduct of this kind would constitute patent infringement but an exception has been made so that the generic drug companies can compete with Health Canada's regulatory approval process while the equivalent innovative drug is still under patent. This is done so the generic can be in a position to enter the market as soon as possible after the patent expiry. This ensures that the patentees do not enjoy a de facto monopoly beyond the life of the patent by virtue of the time it takes for a generic drug company to complete Health Canada's regulatory review process.

While early working is intended to promote the timely market entry of generic drugs, the PMNOC regulations are necessary to ensure that this exception to patent infringement is not used improperly by generic drug companies that might seek to sell their products during the term of the competitor's patent.

Patent protection is an important incentive in encouraging investment and promoting research and development and giving the difficulties traditionally associated with protecting pharmaceutical patent rights by way of conventional infringement litigation, and the PMNOC regulations are intended to operate as a potent patent enforcement mechanism.

In this way, the regulations and the early working exception work in concert to maintain a balance in Canada's drug patent policy. It is important that neither instrument be considered in isolation as the intended policy can only be achieved when the two operate in a balanced fashion.

Overall, the government's drug patent policy appears to be achieving its objectives of encouraging investment and fostering competition. Since the introduction of the early working and the PMNOC regulations in 1993, total R and D spending in Canada by innovative companies has more than doubled.

Private Members' Business

Over that same period, the Patented Medicine Prices Review Board reports that manufacturers' prices of patented drugs in Canada have followed a consistent pattern of decline or near negligible increases and the price of patented drugs in Canada has gone from being 23% higher than the medium international price to 5% below the median and 40% lower than the price in the United States. In fact, the price of patented drugs in Canada has risen by less than the consumer price index in almost every year since 1988.

Despite these positive outcomes, the PMNOC regulations remain a contentious policy instrument. In recent years, representatives of the generic pharmaceutical industry have become increasingly vocal in their allegations that brand name companies are abusing the regulations to unfairly delay generic competition.

Industry Canada, with the assistance of Health Canada, has completed a comprehensive assessment of these allegations and found that while the fundamentals of the regime are sound, there have been instances of behaviour complained of by the generic industry involving some top selling drugs.

• (1900)

While the behaviour in question is exceptional, it has been facilitated by a number of recent court decisions and could potentially grow in the years to come. To prevent this occurrence, a package of regulatory amendments has been developed and will restore the original balanced policy intent underlying the early working exception and the PMNOC regulations. These amendments were re-published in the *Canada Gazette*, part I, on December 11, 2004.

Repealing the PMNOC regulations would be an extreme measure which would completely undermine the government's attempt to maintain its balanced drug patent policy. It would allow generic manufacturers to continue to use the early working exception while stripping pharmaceutical manufacturers of the most effective patent enforcement mechanism at their disposal. This would tip the policy balance between intellectual property protection and the generic entry wholly in favour of the generic industry.

Bill C-274 would also have a number of negative consequences for Canadians. In the absence of strong and effective patent protection, innovator companies would drastically curtail their domestic R and D, which would result in a corresponding loss in research intensive employment.

Canadians' access to the latest medical therapies may also be compromised as innovator companies would be less inclined, absent effective patent protection, to bring their latest products to the Canadian market.

It is my hope that the member for Windsor West will instead support the government's recently proposed amendments to the PMNOC regulations and, in so doing, support this government's effort to foster a fair and competitive marketplace for pharmaceutical products.

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): Madam Speaker, first I wish to congratulate the member for Windsor West for bringing the bill forward. It is an important element for the House to discuss. I would urge all members to consider voting in favour of

the bill and getting it to a committee where we can have a transparent and open discussion about the impact of the current legislation.

A number of people have spoken about the government proposals. We have a number of difficulties with them. In part, the discussion on many of the proposals that have come forward has occurred behind the scenes. There has not been an open and very public dialogue about the impact of these particular regulations.

There are some fear that these regulations are stop gap at the very best and that they would not address some of the current abuses that are in place. It took seven years to get these changes into place but there is no mandatory review and no real guarantee that they will work this time. The government thought the regulations were going to work last time and they clearly have not.

The CGPA has done some very quick estimates of the cost of increased data protection. Had these current proposals been in place over the last five years, it would have added a further \$600 million to prescription costs in Canada. That is just at a minimum. Those kinds of numbers contribute to what we are talking about in terms of the spiralling drug costs in this country.

Who is hurt the most by these drug costs? We are in a climate where we are putting profits before people. Drug therapy costs are second only to hospital expenditures and they are slightly larger than expenditures on doctors. There is no indication that these drug costs will change any time soon.

Provincial governments are demanding changes as their drug benefit plan costs increase at about 14% annually. With an aging population it is very difficult to see how these drug costs would go down substantially over the foreseeable future.

Canadian taxpayers are paying twice in our current system. They not only pay for our public, universal health care system, but they are also paying again at the pharmacy counter. These kinds of doubling up of costs for Canadians cannot go on.

The current regulations have multiple impacts. One impact that they have is on the drug benefit plans. Green Shield Canada's analysis of drug claim costs from 1997 to 2001 indicated that maximizing generic use was important in controlling costs.

Green Shield also indicated before the industry committee in 2003 that because of the rising cost of drugs they were being forced to change their standards of coverage and by doing so they were having to delist eligible drugs, increase co-payments and increase deductibles, which were having a direct impact on its patients.

It also impacts on employers and employees. Unions negotiate health benefits to fill gaps left by our health care system. Many unions have vocally asked for a public pharmacare as there is increasing conflict at the bargaining table over the costs of health plans, particularly drug plans.

Adjournment Debate

•(1905)

The Acting Speaker (Hon. Jean Augustine): The member will have six minutes and 23 seconds at the next debate of this bill.

The time provided for the consideration of private members' business has now expired. The order is dropped to the bottom of the order of precedence on the order paper.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

[English]

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

Mr. Jim Prentice (Calgary Centre-North, CPC): Madam Speaker, I rise today to ask questions in the House with respect to the government's management of the residential school claims dispute. This matter has been discussed previously in the House.

Before Christmas the Deputy Prime Minister indicated to the House that this program was an enormous success, particularly the ADR component of the program, and that the costs which had been incurred up to that point were simply costs that related to the ramping up process so that the government could carry on with the settlement of ADR claims.

In fact, nothing of the sort has happened. At this point the government has expended approximately \$125 million on this process and has resolved something in the neighbourhood of 50 ADR cases. In effect, if one analyzes the numbers it is very clear that four-fifths of every \$1 that has been spent on this program has been spent on bureaucracy, experts, lawyers and the like, with only 20¢ on the \$1 ever finding its way through to the victims.

The AFN studied this and put a recommendation before the government but it judged the ADR program, the process, to be a complete failure. It says that it is motivated by the tort claim considerations of the government but, most important, it says that at the current rate it will take 53 years and cost \$2.3 billion in bureaucratic, legal and expert costs alone to resolve these claims. That does not even take into consideration the cost of the settlements themselves.

At this point in time the number of claims that have been submitted to the government under its program are quite meagre compared to the total pool of available claimants. I have been told that something in the neighbourhood of 1,227 cases have been submitted to the government in this dispute resolution process. In fact, there is a known pool of 85,975 live-in residential school survivors who have available claims against the government.

In addition, the entire mismanagement of the program is complicated by the class action lawsuits that have been commenced, one by the name of Cloud, which has now been certified in the Ontario Divisional Court, and a second one by the name of Baxter, which is on the verge of certification. All of this spells enormous liability consequences for the government.

Could the minister tell this House how the government intends to deal with this? It is very clear that the ADR program is not working and that it is a dismal failure with \$125 million to \$135 million having been spent at this point with 50 cases resolved. That is beyond pathetic.

What is the government intending to do about this? There has been a redress scheme in Ireland called the residential institutions redress act of 2002. I am not necessarily saying that I would agree with everything in that legislative scheme, but it is certainly understandable. Could the minister tell the House why we have not followed an approach like that? Why is there so much mystery, confusion and bureaucracy surrounding the process that is being followed by the government?

•(1910)

Hon. Roy Cullen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am happy to respond to the member for Calgary Centre-North about his question pertaining to the residential school claims program.

To respond to one of his questions, he probably knows that the government has appealed the Cloud decision.

As my colleague is aware, the government launched the alternative dispute resolution process in November 2003 as a fast, safe and effective option to resolve complex and sensitive abuse claims.

The underpinning of the ADR process is to resolve the majority of claims within seven years at a cost of \$1.7 billion, with \$1 billion of that money going directly to former students. In addition, claimants have access to counselling and commemoration. To date, over 1,000 former students have applied to the ADR process.

Government agreed to support the Assembly of First Nations to prepare a report that would recommend ways to make the ADR process more acceptable to former students. This demonstrates our willingness and openness to listen to the advice of key stakeholders and ensure a healthy policy debate.

The ADR process was only designed as an accelerated way to review and compensate for claims of physical and sexual abuse and wrongful confinement. The Assembly of First Nations review seeks a much broader scope. The Assembly of First Nations has recommended compensation for each of the 87,000 former students. This is on top of compensation for claims of physical and sexual abuse. We need to take a careful look at the costing of the Assembly of First Nations proposal to establish how there could be savings as stated.

We are legally required to respond to any claim related to Indian residential schools and now face about 11,300 such outstanding claims.

I hope that the hon. member is not suggesting that the government pay all the claims without verifying them, since the government has an obligation to Canadians to ensure that all claims of abuse are validated before compensation is awarded. There is often a marked departure between what is claimed and what gets accepted.

Adjournment Debate

It takes time and money to verify the allegations and properly assess the impact of the abuse. This is a very large expenditure and is part of government's due diligence to taxpayers.

I want to add that there is a rigorous competitive bidding and selection process to award research contracts. Historical research firms are selected via MERX, the national electronic bidding system. For the hon. member to suggest anything different is completely unfounded.

In summary, the government designed the ADR process to give former students a choice in how best to resolve their residential school claims. We are offering a timely, supportive and humane approach to resolving claims.

• (1915)

Mr. Jim Prentice: Madam Speaker, just to follow up with a supplementary question for my friend, I note that the number of cases which have been brought before the government under the ADR process is very small compared to the total number of cases.

Of the figures which my friend has put before the House today, less than 2% of the pool of cases which the government is facing have been brought forward in this ADR process. That raises the question: why has the government invested \$150 million in that process? If the objective was to expend \$1.7 billion within seven years and settle the majority of the cases which could be settled quickly, it is very clear at this point, two years into the program, that this is a complete failure and that it is not working.

Moreover, it is not working for the victims. Newspapers in this country are replete with stories of residential school victims who feel they are being re-victimized by the process. There are indications that some of the victims are facing claims where their monetary award is \$1,000 and yet \$80,000 to \$100,000 has been spent on proving the case in the manner my friend describes. That is not acceptable. What does the government intend to do about it?

Hon. Roy Cullen: Madam Speaker, the government and the Assembly of First Nations want the same thing: fast and fair compensation for residential school victims of abuse. Since November 2003, over 1,000 individuals have opted for the government's ADR process as the method to resolve their claims. The ADR process will resolve the majority of claims within seven years, which will result in savings to Canadians in the long run.

* * *

CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

Mr. Paul Forseth (New Westminster—Coquitlam, CPC): Madam Speaker, on November 24 I asked the following question and supplemental. The Deputy Prime Minister answered and covered for the immigration minister. I said:

Mr. Speaker, 70% of my community casework is about this dysfunctional immigration department. We now learn that this favoured dancer that we have been talking about, and her husband, first went to their own MP and were told, "Follow the rules". Then the couple went to the immigration minister's campaign office in the election and were able to trade their political work for a government benefit. That is against the law.

There was a non-answer challenge from the Deputy Prime Minister, so I asked another question. I said:

Mr. Speaker, the evasions continue. We have heard about the Ethics Commissioner, but it cannot be used to cover for ministerial accountability.

I put this to the Deputy Prime Minister. Everyone knows that the immigration department is in an absolute mess. The Prime Minister promised during the election to clean things up.

Will the Prime Minister just keep his word, assign some real priority to this national disgrace, replace the minister of immigration, and stop the ongoing damage to Canada's international reputation with this very poorly run department?

The former immigration minister claimed she helped an exotic dancer on compassionate grounds. The minister's chief of staff also held inappropriate meetings with the owners of strip clubs to discuss work permits of dancers. Questions in the House of Commons also highlighted the number of public employees who were attending to the minister during the campaign. Then there was also a mix-up about a campaign contribution receipt. All came together to demonstrate the unethical politicization of immigration.

I want to hear how the new minister has changed things. Ending the practice of importing exotic dancers by temporary permit was a right move, but in the past not once did we hear any Liberal immigration or human resources minister voice a public objection. Only with public embarrassment did the Liberals act.

The real problem is that we have a department that is very poorly run. First, its design is far too complicated. Second, the immigration ministry cannot properly communicate with its clients. The overall operations are inward and self-serving rather than client service oriented. Many employees appear to be operating in mere survival mode, with poor law and regulations to guide them and poor personnel leadership and bad supervision within the workplace. No one seems to be up to date with their work.

The discretionary decision points are being administered in an inconsistent and sometimes cruel manner that reminds one of past Liberal Party racism and the hurtful quotas and blacklists. The horror of the products of the system can be seen in the kinds of cases that get to the federal courts of Canada. Could anyone imagine a bureaucracy producing such bad results as what is regularly listed on the court docket?

This record is all against the backdrop of a political level which is out of touch with its workers, which continues to make unreasonable public pronouncements about targets, and which is without commensurate resources to deliver the mandate in a compassionate and professional manner. The problem has been unethical leadership.

The previous minister made a commitment to me when she was first appointed. She claimed that as a backbencher from the Toronto area she was very aware of how the dysfunctional department had made MPs' offices extensions of the immigration department. She said she was also aware of the fraud going on within some foreign missions. She said she was going to fix it.

Adjournment Debate

It seems we keep changing ministers, but the problems do not change.

To top things off, the system has been unable to protect victims from being deported into danger zones. The pre-removal risk assessment system does not work. Just a few weeks ago, I placed the case of a young lady on the previous minister's desk with a pleading note. In spite of that, the young lady was deported and now, just like I warned, she has been arrested and brutalized. It is another stark reminder that the Liberals cannot manage the public trust. If harm comes to this lady, I will hold the minister directly responsible.

My deep concern is that this government is not capable of solving the serious problems of the department. The cover-ups do not change the reality on the ground. Yet the minister is supposed to be accountable. In view of such poor results, one can understand why I asked my particular questions, and we can only hope that there will be, with the new minister, a meaningful change process and a huge commitment to clean up—

• (1920)

The Acting Speaker (Hon. Jean Augustine): The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration.

Hon. Hedy Fry (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would like to answer the member's questions, but I just want to deal with a couple of things. I think there was a lot of rhetoric in the question; it was sort of in danger of a lot of heat and very little light.

I want to shed some light on it because I think there has been a tendency to ask questions of Ministers of Citizenship and Immigration with rhetoric, knowing full well that in many instances many ministers of this House cannot answer those questions because they are bound, especially in the cases of immigration and other areas, by the Privacy Act.

They cannot divulge why on the surface what seems to be a case that is not worthy of humanitarian and compassionate grounds really is, because they cannot give that data and that information without full consent of the client. The ministers are bound by not being able to give the right answers or to explain the situation properly. That leads to this kind of rhetoric.

What I think we need to talk about is that there were some statements made here which I really do want to respond to. One of them was that the hon. member basically said that many employees appear to be operating in survival mode with poor law and regulations to guide them.

I need to remind the hon. member, who has been a member of Parliament for as long as I have, that in fact these employees work under an act, an act of Parliament decided on by this Parliament. It was amended as recently as 2002 in this House, with debate, as an act of Parliament. People in the Department of Citizenship and Immigration do not suddenly work with nothing; they have a clear set of laws and a clear set of guidelines.

That brings us to the fact that the member talks about the problems he has in his riding. He is not alone. Every single one of us knows that we have problems in our ridings and every single one of us also knows that there have been times when members of the opposition and everyone else have brought cases to a minister of immigration,

who has dealt with them, looked at the facts, realized something needed to be done and got humanitarian and compassionate grounds for those clients. This has not been done only for government or only for Liberals. It has been done for many members across the floor. We know this, so the question is, let us deal with the facts.

Fact one: we bring in about 245,000 immigrants a year. For 80% who come in, it is easy. They move in, they build their lives, they begin to contribute to Canadian society, and we never talk about them, because the ones we see are the complex cases. To suggest that there is a silver bullet and that a minister can suddenly come in and fix things in one fell swoop is not telling the facts as they really are and not even understanding the complexity of the issue.

We are dealing with human lives. We are dealing with people who live in countries, depending on whether they are refugees or not, and who have no papers. I recall that across this House this particular member's party has often accused us of bringing in people without due process, without digging deep and looking for all their papers and all their backgrounds. In many instances those papers and backgrounds are hard to come by. That extends the process. The process can take a long time in certain cases. We see the difficult and complex cases.

What I am saying is that our current minister and this government are very clear that we need to make the system work better. It is a changing and evolving situation that we live in with regard to immigration in our country.

We would love for this hon. member and others to come forward to help us resolve this problem and not throw cheap shots across the floor at us, because it is a complex issue. It is not a simplistic problem.

Let us deal with IRPA. Let us look at these things. We have worked in the House in 2004 and obviously situations have made it such that we are still having problems. Let us work on the process. It is not going to be fixed tomorrow, with the best of intentions. It will take time for some of these things to change because we are dealing with fluid situations and many different countries.

• (1925)

Mr. Paul Forseth: Madam Speaker, in summary, immigration must serve the country, not the Liberal Party. We tried to effect appropriate amendments to the bill when it came through a couple of years ago. Also, it was framework legislation, which had a lot of regulation to attach to it. So far, from what we can see, it is an administrative disaster.

Also, in the last election some Liberal candidates said, "Vote for me and I will deliver the special permits". The previous immigration minister is reported to have made the very same assertions in the last election. Some Liberal candidates certainly made the point. They tied public service administration decisions to who got elected. I challenge the minister to ensure that this never happens again.

We do not need more study and analysis. We need a minister who has both the personal character and the stature in cabinet to get the job done, a minister who can get the resources needed to clean up this mess, a mess which we can see is a weeping sore from coast to coast in this country.

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Hon. Hedy Fry: Madam Speaker, I would not respond to the innuendo and hearsay that seems to characterize all the questions we get. Let us deal with the facts.

Yes, 20% of cases are complex and are not resolved in as expeditious a manner as we could. We sometimes have look at them and find out whether they require special intervention. The current Minister of Citizenship and Immigration has said very clearly, and this is our government's priority, that he has a six point plan of action to speed up the process, to change some of the processes where they do not work and to deal with them, but to do it in a manner in which we set some very clear ways to look at this. We have an evaluation. We continue to evolve the system to meet the changing needs of the clients who come into the system. Let us work together.

The Minister of Citizenship and Immigration has said very clearly that he has a six point plan. We want to hear what members across the hall have to say. We want to hear what Canadians have to say. Let us take the complex questions and get some complex solutions to serve them in a flexible, transparent and compassionate manner.

* * *

[Translation]

AEROSPACE INDUSTRY

Mr. Paul Crête (Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, BQ): Madam Speaker, on November 17, 2004, a few months ago, I put a question to the Minister of Industry, encouraging him to move forward with his aerospace strategy. At that time, his answer was:

—we are moving ahead on a strategy and we will announce the strategy once we have completed discussions and negotiations... We are moving forward with an aerospace strategy, and we will do it in a timely manner.

We are still waiting for a strategy to be announced. All we have heard since was that, at least, an offer had been made by the government to find a solution to help Bombardier so that it could build its new aircraft. At least, in that respect, the Minister of Industry took action following the questions we had put.

However, this happened also after the Minister of Transport, who is the minister responsible for Quebec, made some sort of false statement in January, when he said that an offer had been made on January 13, even though that was not the case.

What is important now is ensuring that the government will reach an agreement with Bombardier. The project must go forward, while respecting the current distribution of jobs in Canada, with approximately 55% in Quebec. We must ensure that we do not lose this project to New Mexico, for example, because the federal government acted too slowly. I hope that the necessary efforts will be made, today, to make up for lost time and ultimately produce results.

This afternoon, I asked a question confirming that, last fall, Bombardier had been offered a \$1.5 billion loan guarantee so it could build jets for Air Canada. Four months later, the letter of credit agreement is unconfirmed, uncertified and not applicable. Bombardier itself has to assume the cost of additional credit because of this. So this is a bad example of the reality in which we are living.

Can the government spokesperson reassure me that we are going to reach a solution quickly and that the thousands of jobs at stake are going to be saved? We have developed an aerospace industry, especially in Quebec, but elsewhere in Canada as well, which deserves our support, and which deserves assistance for research and development. We also need an approach that complements the efforts of the Quebec government and others.

Now that the employees in the Toronto area have said they do not want to renegotiate their contract with Bombardier, is that not a compelling reason for us to have an announcement as soon as possible? Such an announcement is necessary so that Bombardier's board can decide to construct its new aircraft and so that we can benefit from the economic spinoffs, which would be good to have.

• (1930)

[English]

Hon. Jerry Pickard (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the Canadian aerospace industry makes a significant contribution to the overall Canadian economy, with some 700 aerospace and defence firms across the country. It employs more than 75,000 people. Sales in 2003 exceeded \$20 billion.

Aerospace is much more than just one Canadian traditional industry. It is one of Canada's leading advanced technology exporters. The sector invested approximately \$1 billion on research and development in 2003. Aerospace is the second largest investor in R and D in Canada and the fourth in Canada's top 20 industrial R and D performers.

In recent years markets have been slow and competition is tight. Aerospace products require substantial investments and have long development periods. These realities are placing tough demands and new pressures on the aerospace sector. The government is quite conscious of the new pressures and wishes of the aerospace industry.

In the Speech from the Throne we made it very clear that aerospace is a key industry and a priority for the government. The government has committed itself to developing a national strategy to help the sector strengthen its technology leadership and position itself for the future.

A national aerospace strategy could provide the broad context within which the company could consider individual funding decisions. This broad context would include considerations such as the changing international business climate, the economic impact and fiscal implications of support, skills development, trade policy and individual investments that fit the overall direction of Canada's aerospace sector.

The Minister of Industry is moving quickly to develop this strategy. He is collaborating with the industry stakeholders and provincial counterparts. An initial strategic framework will be completed within the next few weeks to provide the context for pressing decisions. This initial framework would then pave the way for developing a long term, comprehensive strategic action plan.

In developing a national aerospace strategy, we will build on impressive achievements to date and on government programs, such as sales financing from Export Development Canada and research and development support such as that available from Technology Partnerships Canada. The partnerships, which have been forged between industry and government, have produced good results for companies and Canada.

Bombardier's success with its family of regional jets is a case in point. There are many other examples in which a risk sharing investment by the government has resulted in new aerospace business for firms in Canada.

Speaking of Bombardier, the third largest aircraft manufacturer in the world, the government also recognizes that the company is one of aerospace's top anchors. Bombardier's aerospace division is Canada's largest aerospace firm with sales of \$11 billion, more than 50% of Canada's overall space output. The company employs 13,000 workers in its facilities in Montreal, Toronto and North Bay and relies on an extensive supplier network.

Members will know that Bombardier is currently considering a next generation aircraft, the CSeries, and we are doing everything we can to recognize timetables that Bombardier would require to move this project forward.

The federal government recognizes how important this aerospace industry is to Quebec and to all other Canadians. We are working very hard to develop a national aerospace strategy and will work hard to ensure the growth and prosperity continues.

• (1935)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Paul Crête: Madam Speaker, I am pleased to see that the parliamentary secretary and I share the same view as regards the importance of the aerospace industry. This is obvious. However, last fall, the federal government, based on the minister's replies, was supposed to release a study on its policy. It is now February and the hon. member is talking about a policy paper, a background paper that is being prepared through a consultation process. I hope this document is available as quickly as possible.

The government's offer is a major factor in the decision by Bombardier's board of directors. However, the more general

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framework under which these investments will be made for the "C" series aircraft is also important. This is also true for all other investments, for small and medium size businesses in the aerospace industry, and for other sectors such as helicopter production, for example, and related industries. It is urgent that this policy be known. It is urgent that this consultation process be completed and that we get a clear message, as we did for example in the 1980s regarding the development of patent drugs, which generated an economic boom.

Can we get assurances that the government will release its study and, more importantly, that it will make an interesting offer to Bombardier, so that this issue can be settled as quickly as possible?

[*English*]

Hon. Jerry Pickard: Madam Speaker, the prospect of Bombardier CSeries has created a great deal of interest in Canada. The government recognizes the importance of this program and is developing a national aerospace strategy that will provide context within which we can make decisions. We would like Bombardier to assemble the CSeries in Canada and are continuing to discuss areas of possible collaboration with our provincial counterparts.

That being said, I am sure the member would agree on focusing only on Bombardier gives a very limited view to aerospace industry. While Bombardier is important, we have other strong, competitive companies that are key players in this aerospace sector. These companies are also embarking on new research and development projects for their companies and competition in the future. Our national aerospace strategy will reflect this strategy.

Aerospace is a key industrial priority for the Government of Canada. We are developing a new national aerospace strategy to ensure continued growth and prosperity. We are interested in Bombardier and the entire aerospace industry.

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Hon. Jean Augustine): The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 7:39 p.m.)

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