



CANADA

# House of Commons Debates

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OFFICIAL REPORT  
(HANSARD)

**Wednesday, November 4, 2009**

—

**Speaker: The Honourable Peter Milliken**

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# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, November 4, 2009

The House met at 2 p.m.

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*Prayers*

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● (1405)

[English]

**The Speaker:** It being Wednesday, we will now have the singing of the national anthem, led by the hon. member for Halifax.

[Members sang the national anthem]

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## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

### CANADA-UKRAINE PARLIAMENTARY PROGRAM

**Mr. Peter Goldring (Edmonton East, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to recognize 25 youthful delegates from Ukraine who have visited with us during the past eight weeks. They are here, in members' offices, to gain valuable perspectives on Canada's most important democratic institution: the Parliament of Canada.

These young people, representing the Canada-Ukraine parliamentary program, embody the highest ideals of achievement and community service. These young people, like Roman Bits from my office, are the future leaders of Ukraine.

Canada and Ukraine are inextricably linked forever by prior migration. Fully one in thirty Canadians is of Ukrainian descent, as are my wife, daughters and granddaughters.

Ukraine holds a special place in the hearts of Canadians. Canada was the first country in the western world to accord diplomatic recognition in 1991 to an independent Ukraine.

As the young emissaries depart, we wish them well and say to them, *Mnohaya lita*.

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### HEALTH

**Hon. Irwin Cotler (Mount Royal, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the emergency debate on the H1N1 pandemic was necessary, but it was an emergency that should never have been, a debate that should never have been necessary, resulting from the government's own skewed priorities, mismanagement and confusion.

There were five concrete recommendations: one, restore the \$400 million pandemic reserve from the 2006 budget to support additional medical staff for vaccinations and patient care; two, reinforce the underfunded and overextended public health system; three, support emergency planning to help local health authorities cope with large lineups, shortage of vaccines and needed health care workers; four, divert the \$60 million being spent on partisan political advertising to a public awareness campaign; and five, put an end to diversionary constitutional babble that prevents the responsibility to protect from being implemented.

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[Translation]

### ROBERT GAGNÉ

**Ms. Diane Bourgeois (Terrebonne—Blainville, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I want to pay tribute to Robert Gagné, a big-hearted man who has been giving of his time as a volunteer for 53 years.

Born into a modest family of five children, Mr. Gagné began volunteering at the age of 13. He is involved with a wide variety of organizations in both the sports community and the social sector. He provides support, comfort and a sympathetic ear to young people, seniors and people who are ill or in need.

A deputy grand Knight of Columbus in Terrebonne, he was a finalist four times at the prestigious Griffon d'Or gala. Recently, he was recognized as volunteer of the year by the Table des aînés de Lanaudière, which presented him with a medal.

Mr. Gagné, you are a great man. Your generosity does you credit, and the community of Terrebonne thanks you. My Bloc Québécois colleagues join me in extending our heartfelt congratulations to you.

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[English]

### STATUS OF WOMEN

**Ms. Irene Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, November is Woman Abuse Prevention Month and New Democrats are incredibly disheartened by the Conservative government's failure to address violence against women.

*Statements by Members*

A year after the United Nations CEDAW report made recommendations that Canada do more to protect women from violence, we have seen little action. The report chastised the federal government for failing to fully investigate missing and murdered aboriginal women. It also called on the federal government to fully fund women's shelters and other support services and, finally, the report called on the federal government to further protect victims of domestic violence.

The women and children of this nation have the right to expect safety and security in their communities, and they have a right to expect the government to uphold that safety. Instead, the Conservatives have taken key steps to eradicate the voices of women in this country. They have stopped funding and have wiped out many organizations that lobbied and assisted women in the fight against violence against women.

This action has had a silencing effect on women's voices and has limited the ability of women to lobby for the adequate support—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale.

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**UNITED STATES AMBASSADOR TO CANADA**

**Mr. Russ Hiebert (South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, on October 2, Canadians were delighted to receive the new ambassador from the United States, David Jacobson.

As the representative of our nation's closest friend, ally and trading partner, Ambassador Jacobson embodies the hopes and dreams our two nations share for a bright North American future. Ambassador Jacobson has already been busy touring the country from coast to coast and, as we can read on his blog, he has already had some pretty incredible experiences in our great land.

As a co-chair of the all-party border caucus and as the member of Parliament for the busiest border crossing in western Canada, I look forward to working with Ambassador Jacobson on a variety of areas of mutual concern. In particular, I look forward to working with him on ways that we can improve the efficiency and security of our borders.

On behalf of all the members of the border caucus, I want to warmly welcome Ambassador David Jacobson to Canada.

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**THE ENVIRONMENT**

**Hon. Keith Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this Friday is the International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflicts.

War poisons the air, water and land. It destroys governance and conservation efforts and leads to the exploitation of natural resources and the mass killing of species, driving them to extinction.

The world has a responsibility to protect but it does not have an obligation to act. We have a judicial mechanism but no enforcement mechanism. One of the great challenges we have is to establish that enforcement mechanism.

Canada and the Liberal government were leaders in the establishment of a responsibility to protect. The Conservative government has failed to lead on after that, to lead and develop a responsibility to protect. If we do not do it, the people and the environments in conflict will pay a fatal price. This we must not allow to occur.

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• (1410)

**TAKE OUR KIDS TO WORK DAY**

**Mr. Ted Menzies (Macleod, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, each year on the first Wednesday of November, thousands of grade 9 students participate in Take Our Kids to Work Day.

Now in its 15th year, this program sponsored by The Learning Partnership sees approximately 250,000 students across Canada take part in a day-long job-shadowing experience. It connects young people to the world of work with the goal of giving them the opportunity to explore career options.

To celebrate the 15th anniversary of Take Our Kids to Work, The Learning Partnership along with Scotiabank launched a six-week national online photo contest. After tremendous response, a winner was chosen for the ultimate dream job photo contest.

With the dream of one day becoming a manga artist, a Japanese-inspired comic designer, a grade 9 student from Claresholm, Alberta, Chandler Blott won with over 4,000 votes. The prize was a two-day trip to Ottawa to meet our Prime Minister today. Chandler, who from the age of three has lived in a silent world, communicates through her creativity.

Please join me in thanking and congratulating my great-niece, Chandler Blott.

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[*Translation*]

**CANADA POST**

**Mr. Guy André (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, municipal officials in the riding of Berthier—Maskinongé are worried about the future of their post office. I have received resolutions from Lanoraie, Yamachiche, Saint-Didace, Saint-Cuthbert, Saint-Étienne-des-Grès, Saint-Alexis-des-Monts, Maskinongé and Saint-Justin demanding that their post offices remain open.

As well, petitions are circulating in order to make the federal government aware that the people in these communities want to keep this essential service.

The minister responsible for Canada Post must confirm in no uncertain terms that the moratorium on closing post offices will be maintained and that fire, an expired lease or the retirement, illness or death of Canada Post staff will not be used to get around the moratorium.

The municipalities and the people of Quebec and Berthier—Maskinongé deserve an official commitment from the federal government.

*Statements by Members*

[English]

**EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE**

**Mr. Larry Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday our Conservative government introduced legislation that will provide self-employed Canadians with access to EI special benefits so they no longer have to choose between their family and work responsibilities.

This bill will have a positive impact on the lives of 2.6 million self-employed Canadians who are so integral to our economy. But do not take it from me; listen to what Canadians are saying.

Richard Phillips from the Grain Growers of Canada applauded the initiative and said that for a lot of young farm families, this could be the difference between whether they stay on the farm or leave the farm.

Catherine Swift, president of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, said that the initiative would fill a “glaring gap” for people who run their own business, especially women.

And there are many more examples.

Canadians want to know whether the Liberal leader will continue to vote against hard-working Canadians or for once will do the right thing and work with this government to support Canadian families.

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**MEDIA LITERACY WEEK**

**Mr. Michael Savage (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this is national Media Literacy Week.

Youth in Canada are extremely tech savvy and interact with media on a daily basis. Whether surfing the Internet, listening to music or playing video games, young people have an amazing ability to learn and use a variety of media platforms and connect with friends, family and people around the world.

However, Media Literacy Week seeks to remind us that despite how technology savvy they are, young people still require guidance and mentorship to develop the critical thinking skills they need to become responsible and engaged citizens as well as responsible media consumers.

Hosted by Media Awareness Network and the Canadian Teachers' Federation, Media Literacy Week encourages parents, educators and community leaders to integrate and practise media and digital literacy in their homes, schools and communities.

This year's theme, media literacy in the digital age, emphasizes the multiple literacy skills needed by today's youth for accessing, evaluating, creating and distributing digital media content.

I applaud the Media Awareness Network and the Canadian Teachers' Federation for their hard work in creating a dialogue about the ongoing challenges and opportunities that online media present for our young people.

● (1415)

[Translation]

**BLOC QUÉBÉCOIS**

**Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Bill C-50 aims to extend access to employment insurance by 5 to 20 weeks for long-tenured workers.

This fourth measure follows the assistance announced by our government a few months ago to help the unemployed. It offers financial assistance directly to workers while they look for new jobs.

Just yesterday in the House, the Bloc decided to keep its promise of “No, no, no” and it did not support Bill C-50, just as it has not supported any of our government's good initiatives.

The Bloc is failing in its commitment to properly represent the people of its ridings. It is abandoning all Quebec workers when it obstructs the work of the House.

This time, the Bloc is clearly abandoning workers in the manufacturing and forestry sectors who desperately need help. I am talking about people who have worked hard and contributed to the employment insurance plan for years, who are now unemployed and have families to take care of and bills to pay.

Our Conservative government is taking action to help the workers hit the hardest by the global economic crisis. Quebeckers and Canadians can be sure that we have the interests of their families at heart.

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[English]

**NORTHERN AND RURAL CANADIANS**

**Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, northern and rural Canadians deserve real support. They are worried about their livelihoods and their communities. They are concerned about essential services that could be taken away.

Many people across northern Manitoba, in Flin Flon, The Pas, Cross Lake, Leaf Rapids, Lynn Lake and other communities are concerned about losing their postal service and are saying no to reductions and privatization of Canada Post services.

They are concerned about the health care in their communities and the real shortage of doctors.

They are asking for affordable housing and they are asking for support for the industries which they support through their work; support for family farms and rural infrastructure; support for miners and forestry workers when it comes to putting a stop to foreign buyouts and agreements that sell our jobs; and support to fishers who, as seasonal workers, ask for supportive legislation in the area of EI and pensions.

The NDP stands proudly for northern and rural Canadians. We fight for people in our regions. While the Conservatives pay lip service, we fight for the justice and the services we all deserve.

*Oral Questions***FIREARMS REGISTRY**

**Ms. Candice Hooppner (Portage—Lisgar, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, today, members of the House will stand to vote on my private member's bill to end the long gun registry.

The registry has not cracked down on criminals like the Liberals said it would. Instead, it has targeted hard-working farmers, hunters, sports shooters and aboriginals.

The Liberal leader and the leader of the NDP have made it clear. They will continue to support this waste of taxpayer money.

Some opposition MPs have decided that they will represent their constituents' wishes and tonight they will vote to end the wasteful and ineffective long gun registry. They are to be commended. I hope this will be the case for all MPs who have ever told a constituent that the long gun registry should be scrapped.

Across this country, concerned long gun owners, police officers and Canadians have expressed discontent with this boondoggle.

It is time for members in the House to do what our constituents have asked us to do and end the wasteful and ineffective long gun registry.

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[Translation]

**LITERARY AWARDS**

**Mrs. Carole Lavallée (Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, this is the week of francophone literary awards. The Robert-Cliche award, the most prestigious award for young Quebec writers, was won by Olivia Tapiero for her novel, *Les Murs*. This young woman, who is only 19, chronicles the difficult life of an anorexic teen attempting yet again to commit suicide.

The Quebec writer of Haitian origin, Dany Laferrière, was recognized once more: this morning he won the Médicis award in the French-language novel category for *L'Énigme du retour*. He is the second Quebecer to win this illustrious prize from France; Marie-Claire Blais won in 1966.

I would also like to mention two other major French literary awards. The Goncourt, the Oscar of French-language literature, was won by Marie NDiaye, for her book *Trois femmes puissantes*, and the Renaudot was awarded to Frédéric Beigbeder for his novel *Un roman français*.

On behalf of all Bloc Québécois members, I wish to congratulate these very talented francophone authors, who have taken their places among the great authors of Quebec and French literature.

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[English]

**CAPE BRETON HIGHLANDERS**

**Hon. Mark Eyking (Sydney—Victoria, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, when it comes to defending Canada and democracy, Cape Bretoners have always been ready to step up and do their duty. They have served in every major conflict in the last 100 years.

Cape Bretoners take pride in their home grown unit, the 2nd Battalion Nova Scotia Highlanders. In late World War I, it

distinguished itself at the Battle of Vimy Ridge with the capture of Hill 145, considered a pivotal enemy stronghold.

During World War II, the Cape Breton contingent took part in the Italian campaign, including the breaching of the Hitler Line that opened the road to Rome and the Gothic Line, which included the taking of Coriano Ridge. Later deployed to northern Europe, the Highlanders fought hard in helping to liberate Holland.

Today, Cape Breton reservists have voluntarily served in Afghanistan with distinction.

I call upon the House to commend the Cape Breton Highlanders for their selfless defence of our freedom.

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● (1420)

**CANADIAN OLYMPIC ATHLETES**

**Mr. Andrew Saxton (North Vancouver, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the countdown is on. The Olympic Winter Games are only 100 days away.

These will truly be Canada's games as we all welcome the world to Vancouver and to Whistler. This will be a celebration of excellence in the true north.

Not only will VANOC stage the best games ever, I am confident that our Canadian team will be our best ever too. Last winter, our Canadian athletes shattered the record and brought home the most World Cup medals that our country has ever won across all sports in one season.

Canadians from coast to coast to coast are proud to support our athletes by wearing our red mittens. Our government is providing practical support for Canada's team through the "Own the Podium" program, and in February we will see the results.

I ask all members of the House to raise their voices and raise their mittens to show support for our Canadian athletes.

**ORAL QUESTIONS**

[Translation]

**HEALTH**

**Mr. Michael Ignatieff (Leader of the Opposition, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, other countries, including the United States, the United Kingdom and France, began purchasing vaccines at the beginning of May. Thirty-five countries purchased vaccines before this government woke up.

Why? Where was the Prime Minister? Why does he show up for a photo op to announce the construction of a piece of sidewalk but is nowhere to be found when it comes to Canadians' health?

*Oral Questions*

**Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we are following the advice of the Chief Public Health Officer of Canada. Quite frankly, the statistics speak for themselves. Vaccine is more available in Canada than anywhere else in the world.

[*English*]

**Mr. Michael Ignatieff (Leader of the Opposition, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we keep hearing that the vaccine is available, so why are there shortages? Why are clinics closing? Why are people waiting eight hours in line? There is a disconnect between what the Prime Minister is saying and the reality on the ground.

Two weeks ago, the health minister said that the vaccine would be available to all Canadians by November. Now it is pushed on until Christmas. Local authorities cannot plan because they cannot predict a reliable federal supply of this vaccine.

When will the Prime Minister take his responsibilities and not only give the provinces and territories the predictability they need, but also the resources?

**Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, on the contrary, the government has been very clear about when and how many doses will be rolled out. Next week there will be an additional 1.8 million doses available, which will bring the total to 8.5 million doses.

The provinces are in the process of distributing this. It is the largest and quickest mass vaccine program in Canadian history and, of course, we will do everything necessary to support their efforts in this regard.

**Mr. Michael Ignatieff (Leader of the Opposition, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Auditor General reported yesterday that for four years the government has failed to prepare an emergency preparedness program that would coordinate the activities of government in a time of national crisis, such as a national H1N1 pandemic. There is still no plan to coordinate activity across government.

Does the Prime Minister agree with the Auditor General's findings and, if so, when will the government present the plan that she requires and that it committed to provide?

• (1425)

**Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, of course, the vaccination program is being run under the national pandemic plan, not under the emergency response plan, so the Leader of the Opposition has his facts confused in this regard.

In terms of the emergency preparedness plan, the government has been operating and road-testing that plan through a number of incidents, including the Manitoba floods, and we will be finalizing that plan in the near future.

**Hon. Ralph Goodale (Wascana, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the pandemic is the first thing the Auditor General mentions in her report.

For \$45 million, the Conservative government could hire 3,000 extra nurses, double the number of vaccination sites or extend the hours of operation to accelerate flu vaccinations. The priority is to get more people vaccinated faster.

Why are the Conservatives putting up to \$45 million into partisan signs on everything from trains to doorknobs instead of helping people fight the flu?

**Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I sometimes wonder whether the member for Wascana just makes it up as he goes along.

What we are doing is moving forward with an unprecedented partnership with the provinces, territories and municipalities on infrastructure projects in every corner of the country, from coast to coast to coast, and, like previous governments, we are ensuring that those investments are communicated to the public.

We have an important responsibility in these tough economic times to report back to Canadians on the great success and the number of jobs and opportunities that are being created from coast to coast to coast.

**Hon. Ralph Goodale (Wascana, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it gets worse. While millions of Canadians cannot get vaccinated, the Conservatives are not only wasting up to \$45 million on useless signs, but they actually want two signs, not just one, on every project, and they are sticking municipalities with a big part of the cost: local tax dollars forced to finance Conservative propaganda.

Will the Conservatives now cancel their wasteful sign campaign and put those dollars into fighting the flu?

**Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, what we are seeing is a sign of co-operation, a sign that the provinces and territories are working constructively with the federal government, a sign that we are putting partisan politics aside and are working constructively to create jobs and to build infrastructure.

Within the last half hour, I had the opportunity to meet with the great mayor of the city of Regina. We have a great partnership with Regina. We are spending almost \$93 million on infrastructure, and we are proud of it.

We will continue to work hard and get the job done.

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

**EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE**

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the bill concerning self-employed workers contains provisions regarding parental leave. But self-employed workers in Quebec are already entitled to parental benefits through the Quebec government's parental insurance plan.

Will the government admit that there is an overlap when it comes to parental benefits, and will it compensate Quebec?

**Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, this new program introduced by the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development is a voluntary program funded by the premiums paid by self-employed workers.

*Oral Questions*

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, parental benefits account for 75% of the total cost of all of the special EI benefits, compared to 25% for compassionate care and sickness benefits. But self-employed workers in Quebec will pay more than their Canadian counterparts, simply to be entitled to sickness and compassionate care benefits, since they are already entitled to parental benefits from the Government of Quebec.

Does the Prime Minister realize that the contribution rate he will impose on self-employed workers in Quebec is unfair in relation to the benefits being offered?

**Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, what the Bloc leader is saying is untrue. This is a voluntary program, paid for by contributions made by the self-employed workers, and these premiums are different, depending on the circumstances in Quebec.

•(1430)

**Mr. Yves Lessard (Chambly—Borduas, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the program is not voluntary.

The problem with this new bill on special benefits for self-employed workers is that it only takes Canada's needs into account, not Quebec's. Self-employed Quebec workers already have access to their own parental benefits system.

Does the minister understand that she should adapt her program to Quebec's existing social safety net, not the other way around?

**Hon. Jean-Pierre Blackburn (Minister of National Revenue and Minister of State (Agriculture), CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am glad to see that the Bloc leader and his party agree that self-employed workers should benefit from these very important measures to provide special benefits, including parental and maternity leave. Until now, this has been available to all Canadians except self-employed workers. Now self-employed workers will be able to benefit from it, and adjustments will be made for Quebec.

**Mrs. Josée Beaudin (Saint-Lambert, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, Bill C-56 is unfair to Quebec's self-employed workers. They are already paying \$0.86 per \$100 to the provincial government for parental benefits, and now the federal government wants them to pay \$1.36 more just to access sickness and compassionate care benefits, which cost the fund next to nothing compared to parental benefits.

Will the minister reduce contributions for Quebec's self-employed workers so that they are in proportion to the benefits they would be entitled to? It would only be fair.

**Hon. Jean-Pierre Blackburn (Minister of National Revenue and Minister of State (Agriculture), CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the member is confusing things. In all of the other provinces and territories, people pay \$1.73 for employment insurance benefits, which include the things we just talked about. Quebecers pay \$1.36. The federal government already compensates Quebec for providing some services itself. Once we add the two new services, it will still cost \$1.36, and in all of the other provinces and territories, it will cost \$1.73. There is a difference. We have taken what Quebec does into account.

[English]

**HEALTH**

**Hon. Jack Layton (Toronto—Danforth, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, regarding H1N1, the local health officials could do a much better job if they knew the funding would be there so they could deliver the vaccine on the ground.

When it comes to a natural disaster, federal funding is provided and local officials could get the kind of program out there to get the vaccine into the arms of the millions of Canadians waiting for it right now.

I have a question for the Prime Minister because his Minister of Industry would not answer the question yesterday. Will he backstop the funding of the delivery of the vaccine on the ground?

**Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the federal government is paying the lion's share of the costs of the vaccine. That is our role. As far as I know and can see, the provinces are putting all the resources at their availability to ensure that this vaccine gets delivered.

It is a challenging process. We have never undertaken a vaccination program so large and so quickly in our country. We are working with our provincial colleagues to ensure that it rolls out successfully.

**Hon. Jack Layton (Toronto—Danforth, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it is hard to understand the difference between a natural disaster and what we face with this disease.

[Translation]

The problem concerning H1N1 is the lack of leadership shown by the federal government. It blames either the provinces or the medical company. There is a serious lack of doses available on the ground.

The original contract, signed by the Liberals, stipulated a single producer and prevented the government from seeking legal recourse.

Can the Prime Minister explain why he maintained that sole-source contract?

**Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is a 10-year contract.

I repeat, the facts are we now have over 6 million doses of the vaccine available. Next week, another 1.8 million doses will be available. This is much faster than the provinces are able to distribute at this time. Canada has the highest per capita availability of the vaccine of any country in the world.

•(1435)

[English]

**Hon. Jack Layton (Toronto—Danforth, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, there are 34 million people in Canada. He is 28 million short. The exclusive 10 year contract for the vaccine was awarded to Shire Biologics by the federal Liberals in 2001, the same year they received a \$57,000 donation from that company.

Shire has since been sold to GlaxoSmithKline. GSK's lobbyist is Ken Boessenkool, a personal friend of the Prime Minister. Was Ken Boessenkool the person who convinced the government that there was no need to go outside the contract with GSK to get additional supplies of the vaccine?

*Oral Questions*

**Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, once again, the contract was signed in 2001 for 10 years. The fact is, and I will repeat it, there are now over six million doses available. There will be another 1.8 million doses available next week. That means 8.5 million doses are available.

The pace of dose availability in the country is ahead of any other country in the world. The resources of the provinces are being stretched to the maximum to ensure this is being rolled out as quickly as possible. This is by far the largest scale and quickest vaccination the provinces have ever attempted in the country.

Rather than criticize them, we should encourage them in their work. They are obviously serving the highest priority groups first, but everybody will be getting a vaccine.

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[Translation]

**INFRASTRUCTURE**

**Mr. Marcel Proulx (Hull—Aylmer, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is confused. That contract was for a vaccine for avian influenza.

Under infrastructure funding agreements, the Conservatives are off-loading onto the municipalities the cost of the creation, printing and installation of signs to promote the Conservatives. These expenditures total \$45 million, which the Conservatives are passing off to the municipalities.

Why are the Conservatives forcing the municipalities to do their dirty work, that is, spread their propaganda?

[English]

**Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, at the beginning of question period, it was \$5 million. Then it was \$40 million. We are already up to \$45 million. Inflation must be taking hold in the country, at least when it comes to the inflation of the truth from our Liberal friends.

What we have is a great partnership between the provinces and territories and the municipalities on infrastructure projects. We have an important responsibility to report back to Canadians on the real action taking place. We are creating jobs. We are building better roads and safer highways. We are going to have cleaner water and better public transit as a result.

We are working constructively with municipalities in every corner of the country. We are getting the job done.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**HEALTH**

**Mr. Marcel Proulx (Hull—Aylmer, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is worse than it looks.

While millions of Canadians are still waiting to be vaccinated, the Conservatives are wasting \$45 million on signs that are completely useless.

Will the Conservatives cancel their propaganda campaign and redirect those funds to help the provinces vaccinate Canadians as soon as possible?

[English]

**Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, one of the hallmarks of the government has been transparency and accountability. That is why we think it is incredibly important, when we make investments in communities coast to coast to coast, that we inform Canadians of those investments.

We have seen good co-operation. We have put aside politics when it comes to dealing with provinces and territorial governments. We put aside politics when dealing with municipalities. If we could only get the same thing from the Liberal Party, that would be quite the accomplishment.

**Mrs. Bonnie Crombie (Mississauga—Streetsville, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Auditor General said, “Public Safety Canada has not exercised the leadership necessary to coordinate emergency management activities”.

Today, U of T’s Mississauga campus cancelled its clinic before the doors even opened because of a vaccine shortage. We are reaching proportions of a national crisis if our students cannot get the proper protection and attention.

Here is a question the Auditor General wants answered. Why has the government not developed a proper national emergency management plan to protect students and all Canadians?

**Hon. Peter Van Loan (Minister of Public Safety, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we do have a federal emergency response plan. It has been working very well in occasions like the spring floods in Manitoba. However, in terms of the H1N1 flu, we are dealing with that under the pandemic management plan, an entirely separate plan.

The federal responsibilities are being carried out very well. We understand clearly the division of responsibilities. We have delivered the highest quantity of vaccine per capita of anywhere in the world. We have carried out that part of our plan.

Another obligation is to make Canadians aware of the need to get vaccinated. They seem to be aware of that need now.

• (1440)

**Mrs. Bonnie Crombie (Mississauga—Streetsville, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday in my riding, Donald and his wife waited five hours at an H1N1 clinic. When Donald finally reached the front of the line, he was turned away because they were running short and needed to save doses for priority recipients. Donald is 56 years old and a diabetic, clearly in the high-risk category.

We keep hearing misleading slogans about six million doses and the highest per capita. Obviously, Donald and the millions like him do not make the grade.

The government says that it will have enough vaccine by Christmas, but the flu is here now. Where is the leadership?

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (Minister of Health, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we are ahead of schedule in getting the vaccine to the provinces and the territories. Six million doses have been distributed, 1.8 million more, 225,000 for unadjuvanted vaccine to the provinces and territories.

Territories and provinces are rolling out their campaigns. We will continue to work with the provinces and territories in their rollout. By next week, some jurisdictions will have completed their mass immunization campaign.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**THE ENVIRONMENT**

**Mr. Bernard Bigras (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of the Environment is continuing to hide his head in the sand by trying to defend the indefensible. Yet for the second time in as many days, Canada has received the “fossil of the day” award at the Barcelona conference on climate change for being the best country at blocking progress on negotiations.

How can the minister claim that his approach is best when 400 environmental groups are condemning Canada's role in sabotaging the Barcelona talks?

**Hon. Jim Prentice (Minister of the Environment, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Canada's position has been clear for a long time. Any international agreement on carbon emissions will have to apply to all the major emitters. To achieve that goal, Canada has invited some very well-known and highly respected negotiators to represent it at the table. We are not the opposition boy scouts. We are taking serious action.

**Mr. Bernard Bigras (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, Canada trails behind all other western countries. That is a fact. According to the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research, Canada's foot-dragging could come at a high cost.

Is the minister aware that his inaction means additional costs not only for Canada, but also for Quebec, which has made an effort to reduce greenhouse gas emissions?

Why is Quebec being made to pay a second time in order to give the oil companies in the west a break? Is this an equitable plan for Canada?

[English]

**Hon. Jim Prentice (Minister of the Environment, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Copenhagen negotiations are the toughest international environmental negotiations that this country has ever been involved in. To protect Canada's interests, we have engaged negotiators who are able, who are tough at the table, and who are very capable.

If tough, able negotiators are going to win fossil awards, then so be it. However, I will tell members one thing this government will not do. We will not negotiate from a position of weakness the way the Liberals did. We will not be the boy scouts at the table.

[Translation]

**CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION**

**Mr. Thierry St-Cyr (Jeanne-Le Ber, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism has totally twisted the meaning of the letter from the Government of Quebec. In the letter, the Quebec government condemned the fact that the cost of last resort assistance offered by Quebec has doubled since 2006-07. In fact, the Government of Quebec has to help more refugees for a longer period of time because the federal system is inadequate.

As a result, Quebec is doubly penalized. Fewer tourists are coming to visit and supporting refugees costs more.

Will the minister admit that the Government of Quebec never demanded that visas be imposed, contrary to what he said yesterday?

**Hon. Jason Kenney (Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Government of Quebec has asked me many times to act responsibly with respect to the increased requests for asylum in Quebec.

In 2008, Quebec received close to 6,000 asylum seekers from Mexico and 90% were bogus claims, according to the IRB. This is costing Quebecers \$171 million.

This government is taking action to defend the interests of Quebec taxpayers. Why does the Bloc not do the same?

• (1445)

**Mr. Thierry St-Cyr (Jeanne-Le Ber, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, you have to admit there is a difference between responsible action and extremist action.

Yesterday, the Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism accused me of defending special interest groups. However, I was merely echoing the words of four Quebec ministers who, in a letter dated July 24, were complaining about the negative impact of the minister's decision on Quebec's tourism.

Why does the minister show so much contempt for the elected members of the Quebec nation by describing them as special interest groups?

**Hon. Jason Kenney (Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is lunacy to have an hon. member here who claims to represent the interests of Quebec taxpayers, but wants to spend hundreds of millions of dollars on bogus asylum seekers, primarily from Mexico, who have settled in Quebec.

This government is taking action to protect the interests of Quebec taxpayers and the integrity of Canada's asylum and immigration system against the will of the Bloc Québécois.

\* \* \*

[English]

**HEALTH**

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Beauséjour, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, to be properly protected against H1N1, Canadians have to be vaccinated before the peak period of the pandemic arrives. That means this month.

*Oral Questions*

However, the government says it will not have all the necessary vaccines until Christmas, and will even miss its own target by 40% next week. Canadians need the vaccine in their arms, not in their Christmas stockings.

Can anybody on the other side of the House credibly say that Canadians will be vaccinated before the peak period of this pandemic by the end of this month?

**Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (Minister of Health, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we are early in the rollout of the vaccine. Six million vaccines have been distributed. An additional 1.8 million vaccines and 225,000 unadjuvanted vaccines for pregnant women have all been rolled out to the provinces and territories.

The provinces and territories have been vaccinating their populations since October 26. They will continue to do that until every Canadian receives the vaccine. We are ahead of schedule, and we will continue to distribute the vaccines to the provinces and territories.

[Translation]

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Beauséjour, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, for all Canadians to be vaccinated before the worst of the season hits, one million people a day will have to be vaccinated for three weeks.

Even if we follow the schedule to have all vaccinations completed by Christmas, we will have to vaccinate half a million Canadians every day.

Since delays are preventing many Canadians from getting vaccinated now, how can the government seriously claim that these two scenarios are even possible?

[English]

**Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (Minister of Health, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, based on the Chief Public Health Officer of this country, the Government of Canada and the provinces and territories established a sequencing guideline for the H1N1 vaccine, recognizing the fact that in nine days it was impossible to vaccinate 33 million Canadians.

This is why both levels of government agreed to develop a sequencing guideline to be used to focus on the most vulnerable for the first week of the vaccine rollout. We will continue to work with the provinces and territories for the next few weeks and roll out the vaccine in the provinces as it is produced.

\* \* \*

**VIA RAIL**

**Hon. Joseph Volpe (Eglinton—Lawrence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, 19.5 million Canadian tax dollars were allocated in September to renovate a dozen VIA Rail cars and to create 51 jobs in the process. Companies in Quebec and New Brunswick can do the work, but the contract went to Avalon Rail in Wisconsin, U.S.A. No Canadian economic stimulus, no Canadian jobs.

Will the Minister of Transport be hammering one of his billboards in front of the factory in Milwaukee and delivering the cheque himself, or does the Conservatives' giant cheque printer not make cheques in American dollars?

**Hon. Rob Merrifield (Minister of State (Transport), CPC):** Mr. Speaker, when it comes to crown corporations, the government works at arm's-length from VIA Rail. As long as the rules are abided by, and that is the thing that we get concerned about, we make sure that everything is done above board and fair.

In this case, there were a multiple number of bidders on this contract and everything was done according to the rules, as long as they were clear and open. We are not a government that believes in protectionism. That is a road to disaster that is advocated by the opposition. It is not a road to success.

● (1450)

[Translation]

**Hon. Marlene Jennings (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Industrial Rail Services in Moncton, and CAD Railway Industries in Montreal also submitted bids to VIA Rail that were equally competitive. Avalon Rail has no plant in Canada, but VIA Rail, with a green light from the Conservatives, awarded it the \$19.5 million contract.

Why will the money allocated to VIA Rail to create Canadian jobs be used instead to create 51 American jobs?

[English]

**Hon. Rob Merrifield (Minister of State (Transport), CPC):** Mr. Speaker, that is pretty rich from a party which in government contracted out RCMP contracts to the United States to Disneyland. That is very rich.

Protectionism is not a recipe for success in the 21st century. We are a government that believes in open trade and freer trade in North America. That is what we are going to do. We are going to make sure that we secure jobs for Canadians as we have opportunities in other markets as well. That is where we need to go in this country.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE**

**Mr. Steven Blaney (Lévis—Bellechasse, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday, Conservative members from Quebec rose to support employed and unemployed workers in Quebec. Not only did the Bloc members remain seated, but they also voted against the bill.

Why is the Bloc Québécois abandoning employed and unemployed workers in Quebec? Can the Minister of National Revenue explain the Bloc's ideological and doctrinaire behaviour when the time comes to help employed and unemployed workers in Quebec, and to deliver the goods?

**Hon. Jean-Pierre Blackburn (Minister of National Revenue and Minister of State (Agriculture), CPC):** Mr. Speaker, in fact, if the Bloc leader and his party wanted to be positive in the House, instead of always criticizing, they would see that our government and the Conservatives are implementing good measures for unemployed workers, for those people who are losing their jobs.

Yesterday we voted, and fortunately, with the support of the NDP, we were able to pass the bill to help long-tenured workers by giving them an additional five to twenty weeks of benefits.

*Oral Questions*

What is worse is that the member for Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, who comes from a region hit hard by unemployment, where the forestry industry is struggling, was not even able to support the unemployed. That is unbelievable.

\* \* \*

**GOVERNMENT ADVERTISING**

**Mr. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives' hypocrisy has no bounds. They promised to make a clean sweep and to put an end to the practices that resulted in the Liberal sponsorship scandal. However, as reported yesterday in *Le Devoir*, they too are spending millions of taxpayers' dollars on partisan advertising. Today, ruefrontenac.com, the paper put out by the locked out workers of the *Journal de Montréal*, reported that they are actually forcing the provinces and municipalities to pay for this Conservative advertising.

When will they clean up their own mess rather than lecturing others?

**Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, during this global economic crisis, we have been working very well with the provinces, territories and municipalities in every part of Canada. It is our responsibility to be accountable and transparent with respect to our investments. That is why we must ensure that Canadians are aware of our investments. We work well, on a non-partisan basis, with every other level of government. We are very proud of that.

\* \* \*

[English]

**GOVERNMENT POLICIES**

**Mr. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, four years ago today the Prime Minister promised that if elected, he would do things differently from the sleazy Liberals. No more patronage appointments—

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**The Speaker:** Order. The hon. member for Outremont has the floor.

**Mr. Thomas Mulcair:** Mr. Speaker, four years ago today the Prime Minister promised that if elected, he would do things differently than the sleazy Liberals. No more patronage appointments; the Conservatives have made over 1,000. A parliamentary budget officer; they are trying to starve him. No more cronyism; dozens of Conservative lobbyists, thousands of contracts. No more Senate stuffing; 1-800-Mike Duffy. All that they have changed is that we now have the Conservative logo on the same old Liberal sleaze.

When are they going to start cleaning up their own house instead of giving lessons to others?

• (1455)

**Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, some four years ago the Prime Minister promised to eliminate the influence of big money on politics. Done. The Prime Minister promised to eliminate corporate cash from the political process and political candidates. Done. The Prime Minister promised to eliminate the capacity of unions to fund

political parties. Done. The Prime Minister promised the most significant overhaul of lobbyist reform ever in Canadian history. Done.

This Prime Minister and this government are providing one of the most ethical governments in our history. They have done more to reform the government than any government in our history and they are awfully proud of it.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**QUEBEC CITY ARMOURY**

**Ms. Christiane Gagnon (Québec, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Auditor General is reporting that the federal government spent \$118 million on 33 armoured vehicles, many of which are not even operational. When it comes time to invest in military equipment, the floodgates open wide, but when it comes time to enhance our military heritage in the heart of Quebec City, they simply order more studies to call into question the relevance of the project.

Will the minister responsible for the Quebec City region admit that she has utterly failed in her duty to show some leadership regarding the restoration of Quebec City's military heritage?

[English]

**Hon. Peter MacKay (Minister of National Defence and Minister for the Atlantic Gateway, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, what the Auditor General has done, in fact, is she has praised the Department of National Defence for being able to procure the vehicles necessary to protect the Canadian Forces for the important work they are doing in Afghanistan. I quote:

In three of the four projects we examined, National Defence and PWGSC provided the Canadian Forces in Afghanistan with urgently needed vehicles that National Defence determined met the operational needs. The quick procurement and delivery of these protective vehicles, in the opinion of National Defence, contributed to the safeguarding of Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan.

We are proud of that fact. We will continue to work with all departments to see that we provide the Canadian Forces the important equipment they need.

[Translation]

**Ms. Christiane Gagnon (Québec, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the minister responsible for the Quebec City region promised that a decision would be made by December regarding the reconstruction of the Quebec City Armoury. Clearly, she has been unable to keep her promise. For Yvan Lachance of the Voltigeurs, the federal government's dithering confirms its insensitivity regarding the Quebec City Armoury.

When will the minister finally show some leadership and tell us what she plans to do with the armoury, and sooner rather than later?

**Hon. Josée Verner (Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister for La Francophonie, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would simply like to remind the House that when we presented our economic action plan, the government promised to spend up to \$2 million on public consultations to find a solution for the Quebec City Armoury.

I would remind the hon. member for Québec that she voted against that initiative. As a government, we want to act transparently and efficiently, and above all, we want to find a solution. During the public consultations, the member for Québec missed her chance once again to propose any constructive solutions. Our government will find a lasting solution for the Quebec City Armoury.

\* \* \*

[English]

#### CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

**Mr. Rodger Cuzner (Cape Breton—Canso, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, construction workers in Atlantic Canada have long had an excellent, mutually beneficial relationship with the contractors of Alberta, but a lack of action on the government's part has strained that relationship.

Large-scale layoffs have impacted both Canadian workers and temporary foreign workers, only to see the less trained, less costly temporary workers hired back just days or weeks later. This is costing Canadian workers their livelihood and in some cases costing temporary foreign workers their lives.

When will the government finally take the Auditor General seriously and fix this problem?

**Hon. Jason Kenney (Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the working conditions of all temporary foreign workers are governed by the relevant provincial labour codes overseen by the provincial labour ministries.

We have recently brought in regulations to allow greater cooperation between my ministry and Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, as well as the provincial labour ministries. In part, we will keep a list of employers with a bad employment record and ensure they do not have access to labour market opinions and work permits in the future.

We are taking action to both grow our economy and defend the interests of these workers.

• (1500)

**Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua (Vaughan, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Auditor General, in reference to the Conservative government, has stated that there is no well-defined strategy to best meet the needs of our labour market.

She stated that the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration has made a number of key decisions without properly assessing the costs, the benefits and the potential risks.

We need action and leadership to better integrate new Canadians into our workforce. Canada is falling behind the rest of the world in an area where we once led.

How and why has the minister allowed this to happen?

**Hon. Jason Kenney (Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, in point of fact, Canada continues to lead on immigration.

We are maintaining, as indicated in the 2010 immigration plan which I have just tabled in the House, that in the next year we will maintain the developed world's highest levels of immigration at

#### Oral Questions

0.8% of our population, between 240,000 and 265,000 new permanent residents.

More important, we have improved the immigration system. We have reduced the backlog in the federal skilled worker category by 33%. We are now giving answers on applicants through that program in 6 to 12 months rather than 5 to 6 years which was the case under the previous government.

\* \* \*

#### PRODUCT SAFETY

**Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (Winnipeg North, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, New Democrats have been trying to get lead and phthalates out of children's toys for over a decade.

Yesterday the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development issued another report showing that the government still is not protecting children from dangerous and toxic substances. The report is very disturbing to Canadian parents who have heard the government talk about this for a long time and are very disappointed that it still has not taken action.

Why does the government continue to fail to protect our children? What does it say to parents heading out to buy toys during this holiday season?

**Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (Minister of Health, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for raising this very important issue. I agree with the member.

There is a bill in the Senate, Bill C-6, the Consumer Product Safety Act, which would allow us to recall products that are unsafe. I would urge all members of this House to urge the Liberal senators to pass the bill so that we can protect the health and safety of our children.

**Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (Winnipeg North, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it is true there is a bill that we supported. We actually worked to amend and strengthen it. It is stuck in the Senate. That is a problem.

The fact of the matter is we do not need a new law to ban toys with toxic substances that the government has already banned.

My question is simply, will the government immediately remove these toxic toys from the store shelves?

**Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (Minister of Health, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, again, to recall any products that are on the shelves of retail stores, we require the legislation that would allow us to do that.

Bill C-6 that is stuck in the Senate with the Liberals, once passed, would allow us to recall products that are unsafe for our children.

\* \* \*

#### FIREARMS REGISTRY

**Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, tonight this House will vote on the member for Portage—Lisgar's private member's bill to repeal the long gun registry.

### Oral Questions

Some opposition members have publicly stated that they will do the right thing and support this bill, and will bring an end to the Liberal's billion dollar boondoggle.

Could the Minister of Public Safety please remind members on the other side of the House why they should voice their constituents' concerns and vote tonight to repeal the ineffective and wasteful long gun registry?

**Hon. Peter Van Loan (Minister of Public Safety, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the long gun registry does a good job of harassing law-abiding hunters and farmers and it does a good job of wasting money, but it does not do a good job of combatting crime. That is why today, members of this House will have an opportunity to finally fix that problem.

The Leader of the Opposition said, "I want to be in a party that respects the rights of legitimate gun owners. It's an issue of freedom". Today he said that the long gun registry lacks legitimacy. Today he gets a chance to add his voice as well. Will he be one of those who does what he says, or is he another politician who says one thing and does another?

**Mr. Gerard Kennedy (Parkdale—High Park, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, recently the RCMP commissioner sent a report to the Minister of Public Safety which contradicts the falsehoods spread by the government about the gun registry. We know it has been kept sitting on his desk for some time because they are trying to suppress it in advance of today's vote.

Could the minister confirm that he has read this report and how long he has had it? Could he tell Canadians why he is withholding the truth that the registry is really a valuable tool that the police need to help keep people safe?

• (1505)

**Hon. Peter Van Loan (Minister of Public Safety, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the report in question will be tabled in this House in accordance with the schedule that is set out in the rules governing reports like that. But Canadians do not need another report to know that the long gun registry is very efficient at harassing law-abiding outdoors enthusiasts and farmers and wasting money, while being terribly inefficient at combatting crime.

Let us all get together. Canadians are watching. Let us fix this wasteful registry tonight.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

### INTERNATIONAL AID

**Ms. Johanne Deschamps (Laurentides—Labelle, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, in her report released yesterday, the Auditor General confirmed the government's mismanagement in the area of international aid. She noted that this government has no long-term vision, and that the frequent changes in the agency's policy direction are undermining the effectiveness of its development assistance.

When will this government come up with a coherent, long-term international aid plan?

[English]

**Hon. Bev Oda (Minister of International Cooperation, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, in fact we agree with the recommendations and the

observations of the Auditor General. In fact it was in 2002 that the previous government tried to increase the effectiveness of its aid.

In the short time we have been in office, we have focused geographically and thematically. We have untied our aid. We are ensuring that our projects are going to see real results in countries for those who are living in poverty.

\* \* \*

### AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

**Mr. Tony Martin (Sault Ste. Marie, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, cattle farmers from Algoma and other areas are back in Ottawa today because they are facing another crisis.

When Jack Tindall was here in 2004, he spoke for 200 Algoma farmers. Now that number is far less and the same story is unfolding across Canada. Beef farmers face mounting bills, ineffective support programs from Conservative and Liberal governments, and unfair trade barriers.

Will the government put more money into the agri-stability program and give it some teeth, so it can actually work for northern Ontario beef farmers?

**Hon. Gerry Ritz (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we have done exactly that. Working with our provincial partners and of course the livestock industry itself, we changed the old CAIS program. We re-evaluated agri-stability with reference margins that work for most cases. When that was not enough, we brought in another program called agri-recovery. What that does is cover off livestock producers in flooded areas such as Manitoba and drought areas in Saskatchewan and Alberta.

We have gone further than that. Working with the industry as well, we are having discussions on a livestock insurance program similar to crop insurance. We have also introduced the slaughter improvement program.

All of these things have come to pass through budgets and through movements. Those guys always vote against it.

\* \* \*

### SEALING INDUSTRY

**Mr. Rodney Weston (Saint John, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the European Union recently adopted new regulations that ban seal products in the EU marketplace. The Canadian seal hunt is humane and it is sustainable, and it adheres to rigorous international standards, a fact that has been upheld by independent veterinarians.

It is obvious that any ban on Canadian seal products was not based on science or facts. This ban does not just go against science; it represents a violation of the EU's trade obligations. When the EU Parliament voted for this ban, the Minister of International Trade said that our government would launch a WTO challenge if the ban did not include an acceptable exemption.

Could the minister—

**The Speaker:** The hon. Minister of International Trade.

**Hon. Stockwell Day (Minister of International Trade and Minister for the Asia-Pacific Gateway, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we had hoped that the European Union would follow the scientific evidence related to the seal hunt. Unfortunately, it did not. It was responding to misinformation by a professional anti-seal hunting lobby.

The Canadian seal hunt is legal. It is done in a sustainable manner and it follows international humane guidelines.

We did make the commitment that should the EU vote to ban Canadian seal hunt products, we would take steps. We have filed a challenge with the WTO. We will protect the Canadian seal hunt.

\* \* \*

#### PRESENCE IN GALLERY

**The Speaker:** I would like to draw to the attention of hon. members the presence in the gallery of six crew members of the NASA mission STS-127: Steve MacLean; Mark Polansky; Julie Payette; Christopher Cassidy; Thomas Marshburn; and David Wolf.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear!

#### ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

●(1510)

[English]

#### SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES (B), 2009-10

A message from Her Excellency the Governor General transmitting supplementary estimates (B) for the financial year ending March 31, 2010, was presented by the President of the Treasury Board and read by the Speaker to the House.

**The Speaker:** I cannot read the signature.

**Hon. Ralph Goodale (Wascana, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I think your reaction to this situation indicates a significant degree of irregularity in just what the government has undertaken in the last few moments. I would ask you to investigate the propriety of what has happened and that nothing should happen with respect to these estimates until you are satisfied that they have been brought to the House in the proper manner.

**Hon. Vic Toews (President of the Treasury Board, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the document speaks for itself. If that member has any evidence that there is any impropriety, let him bring it forward.

**The Speaker:** We will examine the document.

#### Routine Proceedings

#### PUBLIC ACCOUNTS OF CANADA

**Hon. Vic Toews (President of the Treasury Board, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to table today, in both official languages, the Public Accounts of Canada, 2009.

The Government of Canada is committed to sound financial management and reporting. I am pleased to note that for the 11th consecutive year the Auditor General of Canada has provided an unqualified audit opinion of the Government of Canada's financial statements. I have the documents here.

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#### INDIVIDUAL MEMBER'S EXPENDITURES

**The Speaker:** Order, please. I have the honour to lay upon the table a document entitled "Individual Member's Expenditures" for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2009.

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●(1515)

[Translation]

#### CIVIL AVIATION SAFETY

**Hon. Lawrence Cannon (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, with leave of the House and pursuant to Standing Order 32(2), I would like to table, in both official languages, a treaty entitled "Agreement on Civil Aviation Safety between Canada and the European Community" signed in Prague on May 6, 2009.

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#### PACIFIC COAST ALBACORE TUNA VESSELS AND PORT PRIVILEGES

**Hon. Lawrence Cannon (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would also like to table a document entitled "Exchange of Notes between the Government of Canada and the Government of the United States of America concluding amendments to the Treaty between the Government of Canada and the Government of the United States of America on Pacific Coast Albacore Tuna Vessels and Port Privileges", done at Washington on June 12, 2009.

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#### EXPLORATION AND USE OF OUTER SPACE FOR PEACEFUL PURPOSES

**Hon. Lawrence Cannon (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, lastly, I would like to table a document entitled "Framework Agreement between the Government of Canada and the Government of the United States of America for Cooperation in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space for Peaceful Purposes" done at Washington on September 9, 2009.

*Routine Proceedings*

[English]

**ROMÉO LEBLANC**

**Hon. James Moore (Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, this past summer, the remarkable life of Roméo LeBlanc came to an end. It is fitting that the House now has an opportunity to record our collective appreciation for the life and remarkable public service of a great Canadian, a former member of the House, a minister of the Crown, a Speaker of the Senate, Canada's 25th Governor General and Canada's first ever Acadian Governor General.

[Translation]

All of these accomplishments notwithstanding, Roméo LeBlanc was, first and foremost, a son of the Acadian community. It was fitting that his state funeral was held at St. Thomas church in Memramcook, New Brunswick.

[English]

He was a man of great personal character, great decency, dedication and strong loyalty to family, friends and country. Community mattered to Roméo LeBlanc and his service to the people of his home community was the greatest. His establishment of the Governor General's Caring Canadian Awards is testimony to the high value he attached to the strengthening of communities through volunteering and caregiving.

He championed the telling of Canada's greatest stories through the teaching of history and artistic expression. As Her Majesty's representative, he touched the lives of all Canadians he met during his hundreds of events across Canada.

At the time of his passing, there was a great outpouring of affection for Monsieur LeBlanc. In fact, I noticed one of the comments on a CBC website, where a Canadian wrote in anonymously and said, "I was very sad to learn about Monsieur LeBlanc's passing. He signed the Nunavut charter and I was there, a teenager, witnessing a page in Inuit political history. He was an astounding human being".

[Translation]

The fact that his dedication to public service was cut short only by the rapid progression of Alzheimer disease goes to show the strength of the values that inspired him to help others in need.

We salute the Right Hon. Roméo LeBlanc and thank him for his service to Canada. We also thank his family and his community for having given him the opportunity to make his outstanding mark on Canada's history.

[English]

I would like to say to my good friend, the member for Beauséjour, that I am sorry for his loss. The LeBlanc name will live on with pride in the House of Commons through him.

**Mr. Michael Ignatieff (Leader of the Opposition, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to join in the tributes to a great Canadian, a member of the House, a member of the other place and a devoted servant of Canada, the Right Hon. Roméo LeBlanc.

[Translation]

Roméo LeBlanc was always a proud Acadian, a leader and a beacon for his community, especially as the 25th Governor General of Canada and the first Acadian to bear that title. At every stage of his long and impressive career, Roméo LeBlanc was dedicated to the service of his country.

[English]

He was an incredible fisheries minister, at home with everyone on the wharf. The bond he developed with everyone on the wharf and in the whole fishing industry was legendary. He held the post for eight years. I think he was the distinguished Canadian to hold that post the longest. We remember his service to the fishing industry and the fisheries with affection and respect.

● (1520)

[Translation]

As a senator and then Governor General, Roméo LeBlanc was a tireless advocate of education, volunteerism and teaching the history of Canada. He also championed the cause of improving living conditions for the first nations.

We want to publicly offer our most sincere condolences to the LeBlanc family, especially to our colleague and friend the hon. member for Beauséjour, his son, and to his daughter Geneviève.

[English]

Today, in the place that he served, we pay tribute to Roméo LeBlanc's career. We remember him as a consummate public servant and a staunch believer in Canada and the Canadian people.

[Translation]

While we mourn the loss of a great Canadian, we also celebrate his life and his place in the history of a country that he loved with a passion.

[English]

If I could conclude in a personal way, I think anyone who attended the funeral service in that little church in Memramcook will never forget the deep affection and love that was expressed for him by the crowd outside and the crowd inside.

[Translation]

And when we all sang that beautifully melancholic song, *Partons la mer est belle*, we felt the affection and respect that everyone at that ceremony, everyone in that small town felt for a very great Canadian who will be sorely missed.

**Mr. Michel Guimond (Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, this past summer, Acadia lost one of its most illustrious native sons, Roméo Leblanc, at the age of 81. During his long career, Mr. Leblanc left a lasting impression on us all. We will remember him for many different reasons.

He was very proud of what he was. He took pride in his origins, his roots. He was also proud of being Acadian and francophone. Born in 1927 in Memramcook to a father who worked for the railway, he had nothing in his background that destined him for the career he would have.

*Points of Order*

Mr. Leblanc left a long list of achievements. He began his career as a teacher and journalist and was then elected to Parliament as the member for the riding of Westmorland—Kent in New Brunswick. He served as a minister and a senator and later as Governor General, becoming the first Acadian to hold this position. I believe that he did as much for Acadian culture as the greatest figures in the history of his people.

Roméo Leblanc was a simple man who led an extraordinary life. He was a man of the people, a hands-on kind of man who was close to people. He had a big heart and understood the importance of working for the development and enhancement of his community. He always stood up for his people and for the values he cherished.

In his village, in his corner of the country in New Brunswick, Roméo Leblanc was considered a leading figure. Everyone appreciated his genuineness and generosity. His high office never prevented him from remaining close to people, which is remarkable. He never hesitated to go down to the wharves and meet people. It is no surprise that he came to be known as the “fishermen’s minister”.

Roméo Leblanc created the Caring Canadian Award, which recognizes individuals and groups whose unpaid, voluntary contributions provide extraordinary help or care to people in the community. It is also thanks to him that we recognize the contribution of aboriginal peoples every year on June 21, National Aboriginal Day. Lastly, I think of the very important work he did to defend and promote Canada’s francophone community. That shows what kind of man Roméo Leblanc was. He was committed and dedicated. That is why he was a true model and a great source of inspiration for Acadians.

In closing, on behalf of the leader of the Bloc Québécois, the member for Laurier—Sainte-Marie, and all the members of the Bloc Québécois caucus, I would like to express our sincere sympathies to our colleague, the member for Beauséjour, on the loss of the man who was much more than his model in politics, the man who was his father, Roméo Leblanc.

• (1525)

**Mr. Yvon Godin (Acadie—Bathurst, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it is an honour for me to speak today on behalf of the NDP to pay tribute to Roméo LeBlanc, who was considered by all in my community and by myself to be a great politician. The work he did during his career as a member of Parliament, fisheries minister, senator and Governor General had a lasting impact on New Brunswick, Acadia and Canada as a whole.

During his time as fisheries minister, or, as Jean Chrétien put it, minister of fishers, Mr. LeBlanc helped fishers in his region and across the country tremendously. He made great strides forward during his mandate because he was close to the people, close to fishers. He was like one of their own and he knew how to listen to their concerns.

He loved his work and our beautiful country passionately, and he wanted people to care more about politics. My colleague, Bill Blaikie, who had a chance to work with Mr. LeBlanc, told me about what a simple, fair and down-to-earth guy he was, how he liked talking to people and listening to what others had to say to him. I think that many people in politics now could have learned a lot from spending time with Mr. LeBlanc.

He was the first Acadian to be appointed Governor General, and was a great defender of la francophonie in Canada and throughout the world, but many other causes were close to his heart, including volunteerism.

In 1996, to honour everyday heroes who help others and ask for nothing in return, he created the Governor General’s Caring Canadian Award.

He wanted the qualities of openness and compassion that he so admired in Canadians to be applied to solving the problems that divided aboriginal and non-aboriginal people in Canada. He declared June 21 National Aboriginal Day, to pay tribute to the first nations, their culture, their history and their contribution to the development of our country. In doing so, he showed us, yet again, how much respect he had for Canadians, and how much he wanted us all to be equal.

I will conclude with something Mr. LeBlanc said in his installation speech in February 1995:

If I am to be known for anything, I would like it to be for encouraging Canadians, for knowing a little bit about their daily, extraordinary courage. And for wanting that courage to be recognized.

I think that his wish came true, because that is exactly how many Canadians, myself included, will remember him, as a man who believed in his country and its people, and also as a man who was close to people, who respected them, and who profoundly touched the lives of many Canadians. Mr. LeBlanc’s family, including the member for Beauséjour, have every reason to be proud of their father’s accomplishments.

\* \* \*

[English]

**INTERPARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS**

**Ms. Yasmin Ratansi (Don Valley East, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34(1) I have the honour to present, in both official languages, three reports: the report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation of the Canadian Group of Interparliamentary Union, concerning its participation at the eighth workshop of parliamentary scholars and parliamentarians, Wroxton College, Wroxton, United Kingdom, July 26 to 27, 2008; the 17th session of the Steering Committee of the Parliamentary Conference on the World Trade Organization, Geneva, Switzerland, April 3 to 4, 2008; and the meeting of the Asia-Pacific working group of the Interparliamentary Union, Beijing, China, March 20.

\* \* \*

• (1530)

**POINTS OF ORDER****USE OF PROPS IN THE HOUSE**

**Mr. Rodger Cuzner (Cape Breton—Canso, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order arising from question period.

*Routine Proceedings*

Government members en masse contravened one of the Standing Orders by using a prop at the start of question period. What is truly offensive about the contravention is this. Upon inspection of the mittens that were used, which I checked out because I thought for sure there would be a place to cut the connector string that many on the other side would require, or even a trace of an “L” on one and an “R” on the other, on the inside, where we would have expected to see the Canada action plan signage, we saw a sign that said “made in China”.

The government members were very forceful today, saying that they stood up for Canadian jobs. We talked about the jobs that had gone to Wisconsin with the train contract. The Conservatives should apologize to Canadian workers for waving their mittens, which were made in China.

**Hon. Peter Van Loan (Minister of Public Safety, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the gloves that people were wearing here, showing enthusiastic support for Canadian athletes, was a private sector initiative designed to support Canadian athletes. We on this side ensured that they were all paid for. People can buy them at \$10 a piece and help support our athletes. That would be the right Olympic spirit and a great show of pride in Canada.

[Translation]

**Mr. Michel Guimond (Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I imagine that you do not intend to respond immediately from your chair to the point of order raised by my colleague, the Liberal Party whip. However, I refer you to a decision you made following, I believe, the Nagano Olympic Games, where one party made extensive use of props—I cannot think of the French term—that is, accessories or objects.

Before you give your ruling, I would like you to examine the decision pertaining to the Nagano Olympic Games and I believe you will be in a position to enlighten us as to how to proceed in this similar matter.

It was obvious that all Conservative Party members were attempting to impress us with their show of mittens. But if the mitten fits—

[English]

**Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, on the same point of order, I know the Conservatives are very much into optics these days. Now we find out that the Liberals suddenly have a new-found love for made in Canada. We will vote on a bill tonight about made in Canada, so maybe members of the House could think about what they will do in terms of that vote. There is an opportunity to support made in Canada.

I also point out that the mittens, which are made in China, are also not union made. If we truly believe in what we stand for, then let us get away from the optics and vote tonight for the bill on made in Canada.

**The Speaker:** I am not sure that where the mits are made is of any relevance to the Chair in this mini debate, but what is of importance is the use of props in the House. I was shocked that so many members were using props, with which we know we have trouble.

Members have raised points before about various buttons on occasion, certainly ribbons and other things such as scarves and

other items like that, which have been raised in the past. I think these mittens fall in the same category. I hope we will not see a repeat of this. If it continues, obviously the competition could become intense and we may see all kinds of different things appear, which may not be entirely in the best interests of the House.

I would urge hon. members to show proper restraint in this regard.

● (1535)

[Translation]

Does the hon. member for Jeanne-Le Ber also wish to raise a point of order?

## ORAL QUESTIONS

**Mr. Thierry St-Cyr (Jeanne-Le Ber, BQ):** Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Yesterday, after question period, the Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism tabled a letter from Minister Sam Hamad dated May 26 in which the minister complains, and I quote: “that the number of decisions by the Quebec Immigration and Refugee Board has steadily declined”.

In order for all parliamentarians to have a proper understanding of our exchanges, I would like to table a letter dated July 24 signed by Quebec ministers Yolande James, Pierre Arcand, Nicole Ménard and Claude Béchar. In this letter, the four Quebec ministers respond to the minister’s decision.

However, we believe that the new visa requirement for Mexican and Czech nationals will have substantial negative implications—

I would like to table this letter in order for parliamentarians to see that it is not true that the Government of Quebec demanded that visas be imposed.

**The Speaker:** Is there unanimous consent of the House for the hon. member to table this letter?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Speaker:** There is no consent.

\* \* \*

[English]

## COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

## FINANCE

**Mr. James Rajotte (Edmonton—Leduc, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the third report of the Standing Committee on Finance in relation to Bill C-51, An Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on January 27, 2009 and to implement other measures.

\* \* \*

## HOLIDAY HARMONIZATION ACT

**Ms. Chris Charlton (Hamilton Mountain, NDP)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-477, An Act respecting the harmonization of holidays.

She said: Mr. Speaker, it is my great pleasure today to introduce a bill respecting the harmonization of holidays. This enactment would entitle employees under federal jurisdiction to all the general holidays observed in the province in which they work.

I know that I only have 30 seconds to explain the intent of the bill, so let me try to put it as succinctly as possible by way of an example.

Two years ago, the Ontario government created a new holiday known as Family Day. Employees in federally regulated workplaces in Ontario, however, are not currently entitled to that provincial holiday. As a result, we find ourselves in the curious situation where a worker in the federally regulated courier sector, for example, is forced to try to deliver packages to retail businesses that are closed because of the provincial holiday. Moreover, these workers are unable to share the holiday with their family and friends despite the fact that they too work in Ontario.

My bill would end this unintended disconnect between federal and provincial laws by entitling employees in federally regulated workplaces to all the general holidays that are recognized in the province in which they work.

I want to conclude by thanking Shaun Flannery from my riding of Hamilton Mountain for first bringing this issue to my attention. I met him over two years ago when I was canvassing in his neighbourhood and I started working on the bill right away. To get the bill to the House has been an unbelievably circuitous process and I really appreciate his patience.

I am delighted to finally be able to table the bill for Mr. Flannery and for all the workers under federal jurisdiction, who like him, would benefit from this enactment.

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

\* \* \*

#### STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, there have been consultations with the other parties and in order to have the traditional Remembrance Day statement made at 3 p.m. tomorrow instead of 10 a.m., I believe you would find unanimous consent for the following motion. I move:

That, notwithstanding any Standing Order or usual practices of the House, on Thursday, November 5, Statements by Ministers, pursuant to Standing Order 33, shall be taken up at 3 p.m.

**The Speaker:** Does the hon. parliamentary secretary have the unanimous consent of the House to propose this 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)

#### Routine Proceedings

#### PETITIONS

##### ANIMAL WELFARE

**Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal (Newton—North Delta, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, unlike human rights, there is a void when it comes to global recognition of animal rights. As the owner of a black lab, I am proud to present this petition.

The petitioners say that the time has finally come for an international agreement to recognize that animals are conscious and can suffer pain. They call upon the government to support such a declaration at the United Nations.

My constituents and neighbours in Newton—North Delta support animal rights through initiatives like Paws for a Cause and Don't Forget About Fido. We believe that Canada's support for the recognition of animal welfare will encourage governments to establish or improve animal welfare legislation.

• (1540)

##### FRASER RIVER CHANNELS

**Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal (Newton—North Delta, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is my duty to once again present a petition on the dangerous silt build-up in the Ladner channels of the Fraser River. The build-up is creating a safety hazard, impairing marine access and reducing people's enjoyment of the river.

The Ladner Sediment Group has collected signatures from an additional 115 people who call on the federal government to work in conjunction with local stakeholders and fund the dredging of the Ladner channels to remove the silt.

[Translation]

##### CANADA POST CORPORATION

**Mr. Jean-Yves Roy (Haute-Gaspésie—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present a petition on behalf of some of my constituents in Sainte-Angèle-de-Méridi, who want the Canada Post Corporation to continue observing the moratorium proposed in 1994. Of course, they want public post offices in rural municipalities to remain open.

##### ASSISTED SUICIDE

**Mr. Pierre Lemieux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to present two petitions on behalf of some of my constituents from Alexandria, L'Orignal and the surrounding area.

These people are completely against Bill C-384, and the legislation on euthanasia and assisted suicide. They respect human life and expect our Parliament to defend the intrinsic value of human life. They are calling on us to protect and defend our most vulnerable citizens.

They have asked me to formally declare their opposition to the euthanasia and assisted suicide legislation here in the House of Commons. I am pleased to do so on their behalf, and I would like to point out that I will vote against any attempts to legislate euthanasia and assisted suicide.

*Routine Proceedings*

[English]

## EMPLOYMENT

**Mr. Peter Julian (Burnaby—New Westminster, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am tabling a certified petition today that is signed by more than 15,000 Canadians supporting the Telecommunications Workers Union which urges the government to take action to stop the outsourcing of Canadian jobs offshore and to protect good Canadian jobs.

Canadians can get more information from [www.keepjobsincanada.ca](http://www.keepjobsincanada.ca). These signers target TELUS, which is leading the trend of outsourcing knowledge and service sector jobs in Canada. Companies like TELUS are making huge profits by exploiting low-wage countries such as India and China to the detriment of more than 1.7 million unemployed Canadians.

The federal government must commit to ensuring companies like TELUS, which are making their profits in the Canadian market, are required to maintain Canadian jobs in proportion to the profits they extract from Canadian consumers.

More than 15,000 Canadians from Alberta, British Columbia, Montreal and Toronto are saying “protect Canadian jobs”.

## ANIMAL WELFARE

**Hon. Mark Eyking (Sydney—Victoria, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, more than 70,000 Canadians have signed petitions asking the government to support the campaign for the universal declaration on animal welfare, including many people in my riding of Sydney—Victoria.

Today I present this petition on behalf of my constituents, as well as a half a million Canadians who support animal welfare organizations.

[Translation]

## CANADA POST CORPORATION

**Mrs. Carole Freeman (Châteauguay—Saint-Constant, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present a petition here today on behalf of my constituents in the municipalities of Delson, Saint-Mathieu, Sainte-Catherine, Saint-Constant, Saint-Isidore, Mercier and Kahnawake.

For several weeks now, the mayors, municipal councillors, postmasters and citizens of those municipalities have been worried about the future of postal service. Despite the fact that the Canadian Postal Service Charter of September 12, 2009, announced that the moratorium on post office closures in rural areas and municipalities with under 10,000 residents will be maintained, I nevertheless seriously question what these promises are worth. Considering that the document says they will remain open, and then goes on to explain the procedure for closing them, the citizens have serious doubts about the government's sincerity.

The government must understand that the closure of rural post offices will create a division between people who live in the city and people who live in rural areas, and will contribute to the isolation of people with reduced mobility. It will also make things very difficult for our seniors. Maintaining this universal and affordable public service is essential to the economic viability and social identity of our communities.

I therefore present a petition containing 1,892 signatures.

• (1545)

[English]

## FRASER RIVER CHANNELS

**Mr. John Cummins (Delta—Richmond East, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions to present day. The first petition is from the folks from the Ladner Sediment Group.

These people are concerned about the silting up of the Lower Fraser River. The buildup of silt in the secondary channels causes serious navigational hazards, prevents fishermen from delivering their catch to the buyers in the Ladner Slough, and causes great upset to folks living in float homes along the Fraser River.

At low tide, these float homes and the walkways between them go aground. I was down there just a year ago in the wintertime, and it was treacherous walking out to the homes because these walkways had gone aground and were tilted at precarious angles.

The petitioners are calling on the government to make some funding available to address the issue of dredging.

## ANIMAL WELFARE

**Mr. John Cummins (Delta—Richmond East, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, my second petition recognizes that efforts should be made to prevent animal cruelty and reduce animal suffering.

The petitioners call on the government to support a universal declaration on animal welfare.

## AIR PASSENGER BILL OF RIGHTS

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I have a petition that calls for the adoption of Canada's first air passenger bill of rights. Bill C-310 will provide compensation to air passengers flying with all Canadian airlines including charters anywhere they fly. The bill includes measures on compensation for overbooked flights, cancelled flights and unreasonable tarmac delays.

The bill deals with late and misplaced baggage. The bill requires airline companies to use all-inclusive pricing in their advertising.

The legislation is inspired by European Union law which has been in place for four years now. Since Air Canada is already operating under European laws for its flights in Europe, why should an Air Canada customer receive better treatment in Europe than in Canada?

The bill will ensure that passengers be kept informed of flight changes whether they are delays or cancellations. The new rules must be posted in the airports, and airlines must inform passengers of their rights and the process to file for compensation.

The bill is not meant to punish the airlines. If the airlines follow the rules, they will not have to pay \$1 in compensation to passengers.

The petitioners call on the Government of Canada to support Bill C-310 which would introduce Canada's first air passenger bill of rights.

## CANADA POST

**Ms. Judy Foote (Random—Burin—St. George's, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition on behalf of constituents in my riding, this time from Grand Bank and Baine Harbour.

A number of petitions have been received about the issue of post offices.

The petitioners are calling on the federal government not to consider ending the current moratorium on post office closures.

Those of us who are familiar with rural communities recognize how important post offices are to rural residents.

The petitioners are also concerned about legalizing the activities of remailers, which will erode the revenues of Canada Post Corporation needed to maintain its current universal service obligations.

On behalf of the people of Grand Bank and Baine Harbour who have signed the petition, I am asking for the government's consideration.

## FRASER RIVER CHANNELS

**Mr. Richard Harris (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, like my colleague from Delta, I also have a petition from people in the Ladner Delta area in the great Fraser Valley of British Columbia who are concerned about the sediment levels in the Fraser River.

They are supportive of the Ladner Sediment Group who are calling for more attention to be paid to the dredging of the Fraser River in a number of places to enable safe shipping through that area and also to make the area safe for houseboats and access to them.

There are a number of supporters and they call on the Minister of Finance to recognize the needs of the Ladner Sediment Group.

● (1550)

## ANIMAL WELFARE

**Mrs. Michelle Simson (Scarborough Southwest, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition signed by a number of constituents in my riding of Scarborough Southwest.

The petitioners are calling upon the House of Commons to support a universal declaration on animal welfare.

They are urging Canada to join the growing number of nations worldwide that now have a UDAW.

**Mr. LaVar Payne (Medicine Hat, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to present a petition signed by 203 people from my constituency who are calling on the Government of Canada to support a universal declaration on animal welfare.

\* \* \*

## QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I ask that all questions be allowed to stand.

**The Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

*Business of Supply*

## MOTIONS FOR PAPERS

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC):** 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

[English]

## BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

## OPPOSITION MOTION—HEALTH

**Hon. Carolyn Bennett (St. Paul's, Lib.)** moved:

That, in the opinion of the House, provincial and local health authorities and health care workers should receive the maximum possible support from the federal government in handling the H1N1 flu pandemic and related vaccination efforts, and the Government of Canada should therefore immediately: (a) allocate the full \$400 million set aside for pandemic response in the 2006 budget to support additional medical staff for vaccinations and patient care; (b) increase support for emergency planning to help local health authorities cope with long line-ups and shortages of both vaccines and health care workers; and (c) divert the money now being spent on needless, partisan advertising of government budgetary measures to a new public awareness campaign to keep Canadians informed with essential up-to-date information throughout the pandemic.

She said: Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Etobicoke—Lakeshore.

Canada is clearly struggling in the midst of this H1N1 pandemic. The role of the federal government is to prepare Canadians, to lead Canadians and to inform Canadians, and in all three dimensions, the government has failed in its duties and thereby failed Canadians. Our motion is an attempt to rectify this situation.

In 2003, SARS dealt a humbling and poignant wake-up call regarding the serious need for improvement in public health in Canada. Forty-four people died; many more were sick, and our economy suffered from the lowering of real GDP by approximately \$1.5 billion, or 0.15% of the GDP.

Former health minister Anne McLellan asked Dr. David Naylor and the National Advisory Committee on SARS and Public Health to provide a third-party assessment of current public health efforts and lessons learned for ongoing and future infection control. In his report, "Learning from SARS: Renewal of Public Health in Canada", Dr. David Naylor stressed that Canada needs to create a national face for public health that will play a leading role in any future health crises. His report is a blueprint for federal leadership in a public health crisis. His report said that in any response to a public health emergency, there needed to be better cooperation, collaboration, communication and a clarity of who does what, when.

*Business of Supply*

Canada had to learn from the hard lessons of SARS and look at the outbreak as a reminder, warning and opportunity to renew the public health system. Disease prevention around the world is only as strong as its weakest link. Canada needed to provide a strong link, and for that the federal government had to take responsibility and help rebuild the frayed public health infrastructure in Canada.

In the section called “Federal Funding to Renew Public Health across Canada”, Dr. Naylor's report said:

The public health infrastructure needs strengthening at all levels, and this in turn suggests the need for earmarked federal funding that is not currently provided...

The availability of these funds underscores our assumption that any new federal spending on public health should be matched in some respects by P/T spending. But without earmarked federal monies for public health, P/T spending will be drawn, as always, to personal health services and opportunities for leverage and coordination will be lost.

[Translation]

The postscript states:

The SARS story as it unfolded in Canada had both tragic and heroic elements. The toll of the epidemic was substantial, but thousands in the health field rose to the occasion and ultimately contained the SARS outbreak in this country. The committee emphasizes that in drawing lessons from the SARS outbreak, our intent has been not to “name, shame, and blame” individuals, but rather to move and improve systems that were suboptimal. The challenge now is to ensure not only that we are better prepared for the next epidemic, but that public health in Canada is broadly renewed so as to protect and promote the health of all our citizens. It is to these latter ends that the committee's recommendations have been offered. We believe the recommendations represent a reasonably comprehensive and affordable starting point for strengthening and integrating public health at all levels in Canada. As our colleagues in government contemplate these recommendations, the committee commends to them the vision of Benjamin Disraeli who, on introducing his Public Health Act to British Parliament in 1875, remarked that public health was the foundation for “the happiness of the people and the power of the country. The care of the public health is the first duty of a statesman”.

Less eloquently, the committee in closing repeats the simple question we put earlier to all health ministers, finance ministers, and first ministers: If not now, after SARS, when?

• (1555)

[English]

As ministers in Paul Martin's government, we did much to act on Dr. Naylor's recommendations. We put in place the Public Health Agency of Canada; appointed Dr. David Butler-Jones as Canada's first Chief Public Health Officer; and created the public health network for Canada, in which all 13 jurisdictions could plan with the federal government the health and safety of Canadians.

As I mentioned Monday evening, during the emergency debate, in the 2004 budget we put in place a trust fund for the provinces of \$100 million to build the capacity for front line public health. The budget stated:

\$100 million will be made available to relieve stresses on provincial and territorial public health systems that were identified during the SARS outbreak, and to help the provinces and territories address their immediate gaps in capacity by supporting front-line activities, specific health protection and disease prevention programs, information systems, laboratory capacity, training and emergency response capacity.

That was federal leadership. However, in 2007 the Conservative government cancelled the fund. In its 2006 budget, it booked, thankfully, \$400 million for pandemic response, a contingency. It said:

This budget provides \$1 billion over five years to further improve Canada's pandemic preparedness—\$600 million to be allocated to departments and agencies and \$400 million to be set aside as a contingency. (...) The \$400-million contingency would only be accessed on an as-needed basis, if a pandemic were to occur or the

current planning environment were to change significantly—for example, if significant human-to-human transmission were confirmed, resulting in an elevated pandemic risk or if the World Health Organization declared a higher level of pandemic risk. The contingency would be used to enhance Canada's preparedness if an elevated pandemic risk were to occur and to address increased operational requirements during a pandemic influenza outbreak, for example to maintain emergency operations at a higher state of activity.

This was to be a contingency for pandemic response.

We learned that the government put the reserve fund into five annual packages of \$800 million and each year, without a pandemic, the money disappeared. If we do not use it, we lose it.

We learned, in a response on the order paper, that no amounts were allocated from the contingency or spent in 2006-07, 2007-08 and 2008-09. This is unacceptable. The money just disappeared out of the fund. It would be like putting away money in a fund in case we had to replace the roof or the furnace and every year it does not happen, we just take the money back out of the fund. This was to be an airtight fund. We were to break glass in the event of a pandemic.

It is time for the government to put the money back in the box and break the glass. and give those dollars to provincial and territorial local public health authorities that are reeling from the lack of certainty on vaccine delivery and a poor public awareness campaign that has Canadians still with 20 questions when they get to the front of their seven-hour line.

Dr. Naylor's report was very clear about federal leadership required in public health emergencies, but also the need for dollars from the federal government directed to local public health. Yet, the government has reversed the progress, and now the people of Canada are paying.

Platitudes and talking points will not work. Local public health urgently needs funding and, as well, the dollars from the contingency must be made available to help health care providers deal with the increasing numbers of sick people and very sick people.

Every member of this House must look to the situation on the ground in their ridings where they will see the need for the measures proposed in today's motion. We must look forward. We must redouble our efforts to get the resources to our health professionals so that they can get the job done.

*Business of Supply*

We know that lives will be saved and additional sickness avoided the sooner we have a significant percentage of the population immunized. We know that local public health officials are describing that they do not have enough resources to mount mass immunization campaigns or school campaigns or to hire back retired nurses. We know that this virus can make people very sick, with long stays in ICUs, and we need to be ready.

The minister says that she is working with the provinces and territories. The minister has had one meeting which has a drive-by appearance where she was asked for H1N1 resources and isotopes. She refused to listen. She then unilaterally decided that the provinces and territories would pay for 40% of the costs of the vaccine and 100% of the costs for administering the vaccine, and for all other aspects of the response.

They need federal government support. The federal government must assume its proper responsibility, as Dr. David Naylor prescribed six years ago, after the devastation of SARS.

● (1600)

The role of the federal government is to prepare Canadians, to lead Canadians, and to inform Canadians. In all three dimensions, the government has failed in its duties. We urge our colleagues to support the motion for the health and safety of Canadians.

**Mr. Dean Del Mastro (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the member speaks to the clarity of messages. She mentions that Canadians have a number of questions. However, this member well knows that the hon. Minister of Health and the Chief Public Health Officer, David Butler-Jones, have appeared before the health committee several times.

They have participated in hundreds of media availabilities and Health Canada has delivered one of the most comprehensive public awareness campaigns in our country's history. This week, the premiers and chief medical officers in the provinces and territories are doing their best to convey a clear message about the rollout of the vaccine, but the Liberals are currently attempting to muddle all of these efforts and messages.

They want to muddle these clear messages being sent by chief medical officers, professionals across this country, the Minister of Health and Dr. David Butler-Jones. Why are they doing that? Why are they muddling a clear message being sent to Canadians?

**Hon. Carolyn Bennett:** Mr. Speaker, I would ask the hon. member to understand the difference between a media availability and a proper public awareness campaign. I would urge the member to look at what has happened with the NHS in the U.K. and with CDC in the U.S. in terms of proper public education, where people feel confident that they know what to do for themselves and their families.

This minister has failed people terribly by not being able to go to cabinet and get the money to mount a proper public awareness campaign such as those happening in every other country.

**Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP):** Mr. Speakers, we really must ensure that we are talking about this and not trying to turn it into a witch hunt. We all have to take our role very seriously in terms of H1N1.

However, my concern is that we have seen this coming for some time. We knew what we were going to be seeing. Yet, in my region in northern Ontario, where there are shortages, there is real fear in isolated communities on the James Bay coast such as Kashechewan and Attawapiskat. They saw what happened last spring.

Last spring in northern Manitoba was a test run for what was going to happen to first nations communities across this country. Our communities have shut down. They have shut down the schools and airports. They do not want anyone even coming into the community because they are afraid of what they are facing. Yet, a government that should have had a plan to deal with the isolated communities seems not to have been there at a time when it made the promise.

We saw this. We knew what was going to happen. Why does the hon. member think that it is happening before us in the isolated communities in northern Canada right now?

● (1605)

**Hon. Carolyn Bennett:** Mr. Speaker, even today, I have heard the same concerns from northern Ontario that the member has articulated. Many priority communities in Northern Ontario are getting half of the vaccines that they had hoped for.

Infants and children are being inoculated with adult needles because they did not receive pediatric needles to give the vaccine. This is unacceptable. It is bad enough that these kids have to have a shot. That they are being given with adult syringes is just despicable. These people are still suffering. We will continue to fight for the people in northern Ontario and in the remote and rural communities.

**Hon. Keith Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague has done a fantastic job on this file. The government has made an appalling series of errors in terms of being unable or unwilling to dispel the fear and myths that we have heard in our country regarding adjuvant and non-adjuvant, and the presence of small amounts of mercury in the vaccines.

The government has failed to communicate a clear and concise message to the public to answer these fears. Does she not think that this is an appalling failure on the part of this minister and the government?

**Hon. Carolyn Bennett:** Mr. Speaker, as physicians know, sometimes the information changes and therefore efforts must be redoubled on the communication of this. However, I think that, particularly for pregnant women, the government has changed its mind five times. That leads to huge confusion and it is unacceptable.

The government needed direct, clear messages to explain to the people of Canada exactly what was needed. There are too many messages and too many ideas out there for people to feel confident about the choices before them.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Michael Ignatieff (Leader of the Opposition, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend the hon. member for her remarkable work, which stems from her experience as a family doctor.

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[English]

This is a debate in which the opposition seeks to put forward concrete and practical solutions to help the country through the situation it is dealing with on H1N1, but it is also an opportunity for us to highlight the fact that this is a government that does not seem to understand the proper functions of government, which are to plan, to inform and to lead. There is no more basic area where the government has to show competence and compassion than in public health.

[Translation]

From the beginning of this crisis there has been a flagrant lack of preparedness by the Conservative government. The H1N1 flu appeared for the first time on April 23, in Mexico. By the end of July, more than 35 governments had placed their order for the vaccine. The Conservative government did not order the vaccine until August 6.

This delay goes a long way to explaining the confusion that reigned in September and October.

[English]

The Conservatives started vaccination behind many other countries. China, Australia, United States, Sweden, Japan and the United Kingdom, all began vaccinations before Canada, which did not begin its vaccination program until October 26.

[Translation]

The Conservatives did not properly plan the vaccination of pregnant women. We have already talked about that. There was total confusion in the public information for pregnant women. This is a total failure of their duty as the government.

[English]

The Conservatives only used one vaccine supplier even though the Chief Public Health Officer, Dr. David Butler-Jones, has said that the government's contract allows it to purchase vaccine from other providers. We want to know why the Conservatives have not done so.

[Translation]

The men and women at the GSK plant in Sainte Foy are working day and night, but they cannot meet the demand because of this government's delays.

● (1610)

[English]

Another area in which we begin to understand why the failure to plan does not just go back to this summer but it goes back over four years is the fact that the government had no emergency preparedness plan whatever for emergencies in general. One of those emergencies obviously is pandemic planning.

Four years ago the Conservatives should have begun that planning process to put a plan in place. They have not done so. The Auditor General has now pointed this out to the country and the country begins to understand that this is a problem that did not just begin with planning failures this summer, it tracks back in fact to the beginning of the government's mandate.

It is a failure to plan but it is equally a failure to inform. The Conservatives consistently failed to give Canadians credible information about the vaccine. On April 28 the health minister told this House, in response to questions from this side of the House, that the government would stockpile H1N1 vaccine, but it did not happen. On August 12 the health minister told the country that the government was prepared for this fall's outbreak, but it was caught off guard. On October 20, just two weeks ago, the health minister told Canadians that the vaccine would be available to all Canadians in early November and just late last week she began to say, "Well actually, we do not mean early November, we actually mean we might get it done by Christmas".

It is this constant inability to get a clear story out to Canadians that has caused enormous confusion and anxiety in Canadian families. One of the reasons why this has occurred is that the Conservative government chose as a deliberate strategy to spend more than \$60 million promoting its own economic action plan and only one-tenth of that on public information. This seems to me a scandalous display of partisanship when the clear duty of government is to inform the public about public health risks.

[Translation]

We also need to talk about the lack of leadership in all these areas, a lack of leadership and coordination between the federal government, the provinces and the territories.

[English]

My colleague evoked the need to invest \$400 million. It was in the 2006 budget. The clear intention of that 2006 budget, a Conservative budget, was to provide resources so that we could have front-line public health services at the level that a modern civilized country like Canada should have. Instead, the money was not spent and we are now in a situation of frantic improvisation by hard-pressed public health authorities who deserve better from the federal Government of Canada, that is to say, leadership and clear direction.

The health minister, instead of accepting responsibility for these failures, has said, "We do not deliver health care". The fact is that these pandemics do not care about jurisdictions. The role of the federal government is to provide coordination, planning and investment, and to burden share with hard-pressed local, provincial and territorial authorities.

We have had clinics shut down in Alberta, New Brunswick and Manitoba. We have had Ontario hospitals saying that they do not have room for any potential surge of H1N1 patients. In St. John's and Halifax local authorities report dwindling vaccine supplies. This is unworthy of a country of our reputation, and the failure is squarely at the door of the Conservative government.

The Prime Minister himself has been absent throughout this matter. At a moment when we would expect a Prime Minister to stand up and take leadership of this issue, he has been entirely absent.

[Translation]

He has not met with the premiers of the provinces and the territories nor with health officials. He has not shown any leadership during this crisis.

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[English]

I want to remind the House that this is not the first public health emergency in which the government has failed to respond. We had the nuclear medicine fiascos, not one interruption of nuclear medicine but two on this government's watch. Now we have the H1N1. It begins to resemble a pattern of negligence, a pattern of incompetence, a pattern of "we just do not care about this issue", and behind all of that, it seems to me, is an ideological disposition which holds, "What do we care? This is not the function of a federal government". This side of the House believes passionately in the role of an active and compassionate federal government in providing leadership in the protection of the public health of Canadian citizens.

We on this side are attempting to do our job. We raised questions about the H1N1 epidemic the minute it made its presence known, its presence evident in Mexico. The minute it was sequenced in Canada, we began to ask for action. We have been asking for action consistently, and today's opposition motion puts forward extremely concrete proposals that are meant in a constructive spirit. Their chief intent is for the federal government to step up and provide resources to hard-pressed provincial and territorial authorities. We feel that this, if done, would begin to restore Canada's reputation as a country with a first-class public health system right across the country.

I want to make it clear that the Auditor General's report, which makes it clear that there has been a complete failure to provide comprehensive national emergency planning, adds an additional dimension to this debate, which has come to our attention, thanks to her excellent report. In the light of the Auditor General's report, the supply day motion now under debate, standing in the name of the member for St. Paul's, merits amendment.

I now, therefore, move:

That the motion be amended by adding the following:

...and (d) implement the recommendations of the Auditor General of Canada pertaining to emergency management as set forth in Chapter Seven of her 2009 fall report to the House of Commons.

• (1615)

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin):** The amendment is in order.

[Translation]

I must inform hon. members that an amendment to an opposition motion may be moved only with the consent of the sponsor of the motion.

[English]

Therefore, I ask the hon. member for St. Paul's if she consents to the amendment being moved?

**Hon. Carolyn Bennett (St. Paul's, Lib.):** I do.

**Mr. Rob Clarke (Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the member for Etobicoke—Lakeshore.

Today we hear about partisanship, scandal and politicizing a worldwide H1N1 crisis.

What I have seen here today being mocked is myself being a first nations person but, most of all, a Canadian, an aboriginal Canadian

who served my country to protect everyone in this world and in this country of Canada to keep it safe.

Would the hon. member please update the House on how he believes that distributing a ten percent depicting an aboriginal child with a thermometer is helping Canadians? Was it his idea? If so, did he talk to his colleague and ask her to do the same thing with the ten percent depicting a first nations child with a body bag? How is this helping Canadians to get the message out of helping?

**Mr. Michael Ignatieff:** Mr. Speaker, I want to acknowledge with gratitude the public service of the hon. member opposite. This side of the House would always treat that public service with the greatest respect.

The issue before the House is the public information of the Government of Canada. The issue before the House is whether the government has done its job to provide clear, timely and accurate information to the people of Canada about the public health challenges that they face in respect of H1N1.

It is our view that this message has been confused, dilatory and underfunded. That is the position we have taken. We have tried to point out that had the government spent less money on self-promotion and more money on public health promotion, we would avoid the confusion that we see in the lines across the country.

It is extremely important that everybody behaves responsibly in relation to the H1N1 epidemic and provide accurate and timely information to all Canadians. It is also no secret that northern aboriginal communities face particular challenges which are the responsibility of federal authorities. We have been very critical of the ways in which federal authorities have failed to provide accurate and timely public health information to that community.

• (1620)

**Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I have been speaking with families on the James Bay coast whose loved ones are living in unheated tents, thanks to the fact that the government has abandoned basic infrastructure needs and left them abandoned in a sewage crisis.

What we are seeing with H1N1 is not a surprise. This was seen coming for some time. The World Health Organization was focused on this. In our first nations communities we are seeing the return of tuberculosis on northern reserves. Our young people are dying at young ages from all kinds of ailments, from contamination and from a lack of medical services. They were the most vulnerable.

The government saw what happened this spring with H1N1 hitting the reserves in northern Manitoba. It knew what was coming and yet in our communities there is fear because they feel that once again they have been abandoned. They are the most susceptible to H1N1, because we have 15 and 20 people living in two bedroom homes.

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Does the hon. member see this as part of a larger pattern of abandonment of isolated first nations communities by the government?

**Mr. Michael Ignatieff:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his comments based on his experience of northern communities.

Like him, I have often been shocked by the situation of northern communities and the difficulties that they face in providing adequate health services.

This party is associated with the Kelowna accord and very clear commitments to fund improvements in aboriginal health, aboriginal education and aboriginal housing. We are disappointed with the reaction of the government to these challenges. We have pointed out the ways in which it has failed to respond quickly enough to aboriginal communities.

When I met aboriginal leaders from Manitoba, they pointed out the very sharp contrast between their sense of whether their communities are prepared to meet this epidemic and the public claims by the Minister of Health. There is a gap between the lived experience of these chiefs and what the Minister of Health has been saying about the state of preparation to meet the outbreak. We are very concerned about that issue.

**Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (Minister of Health, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the hon. member for Kildonan—St. Paul.

The hon. member for St. Paul's has put forth a motion concerning the H1N1 flu pandemic. This motion comes in three parts. The first part asks for the maximum possible support from the federal government in handling the H1N1 flu pandemic. I am pleased to say that this objective has been achieved, and more.

Second, it has requested that \$400 million be reserved for pandemic preparedness. So far, we have spent over \$1 billion for pandemic planning. This has helped us plan and prepare for this pandemic and the onslaught of the second wave.

However, what I disagree with is the partisan politics the opposition continues to play, to the detriment of all Canadians. These partisan politics are harmful in two ways. First, they are adding to the confusion that has been reported through the media and needlessly worrying Canadians. This confusion is dangerous and counteractive to the objectives of the expert medical advice given to us.

Second, it is using a motion regarding the H1N1 pandemic to stop the government from conducting its regular business. Our economic action plan is solid and has enabled our country to weather the recession far better than other countries.

I want to take a moment to offer my sincere appreciation and gratitude to the many Canadians patiently working through this pandemic virus outbreak with us and to the front-line workers who are working tirelessly to vaccinate as many Canadians as fast as possible.

Canadians, their governments, medical experts and health workers alike know that H1N1 is a preventable disease. That is why we are turning out in unprecedented numbers for the vaccine.

Together we are spreading the word about taking real concrete action instead of spreading myth and confusion. We are demonstrating a sense of social responsibility that is simply unparalleled in the history of public health in this country. As the vaccine campaigns continue into December, we believe all of our efforts will pay off.

All of this work deserves to be supported and built upon, not overlooked and criticized. We are all in this together and we need to continue our co-operation.

This government and our provincial and territorial counterparts have been making real concrete and tangible efforts to protect the health of Canadians. Ensuring timely access to a safe and effective vaccine for every Canadian who needs and wants to be immunized has been a cornerstone of the Canadian pandemic influenza plan for the health sector.

I want to set the record straight about the responsible, well thought out and entirely appropriate decisions the Government of Canada has taken on this file. Vaccines protect Canadians from becoming infected and helps prevent the spread of disease in our communities and, not surprisingly for the H1N1 flu outbreak, vaccines are a critical part of our public health response.

Canada's regulatory authorities have long recognized the unique challenges that would be posed by an influenza pandemic resulting from a completely novel strain virus like H1N1. New vaccines typically take years to be authorized, but in an influenza pandemic of the sort we are currently experiencing where infection has spread rapidly around the world in a few short months, standard vaccine development and regulatory processes are simply not viable.

In 2007, Health Canada began working with the WHO, the USFDA and others to establish a type of safety data that would be required to allow for the eventual approval of a vaccine in the event a pandemic was declared. Advance planning has meant we were able to move quickly on vaccines.

As soon as the WHO identified the novel H1N1 influenza strain, our process and expectations were clearly laid out for our manufacturer. Any potential roadblocks or ambiguity about the process forward had been cleared.

As many are aware, Canada's H1N1 vaccine supplier is GlaxoSmithKline. All provinces and territories in Canada agreed there was a strong public health rationale for securing a domestic vaccine production capacity in Canada. This reduced the risk of having to scramble for supplies at the last minute, compete with other countries or face the risk of products being stuck at border crossings. All governments had that foresight.

● (1625)

Just a few years ago, few countries and very few people were interested in influenza. The manufacturing capacity was much lower and there were not necessarily the options open to us today. Adjuvants, for example, were not an option until we saw an H5N1 emerge, prompting further influenza vaccine research and development.

Our domestic manufacturer actually has an adjuvant to offer, while others do not have similar new technology. This is one reason why, following a competitive tendering process, GSK was the successful bidder. At the time, Canada's public health community applauded this forward-looking, pro-active decision.

Because we had a guaranteed supplier able to meet all of our vaccine requirements, we could make an informed decision regarding our vaccine order. GSK's manufacturing facility and processes had already been assessed by our regulator. The company knew in advance what safety data requirements it had to meet for its H1N1 vaccine to be approved. As a result of this, we knew there would be no regulatory delays in getting vaccines to Canadians.

In short, for opposition members who have been quick to criticize and use this pandemic shamefully for partisan needs, I say this. To date, more than six million doses of adjuvanted H1N1 flu vaccine have been delivered to the provinces and territories. That is currently more H1N1 flu vaccine per capita than any other country in the world.

Let me be clear. All decisions that have involved the purchase, medical advice and roll out of the vaccine have been done in agreement with the provinces and territories. This government has also worked closely with first nations and the provinces to ensure that vaccination was a key component of the overall strategy to fight the H1N1 influenza.

We have ordered enough H1N1 flu vaccine for every Canadian from coast to coast to coast who needs and wants to be immunized. No one will be left behind, and, yes, the H1N1 flu vaccine, a safe and effective vaccine, will be available to Canadians in a timely way.

Looking back to June of this year, I am reminded about what our Chief Public Health Officer said. He said that if all went well, the vaccine would be ready by the end of October. He said that the goal would be to get enough vaccine for all Canadians by Christmas.

Four months later, the reality is we had the vaccine ready by the end of October, and our goal is still to get enough vaccine out to Canadians by Christmas.

We have not cut corners on safety. We have acted in a responsible and deliberate way that balances the need to ensure a safe and effective vaccine is available with the need to stay ahead of any outbreak.

This is a tough balancing act, but we believe we have the balance right.

Since the new virus surfaced in April, we have made hundreds of difficult decisions, all guided by the best available science and expert advice. We have informed Canadians about these decisions every step of the way. We have been upfront with everyone about the global challenges we are dealing with in this worldwide pandemic.

Last week witnessed the beginning of the largest mass immunization campaign in Canadian history. Because we knew it would be impossible to vaccinate everyone at one time, the Government of Canada, in co-operation with the provinces and territories, jointly determined sequencing guidelines for the distribution of the H1N1 flu vaccine. This was done to ensure that vaccine

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programs could target priority groups first, allowing those who needed the vaccine most to get it first.

I want to assure the House that the Government of Canada, along with the provinces and territories, have been working diligently to distribute and administer the H1N1 flu vaccine as quickly, safely and broadly as we possibly can. The Government of Canada has been in constant contact with GSK and the provinces and territories and is sharing information with the provinces and territories on each week's supply.

Canada's supply is secure. The contract with GSK is to produce enough vaccine to meet Canadians' needs first. There has been constant communication, both at the working level and at the senior management level, to share information on vaccine availability in each jurisdiction.

Again, I want to express my gratitude and appreciation to the many health care workers working at clinics. These are very challenging and unique circumstances they are working under. Jurisdictions are giving more vaccine per day than they ever have given in history.

Together, all governments are ensuring Canadians will be able to have access to our number one defence in this pandemic, and that is the H1N1 vaccine.

• (1630)

**Ms. Kirsty Duncan (Etobicoke North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to make it very clear that this is about putting people before politics.

We are very concerned that only one company was used to produce pandemic vaccine. Despite what has been said, that this was in 2001, in 2004 it was recommended to use more than one company. The rule in preparedness is backup, backup, backup.

Not only was one company used but one production line. We ordered the vaccine late and we gambled on when a second wave would come. We gambled that it would come in November or December. What would have happened if it came in September or October, as it did in the past? The second wave arrived and the vaccine rollout began the next week. Those who were vaccinated last week will not be protected for 10 to 14 days.

Why, when the minister said that they would be protected by mid-November, is it now Christmas? Why did she not follow the 2004 recommendations?

**Hon. Leona Aglukkaq:** Mr. Speaker, we have been following the 2006 pandemic plan that was approved by provinces and territories. We invested \$1 billion to get that pandemic plan implemented across the country.

Dealing with this pandemic has been a challenge. It has involved great co-operation from provinces and territories. The chief medical officers of every province, Alberta, Saskatchewan, British Columbia, Nunavut, Northwest Territories, Quebec and Ontario have all been working together collectively to get the vaccine produced.

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The decision of the medical experts at the time was it was important to ensure vaccine was also available for the regular flu season, recognizing that over 4,000 Canadians die every year from the regular flu. This came from the province's recommendations and we agreed to that. Then afterwards we started production of the regular vaccine for H1N1.

We are ahead of schedule. We are getting the information out to all Canadians. The vaccine is being rolled out by provinces and territories. In fact, in some jurisdictions the vaccination program will be completed by next week.

• (1635)

**Mrs. Carol Hughes (Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapuskasing, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, again we see there is not much of a difference between how the Liberals and Conservatives manage crises, such as the one we have before us today on H1N1.

One just has to remember the delayed response on SARS under the Liberal government.

The Liberal colleague from St. Paul's commented on the government's use of earmarked funds for a situation that would arise such as this one. One knows that the Liberals are not committed to earmarked funds, given the fact that they took \$57 billion out of EI funds.

Given the fact that we have seen such big lineups and the fact that we have heard at the health committee that there is a problem with regard to additional medical staff, is the minister committed to putting more dollars into those areas?

**Hon. Leona Aglukkaq:** Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, to get the pandemic plan in place we invested \$1 billion. Our government agreed to it in 2006. That \$1 billion has been invested in a number areas, whether it be developing antivirals and so on.

The key to managing a pandemic is to work in partnership with our partners, and that is the provinces and the territories. That is exactly what we are doing.

As part of the pandemic plan, we have also agreed to fund the vaccine, to purchase it for every Canadian who wants it or needs it. We made a commitment to purchase 50.4 million vaccines for all Canadians as part of this investment in managing the pandemic.

We continue to work with the provinces and territories. One of the things that we also agreed to in Winnipeg, at the federal, provincial and territorial ministers conference, was we would have mutual aid agreements in place for Canada. We signed off on those agreements, which would allow us to assist each other should we have an outbreak in one jurisdiction and so on. These mutual aid agreements allow us to work together without any borders in dealing with a pandemic. That is one of the good components of the pandemic plan that has been well thought out for Canada.

[*Translation*]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin):** 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 Edmonton—Strathcona, The Environment.

[*English*]

**Mrs. Joy Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to focus my remarks on pandemic planning and communications. I want to preface my remarks by stating that without the Canadian pandemic influenza plan, adopted in 2006, our current goals would not be attainable. This includes ensuring access by December to a vaccine for all Canadians who need and want one. It includes ensuring that every level of government, medical professionals and scientific experts are involved and collaborate along the way so the right decisions are made based on the best medical evidence.

The position of the WHO with regard to a global pandemic has always been it is a question of when, not if. All countries are urged to develop or update their own plans for dealing with influenza. Canada's pandemic plan, developed and adopted by the federal government together with the provinces and territories, has been invaluable in responding to the current H1N1 outbreak. It has helped all governments respond at all levels, from the public health officials to local planners to first responders.

Among other elements, this plan provides a framework to guide the actions of all levels of government for prevention, preparedness and response and implementation activities. In adopting the plan, the federal government also took a number of important steps to strengthen pandemic readiness. We increased surveillance and monitoring of influenza outbreaks to detect cases and clusters of severe or emerging respiratory infections and to effectively prevent and contain their spread.

In addition, national case definitions and standardized laboratory tests and protocols were developed to ensure consistent approaches to diagnosing, managing and reporting cases of severe respiratory infection.

Budget 2006 provided \$1 billion over five years, that is from 2006 to 2011, to further improve Canada's pandemic preparedness; \$600 million to be allocated to departments and agencies for a variety of pandemic preparedness activities; and \$400 million to be set aside as a contingency to be assessed if a pandemic were to occur. This money was used to strengthen federal capacity in seven major areas: vaccines and antivirals, surge capacity, prevention and early warning, emergency preparedness, critical science and regulation, risk communications, and federal-provincial-territorial and international collaboration.

The Public Health Agency of Canada received \$384 million over five years to strengthen federal human public health capacity to prepare and respond to the threat of avian and pandemic influenza in several areas: vaccine development capacity and purchase of antivirals and an early warning surveillance in collaboration with the WHO.

In addition, Health Canada received \$15.5 million to address public health emergency planning for first nation communities and for regulatory work on vaccines and antivirals.

The Canadian Institutes of Health Research also received funding of \$21.5 million. This continues to support over 140 pandemic and influenza-related projects that contribute to managing the current influenza outbreak. This funding was a significant investment that showed foresight, leadership and commitment to the health and well-being of all Canadians.

It is because of this investment that Canada has been on the leading edge of the global response. In fact, other countries have commented on how well Canada has been responding.

Dr. Margaret Chan, Director-General of the World Health Organization, specifically commended Canada for all its efforts. I think Canadians would agree that given the circumstances, we are well prepared on all levels and have responded based on this planning, acting in co-operation and collaboration with the provinces and the territories, following the best medical evidence available at the time.

This government knows how important it is not only to respond but to communicate with Canadians during a pandemic. Inevitably the public will have concerns, fears and many questions about it. We place great value in ensuring all Canadians have the right information to make decisions for their families and for their loved ones.

• (1640)

One of our key responsibilities is to make sure Canadians have reliable, up to date and comprehensive information on H1N1, how to protect themselves and how to manage during the outbreak. Right from the beginning, the Government of Canada has been up front, transparent and diligent in sharing what we knew, and as we learned more about this new virus, sharing that new information as well.

We are learning more about H1N1 every day. We continue to strive to share what we know with Canadians so that they see us as a trusted source of information. We know where Canadians are looking for this information and we are responding to their needs.

If we look at the traffic on the Public Health Agency of Canada website, there were a total of 4.1 million visits to the site between April 24 and November 1. On the 1-800 O Canada information line, a total of 24,247 calls have been received since September 24, nearly all of them from the general public.

On October 13, the Public Health Agency of Canada launched its H1N1 preparedness guide. It is extremely popular among Canadians. To date, 390,000 guides have been ordered via the 1-800 O Canada number, 26,000 copies have been downloaded from our website at [www.fightflu.ca](http://www.fightflu.ca), and 650,000 copies have been distributed to 6,550 Canada Post offices. Already a reprint of two million copies is being done this week and distributed to Service Canada and Canada Post.

The launch of the H1N1 preparedness guide was an opportunity for the Minister of Health and Canada's Chief Public Health Officer to meet with people all across the country, including people living in remote and isolated communities, to talk about what the Government of Canada is doing to protect the health of all Canadians during the pandemic.

There is a huge amount of interest and the Government of Canada is keeping up with demand by providing factual, relevant and timely

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information on this virus. In particular, Canadians want information on the symptoms of this flu and what to do if a loved one falls sick. This information is included in our preparedness guide, on our website, in our marketing campaign and in all our many communications vehicles.

Last Tuesday, after the vaccination clinics had started across the country, we saw a huge increase in visits to the [fightflu.ca](http://fightflu.ca) website that we manage at the Public Health Agency on behalf of the provinces and territories. The all-time high previously was 600,000 visits. We received more than three times that number of visits on Tuesday.

Not only are large numbers of Canadians visiting the site, they are spending more time on these pages, which means they are reading the information and they are going deeper to find additional information. There is also ample evidence that Canadians want to get vaccinated and we are working with all our partners to make sure that they do just that. Our outreach strategy is working, and thanks to our comprehensive approach to collaboration, we are prepared for what may come this winter.

This large-scale and comprehensive approach to informing Canadians is unprecedented in Canadian history. Our extensive preparation and close collaboration with the provinces, territories and public health authorities have enabled us to provide Canadians with a constant flow of clear, factual information to help them deal with this public health emergency. Our pandemic plan is the culmination of an extensive dialogue in collaboration with provincial and territorial public health authorities, health care workers, scientific experts and academics.

It is this foresight and preparation that has enabled Canada to respond as quickly and as effectively as it has to the H1N1 virus. It is the years of comprehensive planning with all our partners that has made our country a global leader before and during this flu pandemic.

• (1645)

**Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal (Newton—North Delta, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Kildonan—St. Paul mentioned that there are thousands of pieces of information out there, but it is very clear that there has been no clear information, responsible planning or adequate funding for those Canadians who have difficulty understanding English or French. This is very consistent with the comments made by the hon. Minister of Citizenship and Immigration last summer when he expressed his disdain for those Canadians who have difficulty speaking English or French.

I would ask the hon. member for Kildonan—St. Paul how she would like to see this situation rectified instead of this gross mismanagement by her government.

**Mrs. Joy Smith:** Mr. Speaker, in actual fact, the information has gone out in both official languages here in Canada. Up north there have been additional languages addressed as well with information and pamphlets. I know there has been a lot of attention paid to all groups to ensure that they do get the information.

*Business of Supply*

It is very regrettable that members opposite tried to use this pandemic as a venue to put fear into the population. We need to work in partnership. We are working in partnership with the provinces and territories. We need all opposition parties to work with us on this pandemic.

[Translation]

**Mr. Pascal-Pierre Paillé (Louis-Hébert, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask a fairly simple question.

Earlier, the Minister of Health told us that she would give us facts. I will quickly go over some facts. The WHO instituted a state of emergency for the H1N1 flu on June 11, over four months ago. H1N1 flu appeared for the first time in April, over six months ago.

Will the member finally admit, once and for all, that her government alone is responsible for this crisis?

• (1650)

[English]

**Mrs. Joy Smith:** Mr. Speaker, there is a very important aspect to H1N1. It is a virus that we have never seen before. Our government has worked very closely with our partners in the provinces and territories to ensure that up-to-date information, as we find out more things about this virus, is relayed to the Canadian public.

It is very important that all members of Parliament be very responsible and work together to ensure that this information gets out to their constituents, as we have done as a government here on the floor of the House of Commons. It is also very important that we do not create a mass hysteria.

We need to work in partnership on this pandemic and we need to ensure that everybody is vaccinated. People have to have that vaccination to be protected. That is the message we need to put out to the people of Canada.

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for introducing the human trafficking bill, which the NDP caucus and I supported.

However, 50 million doses of vaccine are small comfort for people standing in line for eight hours and then finding out that the clinic is closed. Isolated communities like Garden Hill in Manitoba are ignored while members of the Calgary Flames get special treatment. The Prime Minister hides after saying that he would be first in line to get a vaccination.

I would like to know where the leadership of the government is. When is the Prime Minister going to get this whole effort organized?

**Mrs. Joy Smith:** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has shown remarkable leadership in ensuring that this information gets out to Canadians. I find it passing strange that members opposite do not talk about the vaccinations in the Thunder Bay area. That area had so much of a supply that they were giving some of it to other people.

We have a very balanced approach here in ensuring that Canadians know that they can get their vaccinations. By December, all of these vaccines will be out and people will be vaccinated in Canada.

[Translation]

**Mr. Luc Malo (Verchères—Les Patriotes, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, this afternoon I rise to speak to the official opposition motion, which states:

That, in the opinion of the House, provincial and local health authorities and health care workers should receive the maximum possible support from the federal government in handling the H1N1 flu pandemic and related vaccination efforts, and the Government of Canada should therefore immediately: (a) allocate the full \$400 million set aside for pandemic response in the 2006 budget to support additional medical staff for vaccinations and patient care; (b) increase support for emergency planning to help local health authorities cope with long line-ups and shortages of both vaccines and health care workers; and (c) divert the money now being spent on needless, partisan advertising of government budgetary measures to a new public awareness campaign to keep Canadians informed with essential up-to-date information throughout the pandemic.

The Bloc Québécois supports the motion because the federal government must now correct the situation and provide the support that Quebec and the provinces are entitled to expect. They could in turn facilitate the work of local health authorities.

The Bloc Québécois supports the motion to dispel confusion about the second wave of H1N1 pandemic influenza. However, we feel that the motion should be amended to ensure that each level of government continues to respect its jurisdictional boundaries while working to correct the situation.

The purpose of this motion is to allocate additional funding to fight H1N1 pandemic influenza. Following the SARS epidemic in the spring of 2003, which hit Canada hard, the Conservative government allocated \$1 billion over five years in its 2006 budget "to further improve Canada's pandemic preparedness". That is what was in the budget.

About \$600 million was given to various organizations and departments to help them prepare, and another \$400 million was set aside for a future crisis. One of the official opposition's arguments that led to this motion was that because such a crisis did not occur during the past three years, the Conservatives used \$80 million per year for other things.

I would really like to know for what other things the government thought it could and should use money that was set aside for something as serious as a pandemic. I would like the government to explain, here in the House, what happened to those millions of dollars, which were supposed to be set aside to help Quebec and the provinces should a pandemic occur.

Now it seems that there is \$160 million left to deal with this eventuality. Yet the federal government should be able to draw on the entire \$400 million initially set aside for pandemic response.

That money should be paid out to ease the burden for Quebec and the provinces, which have to cover the cost of vaccinating people and caring for the sick. That money would help hire more nurses to vaccinate people when the vaccine arrives or help cover the additional cost of caring for the higher number of people severely affected by H1N1 who require hospitalization.

*Business of Supply*

It is important to keep in mind that a collective effort is what is needed. Everyone has to do their part. Everyone has to do their job. At this point, we can see that the government is not doing some of what it should be doing. It must also do its job transparently. Right now, it seems as though information is being given out in dribs and drabs. There is no clear strategy, and the government needs to make an effort to correct this situation.

As I said, the federal government must help the provinces cope with the added pressure on the provincial health care systems.

• (1655)

The motion also suggests that the federal government improve its emergency planning in order to support local health authorities, reduce lineups and address shortages of vaccines and health care workers. It is now officially recognized that the federal government was poorly prepared for the H1N1 outbreak. As recently as yesterday, November 3, the Auditor General, Sheila Fraser, criticized the government for not having a pandemic plan. In fact, the official opposition amended its motion to add the fact that the government must implement the Auditor General's recommendations on emergency management.

The Auditor General's report said this:

Public Safety Canada has not exercised the leadership necessary to coordinate emergency management activities, including critical infrastructure protection in Canada. For example, it has yet to develop the policies and programs that would help clarify its leadership and coordination role for an "all-hazards" approach to the emergency management activities of departments. Public Safety Canada has taken the first step by developing the interim Federal Emergency Response Plan, which it considers to be final although it has not been formally approved by the government. Nor does the Plan include updated or completed definitions of the roles, responsibilities, and capabilities needed for an integrated, coordinated approach to emergency response.

When I see the Auditor General of Canada being somewhat critical of the emergency plan, I recall the committee meetings where officials from various departments came and told us about their preparations. In light of that report, I wonder if, in their presentations to the committee, they did not fail to mention a few things. I think it would be interesting to hear them again on that. Are the departments talking to one another to ensure an overall coordination of government operations, among other things?

When I see the Auditor General suggest that the emergency plan is lacking, I recall the special meeting held in August, when the Standing Committee on Health heard the Minister of Health. She had been making piecemeal announcements week after week. I asked her this: "Madam Minister, do you not think that, instead of making piecemeal announcements, you should be putting forward a comprehensive overall plan of the actions to be taken to respond efficiently and effectively to a potential second wave of the H1N1 flu?" To this day, the government's policy seems to be this kind of piecemeal approach.

While the motion calls on the federal government to support local health authorities, we are of the opinion that the federal government should step up its prevention strategy to support Quebec and the provinces instead, so that they can in turn make things easier for local health authorities, given that health is a provincial jurisdiction.

The third part of the motion calls on the government to divert the money being spent on strictly partisan advertising to measures to

promote public awareness and provide the public with all essential information concerning the H1N1 flu.

I am pleased to hear the Liberal Party say that partisan advertising should be ruled out. I cannot believe that it only now figured that out. Advertising should be for public information purposes only and really be used for that purpose. I hope that putting forward a motion they will be voting for today will make them realize that the various partisan ads they were fond of when in government were no more acceptable than the current government's ads.

• (1700)

It is disappointing when public funds are used for purely partisan purposes to increase a government's or a prime minister's popularity.

I spoke about relevant, accurate and targeted information. There is one example of a time when more information should have been given to the public; when other countries were approving the vaccine but not Canada. The public was confused. Members will recall that the United States approved their vaccine on September 13. Australia approved it on September 18, and France on September 23. Canada had to issue an interim order on October 13 to allow the vaccine to be distributed to the provinces. Furthermore, this interim order was based on European tests conducted on a vaccine similar to the one that would be distributed in Quebec and Canada.

So, after the government had put so much emphasis on waiting for the results of the Canadian tests, we have every reason to wonder why Health Canada decided to approve the vaccine at that point, since an official appearing before the Standing Committee on Health even admitted that aggregate data from around the world were used in making this decision.

Furthermore, the Minister of Health and the head of the Public Health Agency of Canada repeatedly urged the public to get vaccinated. This message was splashed all over the media—on radio, on TV and on the Internet. Now the massive vaccination campaign has been launched, and many Quebecers and Canadians have heeded that message and are waiting outside vaccination centres.

Centres are having to turn people away by the hundreds, because they do not have enough doses of the vaccine. While the public has responded to the Canadian government's call, the government is being inconsistent, and is giving out conflicting information. At the end of August, the government said that we did not need a list of priority individuals, because Canada had ordered enough doses for everyone. Then, on September 16, the Public Health Agency of Canada announced that high risk individuals would be vaccinated first. This shows that they were managing things as they went along, instead of preparing in advance, which is what we expect from those in charge of Canada's public health.

*Business of Supply*

What is more, it would seem that members of the Conservative government are not sharing their information. While the Minister of Health and the Chief Public Health Officer of Canada were touring the country to encourage people to get vaccinated, the Prime Minister seemed reluctant to follow the advice of a member of his cabinet. On October 15, the Prime Minister said he would get vaccinated if it were generally recommended.

The government only added to the confusion of its message, while its members sent out inconsistent messages, which left some doubt about the effectiveness of the vaccination campaign. After this blunder, it can consider itself lucky that the public responded positively to Health Canada's request and decided to get vaccinated.

We have to make sure the freed-up money goes to Quebec and the provinces, which are responsible for vaccination and health care delivery. The role of the federal government is limited to emergency planning, prevention and the distribution of safe vaccine, areas in which it has clearly failed.

On October 29, the Chief Public Health Officer of Canada announced that the production of adjuvanted vaccine would be reduced, delaying by a few weeks the production and delivery of regular vaccine to the provinces.

● (1705)

During the emergency debate I asked the minister a very simple question: when will things return to normal? When will the number of doses we had been receiving week after week, namely 400,000 doses in Quebec, be distributed again to the provinces? The minister was unable to answer that very simple question. It is a bit distressing to see that the minister was unable to say when this shortage would end. A number of vaccination centres have closed because of this shortage. This really does not make any sense. People are told it is time to get vaccinated and the clinics that were set up have to close because there is no vaccine, which is the federal government's responsibility.

While the line-ups for the H1N1 vaccine are getting longer and the vaccination centres are overflowing, it is unacceptable that the distribution of vaccine has decreased because of this governmental decision, which smacks of improvisation. Quebec, which was receiving 400,000 doses a week, will now have to settle for 101,000 doses this week.

Earlier this week or even late last week, Dr. Butler-Jones indicated that he was only advised of the situation last Thursday. He said he had no way of knowing how popular the H1N1 vaccine would be. The reality is that the federal government is having a hard time keeping up with the demand for the vaccine, while the high risk groups remain vulnerable. It could have made arrangements much earlier, knowing that it would eventually be supplied with 50.4 million doses of the vaccine.

It is asking people to be patient, but during that time a higher percentage of the population runs the risk of being infected. Over the past 10 days, 167 hospital admissions were reported across Quebec. Five people have died in Ontario, including three healthy youngsters. These unfortunate situations soon raised concerns among parents looking to protect the health of their children, but many are unable to act on their concern because of the shortage of vaccines.

At the moment, the shortage of vaccines has been caused by the shift in production from adjuvanted to non-adjuvanted vaccine. The latter was ordered in September, after the WHO indicated it did not have sufficient data concerning the effects of the adjuvanted vaccine on certain groups considered at risk by the Public Health Agency of Canada, including pregnant women. Despite the fact that the WHO had made this fact known in June, when the pandemic started, the government delayed its order for the non-adjuvanted vaccine. In her October 26 press conference, the minister announced that she would be buying doses of the non-adjuvanted vaccine from Australia.

Adding to the confusion in the message sent to the public, the shift in production and the minister's announcement concerning the procurement of 200,000 doses of non-adjuvanted vaccine from an Australian company, whose product was also approved by interim order, happened just after the WHO approved the adjuvanted vaccine for pregnant women, the original reason for ordering the non-adjuvanted vaccine.

The delay in ordering the vaccine and the approval given through an interim order have done nothing to reassure Quebeckers and Canadians regarding the government's management in its own jurisdictions. As soon as the World Health Organization alerted governments around the world to the risk of a pandemic, the Bloc Québécois doubted the federal government's ability to properly plan for a general outbreak of H1N1.

That is why the Bloc Québécois supports the motion that seeks to clear up the prevailing confusion regarding the second wave of the H1N1 flu pandemic. However, a few small changes still need to be made in order to reassure us that, while fixing the situation, each level of government will continue to respect its areas of jurisdiction.

● (1710)

[English]

**Hon. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I listened to the member's remarks and agree with most of them on his criticism of the government. He talked about the lineups in Quebec. I can tell him that there are lineups and dissatisfaction in PEI.

The fact is that the government ordered late. Even China is in its seventh week of vaccinations. We are only in our second week, and there is only 20% of the supply that should be available.

The government goes on at length about the six million that it has out there. I would ask the question the other way. Simple math would tell me that if there are six million doses out there, there are 26 million doses that are not out there. Experts claim that the virus will peak in five weeks. The minister says we will get the vaccination by Christmas. What about these 26 million potential vaccinations that are needed?

I think it is incredible incompetence on the part of the government.

However, I will ask my colleague, would he agree that at least there is one area where the government could come up with funding to assist, in terms of maybe getting more health care workers out there, attempting to get vaccines elsewhere, and redeploy the \$400 million that it had set aside for emergencies? We do not know where it went, whether it went to signage or whatever, but would it be wise to redeploy that \$400 million so that we could put more vaccines into the arms of Canadians, where it matters?

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Malo (Verchères—Les Patriotes, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Malpeque was right when he said that the government set aside \$400 million in its budget to help Quebec and the provinces deal with pandemics. As he himself said, we are going to see record numbers of people infected by the virus in the coming weeks. The government needs to provide a considerable amount of money to Quebec and the provinces, and fast. We must increase our efforts and the number of personnel devoted to this important task of vaccinating the public. We must ensure that all other health care operations in all the provinces continue operating smoothly, and ensure that all levels of government in Quebec and the provinces have the financial resources they need to carry out this very important task, that is, protecting the people they are responsible for.

It is also important to remember—and the hon. member mentioned this in his speech—that, between June 11 when the WHO declared this a pandemic and August when the government ordered the vaccine, concrete action could have been taken.

• (1715)

**Mr. Claude Gravelle (Nickel Belt, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, from the outset of the debate in the House of Commons on H1N1, the government has blamed the Liberals and the Liberals have blamed the government. No one wants to take responsibility for what is currently happening.

I would like to ask the member for Verchères—Les Patriotes a question about what will happen in the future. I am thinking about the present and the future, not the past. I would like to know what he thinks the government could do in future to help Canadians.

**Mr. Luc Malo:** Mr. Speaker, in fact, the motion answers the member's question in part. The first part of the motion, part (a), calls on the federal government to make an additional \$400 million available to Quebec and the provinces to help them cope with the crisis in their jurisdictions.

In addition, part (d), which is the proposed amendment, calls on the government to implement the recommendations in the Auditor General's report, which says that the government's emergency plan is lacking. As I mentioned in my speech, it is important to have a clear, detailed plan, because it is important that every crucial step in addressing a pandemic or emergency be clearly defined in advance and shared with everyone involved, which means that the government must be transparent.

When I asked the minister to tell us the schedule for producing, administering and distributing the vaccine for Quebec and the provinces, she was unable to respond. Is it because she does not have the information or because she does not want to share it with all the members?

### *Business of Supply*

The last Conservative member who spoke seemed to be saying that we should be ensuring that scientific information about the vaccination and the fight against H1N1 is relayed to our constituents.

[*English*]

**Mr. Paul Calandra (Oak Ridges—Markham, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I listened intently to my hon. colleague's interventions.

I was in the Ontario government at the time of the SARS crisis. One of the things that came out of the Naylor report that has been referred to often is the need for the Government of Canada to co-operate effectively with the provinces in order to deal with a public health emergency.

I know the member for Malpeque delights in claiming that the provinces and the local public health officials have not been rolling out the vaccine quickly enough, but I note that some eight million doses of the vaccine have been delivered and that Canadians from coast to coast to coast are getting the vaccine. I know that the minister has been working extraordinarily well with her provincial counterparts.

I am concerned that the member opposite seems to be suggesting that the federal government should not be continuing to co-operate with the provinces in the truly extraordinary way that it has. Will he recognize the fact that unlike the SARS epidemic this government has worked extraordinarily well with the provinces? We have been able to get millions of doses of this vaccine out to people safely and faster than any other country in the world.

I wonder if the hon. member, as opposed to bringing down our provincial counterparts, would join with me in celebrating everything that they have done to ensure that Canadians are receiving this effective vaccination in record time.

• (1720)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Malo:** Mr. Speaker, the member seemed to be saying that I think it is terrible that the federal government is getting along with the provincial governments in the fight against H1N1. That is total false. What I am saying is that every government must ensure first and foremost that it does its job, in keeping with the Constitution and the jurisdictions of the different levels of government.

[*English*]

**Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (Winnipeg North, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it appears that I have about five minutes left in the debate to give a perspective that I think has been missing from some of the discussion today.

First, I want to thank the Liberals for bringing forward this motion, part of their opposition day debate. I want to say to them that it is probably important for the Liberals in the House to answer questions, more than the Conservatives.

*Business of Supply*

We have identified one of the root causes of the problems we have faced over the last few days to be the fact that we have in place a single source contract that was signed by the Liberals, Prime Minister Chrétien at the helm, at cabinet in 2001 with the company that preceded GlaxoSmithKline, Shire Biologics for \$325 million.

That was 2001, when of course we were in the middle of the sponsorship scandal. That was 2001, when the Liberal government at the time suggested that there had to be a company funded in Quebec, thereby excluding most other possible bidders. As a result, a single source contract for producing all pandemic vaccines went to one company, Shire Biologics.

I raise this because I want the Liberals to account for it. I want their members to know and members in the House to know that Canadians are standing in line for vaccination that they believe is necessary for the health and well-being of themselves and their children, who are worried to death about not being able to get the vaccine for asthmatic children, and who are fearful as pregnant women about what, when and how they will get the protection they need. I want Canadians to know the true story, that behind this problem, behind much of the difficulties that we are faced with today, was a decision made by the Liberals eight years ago for political purposes, it would appear.

I am not here making generalizations or casting aspersions, but it would appear that, in fact, there were political reasons for the decision that was made back then and we are paying the price today. It is infuriating for Canadians to realize that the lineups, the lack of access to the vaccine, can be traced back to the fact that we have a single source contract.

I would like to remind the House about the expert testimony we received at the health committee, and the Liberals were there to hear this, from the company that did not get any contract from the government for producing the pandemic vaccine, and that is Sanofi Pasteur. Dr. Rob Van Exan, who came to our committee, said the following:

My comments were based on the fact that we have had a two-supplier process in Canada for the regular seasonal vaccines since 1992, which predates GSK's involvement in this. I've been with Connaught for 30 years, so I remember this. In fact, Connaught was one of the ones that instigated and negotiated the two-supplier system—

He went on to say:

This is a much trickier vaccine to produce on a seasonal basis than any other. The concerns are not only with the virus changing. What about the source of eggs, and what about viruses getting into the eggs or into the chickens? There are so many places for something to go wrong.

That is why we must have a two supplier contract. Why? That is the first question.

How do we fix the problem? The government has suggested that perhaps it will start looking at a two supplier scenario once again, but it is a little too late, is it not? Why did the government, when it was faced with the knowledge of these problems and the single source contract, and the inability to meet demand as it had predicted, not make changes to the contract, not do something to enhance the production of the vaccine?

Maybe it has to do with the fact that the Conservatives are playing the same kinds of games as the Liberals. Maybe it has to do with the

fact that the chief lobbyist for GlaxoSmithKline is Ken Boessenkool, who is a well-known Conservative, a close friend of the Prime Minister's, who served as policy and communications adviser when the Prime Minister was doing his leadership bid, and who more recently became a lobbyist for GSK.

•(1725)

Is it possible that the government did not intervene because the most current version of this drug company was busy lobbying the government and trying to keep hold of this single source of production?

I raise other concerns that we have faced within the last few days that gall Canadians. They now realize that there have been 101 deaths, six since last Thursday when the supply of vaccine dried up and mass immunization clinics across this country were closed. Provinces had to say to people on the priority list that they did not have the vaccine to help them.

I want the House to know that Canadians are galled by the fact that there are Canadians in this country who can go to Medcan, a private clinic in Toronto, or Copeman in Vancouver and get the vaccine they need and want because they have paid \$4,000 a year for a membership and are therefore entitled to it.

I thought Conservatives were against that kind of elite access. I thought Conservatives were going to stop the kind of nonsense we saw from Liberals with their entitlements.

Why did the Conservatives not ensure that no private clinic would be able to access this vaccine, and why was the Canada Health Act not upheld?

I also wonder why the government has not been able to present a coordinated strategy with one communication message across this country showing that the vaccine is available and that the government is prepared to do whatever is necessary to save people's lives and to ensure that people get the vaccine they need when they need it.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin):** It being 5:28 p.m. it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the business of supply.

The question is on the amendment. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the amendment?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin):** All those in favour of the amendment will please say yea.

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin):** All those opposed will please say nay.

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin):** In my opinion the nays have it.

*And five or more members having risen:*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin):** Call in the members.

• (1750)

*And the bells having rung:*

**The Speaker:** I understand there has been agreement to proceed first with the recorded division on Bill C-391.

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[English]

### CRIMINAL CODE

The House resumed from October 28 consideration of the motion that Bill C-391, An Act to amend the Criminal Code and the Firearms Act (repeal of long-gun registry), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

**The Speaker:** The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at second reading stage of Bill C-391, under private members' business.

The question is on the motion.

• (1755)

[Translation]

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

(Division No. 124)

### YEAS

#### Members

Abbott	Ablonczy
Aglukkaq	Albrecht
Allen (Welland)	Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Allison	Ambrose
Anders	Anderson
Andrews	Angus
Arthur	Ashfield
Ashton	Bagnell
Baird	Benoit
Bernier	Bevington
Bezan	Blackburn
Blaney	Block
Boucher	Boughen
Braid	Breitkreuz
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)	Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)
Brown (Barrie)	Bruinooge
Cadman	Calandra
Calkins	Cannan (Kelowna—Lake Country)
Cannon (Pontiac)	Carrie
Casson	Chong
Clarke	Clement
Cullen	Cummins
D'Amours	Davidson
Day	Dechert
Del Mastro	Devolin
Dreeshen	Duncan (Vancouver Island North)
Dykstra	Easter
Fast	Finley
Flaherty	Fletcher
Galipeau	Gallant
Glover	Goldring
Goodyear	Gourde
Gravelle	Grewal
Guergis	Harper
Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)	Hawn
Hiebert	Hill
Hoback	Hoepfner
Holder	Hughes

Hyer	Jean
Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)	Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)	Kent
Kerr	Komarnicki
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)	Lake
Lauzon	Lebel
Lemieux	Lobb
Lukiwski	Lunn
Lunney	MacKay (Central Nova)
MacKenzie	Maloway
Mark	Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)
Mayes	McColeman
McLeod	Menzies
Merrifield	Miller
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)	
Moore (Fundy Royal)	
Nicholson	Norlock
O'Connor	O'Neill-Gordon
Obhrai	Oda
Paradis	Payne
Petit	Poilievre
Prentice	Preston
Rafferty	Raitt
Rajotte	Rathgeber
Reid	Richards
Richardson	Rickford
Ritz	Rota
Russell	Saxton
Scheer	Schellenberger
Shea	Shipley
Shory	Simms
Smith	Sorenson
Stanton	Stoffer
Storseth	Strahl
Sweet	Thibeault
Thompson	Tilson
Toews	Trost
Tweed	Uppal
Van Kesteren	Van Loan
Vellacott	Verner
Wallace	Warawa
Warkentin	Watson
Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country)	
Weston (Saint John)	
Wong	Woodworth
Yelich	Young— 164

### NAYS

#### Members

André	Asselin
Atamanenko	Bachand
Bains	Beaudin
Bélangier	Bellavance
Bennett	Bevilacqua
Bigras	Blais
Bonsant	Bouchard
Bourgeois	Brison
Brunelle	Byrne
Cannis	Cardin
Carrier	Charlton
Chow	Christopherson
Coady	Coderre
Comartin	Cotler
Crombie	Crowder
Cuzner	Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)
Davies (Vancouver East)	DeBellefeuille
Demers	Deschamps
Desnoyers	Dewar
Dhaliwal	Dhalla
Dion	Dorion
Dosanjh	Dryden
Duceppe	Dufour
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)
Eyking	Faillie
Folco	Foote
Freeman	Fry
Gagnon	Garneau
Gaudet	Godin
Goodale	Guay
Guimond (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques)	
Guimond (Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord)	
Hall Findlay	Harris (St. John's East)

*Business of Supply*

Holland	Ignatieff
Jennings	Julian
Kania	Kennedy
Laforest	Laframboise
Lalonde	Lavallée
Layton	LeBlanc
Lee	Lemay
Leslie	Lessard
Lévesque	MacAulay
Malhi	Malo
Marston	Martin (Winnipeg Centre)
Martin (Sault Ste. Marie)	Masse
Mathysen	McCallum
McGuinty	McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)
McTeague	Ménard
Mendes	Minna
Mourani	Mulcair
Murphy (Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe)	Murphy (Charlottetown)
Murray	Nadeau
Neville	Oliphant
Ouellet	Pacetti
Paillé	Paquette
Patry	Pearson
Plamondon	Pomerleau
Proulx	Rae
Ratansi	Regan
Rodriguez	Roy
Savage	Savoie
Scarpaleggia	Sgro
Siksay	Silva
Simson	St-Cyr
Szabo	Thi Lac
Tonks	Trudeau
Valeriotte	Vincent
Volpe	Wasylcia-Leis
Wilfert	Wrzesnewskyj
Zarac— 137	

## PAIRED

Nil

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried. Accordingly, the bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security.

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

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

## BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

## OPPOSITION MOTION—HEALTH

The House resumed consideration of the motion and of the amendment.

**The Speaker:** The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion of supply.

The question is on the amendment.

● (1800)

**Hon. Gordon O'Connor:** Mr. Speaker, if you were to seek it, I think you would find unanimous support for the amendment.

**The Speaker:** Is it agreed that the amendment carry?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

(Amendment agreed to)

**The Speaker:** The next question is on the motion, as amended. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion, as amended?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Speaker:** All those in favour will please say yea.

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

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

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Speaker:** In my opinion the nays have it.

*And five or more members having risen:*

● (1805)

[Translation]

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

(Division No. 125)

## YEAS

## Members

Allen (Welland)	André
Andrews	Angus
Ashton	Asselin
Atamanenko	Bachand
Bagnell	Bains
Beaudin	Bélanger
Bellavance	Bennett
Bevilacqua	Bevington
Bigras	Blais
Bonsant	Bouchard
Bourgeois	Brison
Brunelle	Byrne
Cannis	Cardin
Carrier	Charlton
Chow	Christopherson
Coady	Coderre
Comartin	Cotler
Crombie	Crowder
Cullen	Cuzner
D'Amours	Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)
Davies (Vancouver East)	DeBellefeuille
Demers	Deschamps
Desnoyers	Dewar
Dhaliwal	Dhalla
Dion	Dorion
Dosanjh	Dryden
Duceppe	Dufour
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)
Easter	Eyking
Faile	Folco
Foote	Freeman
Fry	Gagnon
Gameau	Gaudet
Godin	Goodale
Gravelle	Guamieri
Guay	Guimond (Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-
Côte-Nord)	
Hall Findlay	Harris (St. John's East)
Holland	Hughes
Hyer	Ignatieff
Jennings	Julian
Kania	Kennedy
Laforest	Laframboise
Lalonde	Lavallée
Layton	LeBlanc
Lee	Lemay
Leslie	Lessard
Lévesque	MacAulay
Malhi	Malo
Maloway	Marston
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)	Martin (Winnipeg Centre)
Martin (Sault Ste. Marie)	Masse
Mathysen	McCallum
McGuinty	McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)
McTeague	Ménard

*Private Members' Business*

Mendes  
Mourani  
Murphy (Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe)  
Murray  
Neville  
Ouellet  
Paillé  
Patry  
Plamondon  
Proulx  
Rafferty  
Regan  
Rota  
Russell  
Savoie  
Sgro  
Silva  
Simson  
Stoffer  
Thi Lac  
Tonks  
Vincent  
Wasylcia-Leis  
Wrzesniewskij

Minna  
Mulcair  
Murphy (Charlottetown)  
Nadeau  
Oliphant  
Pacetti  
Paquette  
Pearson  
Pomerleau  
Rae  
Ratansi  
Rodriguez  
Roy  
Savage  
Scarpaleggia  
Siksay  
Simms  
St-Cyr  
Szabo  
Thibeault  
Valeriotte  
Volpe  
Wilfert  
Zarac — 156

Richards  
Rickford  
Saxton  
Schellenberger  
Shipley  
Smith  
Stanton  
Strahl  
Thompson  
Toews  
Tweed  
Van Kesteren  
Vellacott  
Wallace  
Warkentin  
Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country)  
Weston (Saint John)  
Wong  
Yelich  
Richardson  
Ritz  
Scheer  
Shea  
Shory  
Sorenson  
Storseth  
Sweet  
Tilson  
Trost  
Uppal  
Van Loan  
Verner  
Warawa  
Watson  
Woodworth  
Young — 144

## PAIRED

Nil

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

## NAYS

## Members

Abbott  
Aglukkaq  
Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)  
Ambrose  
Anderson  
Ashfield  
Benoit  
Bezan  
Blaney  
Boucher  
Braid  
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)  
Brown (Barrie)  
Cadman  
Calkins  
Cannon (Pontiac)  
Casson  
Clarke  
Cummins  
Day  
Del Mastro  
Dreeshen  
Dykstra  
Finley  
Fletcher  
Gallant  
Goldring  
Gourde  
Guergis  
Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)  
Hiebert  
Hoback  
Holder  
Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)  
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)  
Kerr  
Kram (Prince Edward—Hastings)  
Lauzon  
Lemieux  
Lukiwski  
Lunney  
MacKenzie  
Mayes  
McLeod  
Merrifield  
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)  
Moore (Fundy Royal)  
Nicholson  
O'Connor  
Obhrai  
Paradis  
Petit  
Prentice  
Raitt  
Rathgeber

Ablonczy  
Albrecht  
Allison  
Anders  
Arthur  
Baird  
Bernier  
Blackburn  
Block  
Boughen  
Breitkreuz  
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)  
Bruinooge  
Calandra  
Cannan (Kelowna—Lake Country)  
Carrie  
Chong  
Clement  
Davidson  
Dechert  
Devolin  
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)  
Fast  
Flaherty  
Galipeau  
Glover  
Goodyear  
Grewal  
Harper  
Hawn  
Hill  
Hoepfner  
Jean  
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)  
Kent  
Komarnicki  
Lake  
Lebel  
Lobb  
Lunn  
MacKay (Central Nova)  
Mark  
McColeman  
Menzies  
Miller  
Norlock  
O'Neill-Gordon  
Oda  
Payne  
Poilievre  
Preston  
Rajotte  
Reid

\* \* \*

● (1810)

[English]

## EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE ACT

The House resumed from October 29, consideration of the motion that Bill C-308, An Act to amend the Employment Insurance Act (improvement of the employment insurance system), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

**The Speaker:** The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at second reading stage of Bill C-308 under private members' business.

● (1815)

[Translation]

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

(Division No. 126)

## YEAS

## Members

Allen (Welland)  
Andrews  
Ashton  
Atamanenko  
Bagnell  
Beaudin  
Bellavance  
Bevilacqua  
Bigras  
Bonsant  
Bourgeois  
Brunelle  
Cannis  
Carrier  
Chow  
Coady  
Comartin  
Crombie  
Cullen  
D'Amours  
Davies (Vancouver East)  
Demers  
Desnoyers  
Dhaliwal  
Dion  
André  
Angus  
Asselin  
Bachand  
Bains  
Bélanger  
Bennett  
Bevington  
Blais  
Bouchard  
Brisson  
Byrne  
Cardin  
Charlton  
Christopherson  
Coderre  
Cotler  
Crowder  
Cuzner  
Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)  
DeBellefeuille  
Deschamps  
Dewar  
Dhalla  
Dorion

*Private Members' Business*

Dosanjh	Dryden	Gallant	Glover
Duceppe	Dufour	Goldring	Goodyear
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)	Gourde	Grewal
Easter	Eyking	Guergis	Harper
Faille	Folco	Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)	Hawn
Footé	Freeman	Hiebert	Hill
Fry	Gagnon	Hoback	Hoepfner
Garneau	Gaudet	Holder	Jean
Godin	Goodale	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)	Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)
Gravelle	Guarnieri	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)	Kent
Guay	Guimond (Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-	Kerr	Komarnicki
Côte-Nord)		Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)	Lake
Hall Findlay	Harris (St. John's East)	Lauzon	Lebel
Holland	Hughes	Lemieux	Lobb
Hyer	Ignatieff	Lukiwski	Lunn
Jennings	Julian	Lunney	MacKay (Central Nova)
Kania	Kennedy	MacKenzie	Mark
Laforest	Laframboise	Mayes	McColeman
Lalonde	Lavallée	McLeod	Menzies
Layton	LeBlanc	Merrifield	Miller
Lee	Lemay	Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)	
Leslie	Lessard	Moore (Fundy Royal)	
Lévesque	MacAulay	Nicholson	Norlock
Malhi	Malo	O'Connor	O'Neill-Gordon
Maloway	Marston	Obhrai	Oda
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)	Martin (Winnipeg Centre)	Paradis	Payne
Martin (Sault Ste. Marie)	Masse	Petit	Poilievre
Mathyssen	McCallum	Prentice	Preston
McGuinty	McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)	Raitt	Rajotte
McTeague	Ménard	Rathgeber	Reid
Mendes	Minna	Richards	Richardson
Mourani	Mulcair	Rickford	Ritz
Murphy (Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe)	Murphy (Charlottetown)	Saxton	Scheer
Murray	Nadeau	Schellenberger	Shea
Neville	Oliphant	Shiple	Shory
Ouellet	Pacetti	Smith	Sorenson
Pailé	Paquette	Stanton	Storseth
Patry	Pearson	Strahl	Sweet
Plamondon	Pomerleau	Thompson	Tilson
Proulx	Rae	Toews	Trost
Rafferty	Ratansi	Tweed	Uppal
Regan	Rodriguez	Van Kesteren	Van Loan
Rota	Roy	Vellacott	Verner
Russell	Savage	Wallace	Warawa
Savoie	Scarpaleggia	Warkentin	Watson
Sgro	Siksay	Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country)	
Silva	Simms	Weston (Saint John)	Woodworth
Simson	St-Cyr	Wong	Young — 144
Stoffer	Szabo	Yelich	
Thi Lac	Thibeault		
Tonks	Valeriote		
Vincent	Volpe		
Wasylcia-Leis	Wilfert		
Wrzesnewskyj	Zarac — 156		

**NAYS**

## Members

Abbott	Ablonczy
Aglukkaq	Albrecht
Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)	Allison
Ambrose	Anders
Anderson	Arthur
Ashfield	Baird
Benoit	Bernier
Bezan	Blackburn
Blaney	Block
Boucher	Boughen
Braid	Breitkreuz
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)	Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)
Brown (Barrie)	Bruinooge
Cadman	Calandra
Calkins	Cannan (Kelowna—Lake Country)
Cannon (Pontiac)	Carrie
Casson	Chong
Clarke	Clement
Cummins	Davidson
Day	Dechert
Del Mastro	Devolin
Dreeschen	Duncan (Vancouver Island North)
Dykstra	Fast
Finley	Flaherty
Fletcher	Galipeau

Nil

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried. Accordingly, the bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities.

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

\* \* \*

[English]

**MADE IN CANADA ACT**

The House resumed from November 3 consideration of the motion that Bill C-392, An Act respecting the use of government procurements and transfers to promote economic development, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

**The Speaker:** The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at second reading stage of Bill C-392, under private members' business.

The question is on the motion.

*Private Members' Business*

● (1825)

[Translation]

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

*(Division No. 127)***YEAS**

## Members

Allen (Welland)	Angus
Ashton	Atamanenko
Bains	Bélanger
Bevilacqua	Bevington
Byrne	Cannis
Charlton	Chow
Christopherson	Coderre
Comartin	Cotler
Crowder	Cullen
D'Amours	Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)
Davies (Vancouver East)	Dewar
Dhalla	Dion
Dosanjh	Dryden
Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)	Easter
Eyking	Fry
Godin	Gravelle
Guarnieri	Harris (St. John's East)
Hughes	Hyer
Jennings	Julian
Layton	LeBlanc
Leslie	MacAulay
Malhi	Maloway
Marston	Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)
Martin (Winnipeg Centre)	Martin (Sault Ste. Marie)
Masse	Mathysen
McCallum	Minna
Mulcair	Neville
Pacetti	Proulx
Rae	Rafferty
Savoie	Sgro
Siksay	Stoffer
Thibeault	Tonks
Volpe	Wasylycia-Leis
Wilfert— 67	

**NAYS**

## Members

Abbott	Ablonczy
Aglukkaq	Albrecht
Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)	Allison
Ambrose	Anders
Anderson	André
Andrews	Arthur
Ashfield	Asselin
Bachand	Bagnell
Baird	Beaudin
Bellavance	Benoit
Bernier	Bezan
Bigras	Blackburn
Blais	Blaney
Block	Bonsant
Bouchard	Boucher
Boughen	Bourgeois
Braid	Breitkreuz
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)	Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)
Brown (Barrie)	Bruinooge
Brunelle	Cadman
Calandra	Calkins
Cannan (Kelowna—Lake Country)	Cannon (Pontiac)
Cardin	Carrie
Carrier	Casson
Chong	Clarke
Clement	Coady
Crombie	Cummins
Cuzner	Davidson
Day	DeBellefeuille
Dechert	Del Mastro
Demers	Deschamps
Desnoyers	Devolin

Dhaliwal	Dorion
Dreeshen	Duceppe
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Dykstra	Faille
Fast	Finley
Flaherty	Fletcher
Folco	Foote
Freeman	Gagnon
Galipeau	Gallant
Garneau	Gaudet
Glover	Goldring
Goodyear	Gourde
Grewal	Guay
Guergis	Guimond (Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-
Côte-Nord)	
Hall Findlay	Harper
Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)	Hawn
Hiebert	Hill
Hoback	Hoepfner
Holder	Holland
Jean	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Kania	Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)
Kennedy	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Kerr	Kerr
Komarnicki	Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)
Laforest	Laframboise
Lake	Lalonde
Lauzon	Lavallée
Lebel	Lee
Lemay	Lemieux
Lessard	Lévesque
Lobb	Lukiwski
Lunn	Lunney
MacKay (Central Nova)	MacKenzie
Malo	Mark
Mayes	McColeman
McGuinty	McLeod
Ménard	Mendes
Menzies	Merrifield
Miller	Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)
Moore (Fundy Royal)	Mourani
Murphy (Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe)	Murphy (Charlottetown)
Murray	Nadeau
Nicholson	Norlock
O'Connor	O'Neill-Gordon
Obhrai	Oda
Oliphant	Ouellet
Paillé	Paquette
Paradis	Patry
Payne	Pearson
Petit	Plamondon
Poilievre	Pomerleau
Prentice	Preston
Raiitt	Rajotte
Ratansi	Rathgeber
Reid	Richards
Richardson	Rickford
Ritz	Rodriguez
Rota	Roy
Russell	Savage
Saxton	Scarpaleggia
Scheer	Schellenberger
Shea	Shipley
Shory	Simms
Simson	Smith
Sorenson	St-Cyr
Stanton	Storseth
Strahl	Sweet
Szabo	Thi Lac
Thompson	Tilson
Toews	Trost
Tweed	Uppal
Valeriote	Van Kesteren
Van Loan	Vellacott
Verner	Vincent
Wallace	Warawa
Warkentin	Watson
Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country)	
Weston (Saint John)	
Wong	Woodworth
Wrzesnewskyj	Yelich
Young	Zarac— 224

*Private Members' Business*

## PAIRED

Nil

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion lost.

[English]

**Mr. Mario Silva:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I believe my vote was not recorded. I would like to record my vote as being in favour of the motion.

**The Speaker:** Is it agreed that the member's vote be recorded as being in favour of the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Speaker:** There is no agreement but the point has been made.

\* \* \*

## BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

**The Speaker:** I would like to inform the House that under the provisions of Standing Order 97.1(2), I am designating Tuesday, November 17, 2009 as the day fixed for the consideration of the motion to concur in the seventh report of the Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Technology. The report contains a recommendation not to proceed further with Bill C-273, An Act to amend the Competition Act and the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999 (right to repair).

The one hour debate on the motion will be held immediately after the usual private members' business hour, after which the House will proceed to the adjournment proceedings pursuant to Standing Order 38.

[Translation]

The House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's order paper.

\* \* \*

● (1830)

[English]

## FIRST NATION CADET PROGRAMS

The House resumed from October 6 consideration of the motion.

**Hon. Larry Bagnell (Yukon, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pride to speak to this motion on increasing the cadet program in aboriginal communities. I am very excited about the motion. I have a lot of aboriginal people and communities in my riding and I am very supportive of the motion.

I am a bit disappointed at not having more prescription as to what we could do to facilitate the enhancement of cadets in aboriginal communities, but, nevertheless, I am very excited to support the motion. I thank the member for Wetaskiwin for bringing it forward. I also thank my colleague from Labrador for his eloquent speech on the motion and about the experiences in his riding. The member for Wetaskiwin spoke very passionately about how important this was to the people of Hobbema and he showed what a tremendous difference a program for youth could have on a community and the success of

the program. It is these types of success stories that parliamentarians should support, try to continue and expand.

Some people do not understand the purpose of the cadet program. It is not a recruitment for the military, although some people inevitably go on to the military. It is a youth responsibility program. It is a chance for youth to work together constructively and learn a lot of skills that are important in life. In particular, they learn leadership skills, teamwork skills, they boost their self-esteem, they have a sense of self-discipline, they can hone their decision making and self-confidence and there is an important physical education component.

All those good qualities that are very important for the education of youth and for youth to have successful lives are great benefits of the cadet program. We are very supportive of the program itself and, in particular, in first nation communities it makes wonderful sense, especially when we can see, from the example of Hobbema, how well it has worked and how excited the young cadets from Hobbema were to be in that program.

I must also congratulate the RCMP officers for their great community service of being involved in and running that program. When a people come from rural Canada or from the north, from Yukon like I do, they see the important role the police play in the community, not just policing, but they are involved in all aspects of the community. They are part of the community and they are wonderful role models. In this particular exercise, the Hobbema Cadet program, the RCMP showed exactly that type of function. Some might say that is not related to why we hired the RCMP, but it is related. It is a point that we on the Liberal side have been making for so long, which is that prevention is the best tool to reduce crime. These positive activities for youth are a great step in that direction.

We all know the saying that idle hands are the devil's playground. When I was a youth, we had after-school programs and summer programs where we could get involved in activities at school. Those programs kept us doing positive and productive things, just as the cadet programs do.

I want to talk about how wonderful the cadet program is in my riding. We have a cadet camp and cadets come from all over Canada in the summer, the air cadets, the sea cadets and the army cadets. They have a wonderful experience. They not only learn all the important lessons of life, which I talked about, but they also get to meet other youth from right across Canada and understand where they come from. I go to a lot of the graduation ceremonies and it is moving to see how sad the cadets are to leave.

● (1835)

I am almost moved to tears sometimes to see very small Inuit children who have come and who have never seen a tree before in their life. They have come to this cadet program and met other Canadians from across the north and from across Canada. They have seen things they would not otherwise have seen.

*Private Members' Business*

It is such a positive experience in the lives of youth that I cannot help but promote this motion that I hope leads to more and more cadet camps in the aboriginal communities, as specified in this motion, to give the opportunity to thousands of aboriginal youth across the country to have the same positive experience that many of the youth in Hobbema had.

I also want to talk about another program that is very similar and also very positive, which I am strongly supportive of for the youth of the north, and that is the junior rangers. There is a range of programs in the north. A high percentage of the northern rangers who express our sovereignty across the north and that do our rescue across the north are northern aboriginal peoples who know how to live on the land and who are doing a great service for Canada.

We have been very supportive in our party of the rangers, of creating them, of making them grow and of their having more and more of a presence. There have been some problems in the past about uniforms or equipment, or not getting their remuneration for their supplies or equipment, or getting paid on time or in a way they could actually access it in remote communities where, for instance, there may not be a bank, there may not have been enough of a per diem or not enough of an amount for their equipment.

However, I think we need to all work together and remember that the rangers are a very important part of Canada's armed forces and that they should be treated with the equipment and respect they deserve and need. I think every Canadian is very proud of our northern rangers.

It only makes sense that we would therefore be very supportive of the junior ranger program, led by these rangers and others in communities across the north. Once again, it is a tremendous learning experience on the land and in the skills that are needed in the north to show our presence.

We did have an issue at one time. A community wanted both a junior ranger and a cadet corps but this was not allowed. This was a large enough community that I think it could have easily supported both. I hope that type of policy does not continue and that we can have both types of wonderful youth programs in a community when the community wants it, when the tremendous volunteers who are required to run all these programs are available, interested and are supportive of the programs.

In conclusion, I would like to say that I am very supportive of the motion. There are over 600 aboriginal communities in the country but not that many aboriginal cadet corps at the moment, and there is obviously room for expansion of it.

The wonderful show on CBC done on the Hobbema Cadet Corps shows what can be accomplished. It shows how crime can be reduced by investing in positive activities for our youth and giving them those opportunities in the north and in the south, in aboriginal communities so that they learn these valuable lessons of life. They interact with adults who are volunteers and role models, either RCMP or rangers.

I commend the member for Wetaskiwin for bringing this motion forward and the member for Labrador for his great support and examples of this motion. I certainly encourage everyone in the House to vote to support our youth, to support more activities for

youth, to support the junior rangers and to support the army, sea and air cadets.

**Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to speak in favour of Motion No. 271 on behalf of the entire New Democratic caucus. If passed, this motion would call on the government to promote first nations community cadet programs across the country.

I want to thank and congratulate my colleague from the government side, the hon. member for Wetaskiwin, for bringing this motion forward. I understand that his motion is inspired by the success of a first nations cadet program that is running right now in his riding, the Hobbema Community Cadet Corps program.

I would like to thank the hon. member for drawing our attention to this excellent program and the attention of the entire House and for giving us the opportunity to learn more about the fine work that is being done by RCMP officers, first nations leaders and other community members who have devoted their time and energy to this program and have made this commitment to the children and youth in Hobbema to offer them a vision of the future that is filled with hope, pride and success.

The first Community Cadet Corps started 10 years ago in Saskatchewan on Carry the Kettle Reserve near Regina. It was developed by RCMP Corporal Rick Sanderson. More than 40 chapters now exist in Saskatchewan and Manitoba. The Hobbema program was formed in November 2005 and it is the only program of its kind in Alberta. It is the largest Community Cadet Corps program in Canada.

[*Translation*]

These cadet corps programs were developed specifically to meet the needs of first nations youth because they emphasize aboriginal languages and cultures. This is a joint project between police officers and members of first nations communities to provide young people with leadership training.

The purpose of the programs is to foster positive attitudes and teach social development skills. Basically, these programs give young people hope and nurture a sense of pride in their identity and their communities.

● (1840)

[*English*]

These cadet corps programs are designed specifically with the needs of first nations youth in mind. They emphasize native culture and language. They are a collaborative effort by police officers and first nations community members to give young people leadership training. They aim to teach positive attitudes and social development skills. Fundamentally, these programs are about instilling in these young people some hope for the future and full pride in their identities and in their community.

*Private Members' Business*

As the New Democrat public safety critic, I commend the RCMP for creating these first nations programs. I commend the partnership between RCMP and first nations leaders. We need more of this co-operation to happen right across the country. We need more aboriginal youth to seek a career with the RCMP and other police forces. When first nations are able to take leadership in policing their communities, we have safer communities.

What a wonderful vision it would be to see RCMP and policing detachments across the country, in aboriginal and non-aboriginal communities, staffed by aboriginal youth who become the young men and women who police with their visions, their culture, their experiences and the special knowledge that they will bring to the types of issues that they have grown up with and know so well.

My riding, Vancouver Kingsway, is very different from the area that my hon. colleague from Wetaskiwin represents. Vancouver Kingsway is an urban riding 21 square kilometres in size. It seemed like more than that when I went door-knocking in the last election, but I am assured that it is actually quite small when compared with other ridings. Certainly it is small compared with my hon. colleague's constituency, which stretches over 15,000 square kilometres.

I point this out because, while we represent two very different parts of our country, we both have first nations populations in our ridings that are facing very difficult challenges.

I would like to talk a bit about the issues facing urban first nations, particularly in the Vancouver area. When we talk in the House about first nations in our country, we often look at first nations people who live on reserves or in rural communities. We deal with critical issues facing these people.

The issues facing rural first nations are important ones: ensuring that they receive a fair share of the natural resources that our country is blessed with; and ensuring that their voices are heard in land-use decisions on territories that they have traditionally inhabited and, in the case of British Columbia, much of which is unceded.

However, there are equally important issues facing urban aboriginal people and these issues are too often forgotten.

There are 1.2 million people in Canada who self-identify as aboriginal. The majority of those, 53%, are living in urban areas. That is over 600,000 first nations people living in urban communities across Canada. There is a large, vibrant first nations community in Vancouver. This community faces huge challenges. On nearly every social, health and economic measure, urban aboriginals are disadvantaged. Too many live in poverty and substandard housing. They face high unemployment and too many do not graduate from high school.

Members in the House know about these challenges. They see them in their ridings as well. I do not want to belabour these negative facts because I want to talk about the positive things that are happening in our community. I want to talk about some of the good work that is being done by people in Vancouver.

There is a first nations housing co-op in my riding. It is called the Synala Housing Co-op. I have had the opportunity to visit this co-op and it is an example of the good things that can be achieved to

improve the lives of urban first nations. This co-op is filled with first nations families that are living together, building community, working together and raising families in an urban setting that preserves the important cultural identity that they must.

My youngest daughter, Cerys Davies, recently graduated from Mount Pleasant Elementary School in Vancouver, which is just outside Vancouver Kingsway. This school has a wonderful principal named Steve Agabob. I spoke with Mr. Agabob this afternoon and I asked him about the challenges facing aboriginals in his school. He told me that 12% of the population of his students was aboriginal.

He talked to me about the importance of aboriginal enhancement agreements. These are living documents that enable us to look at the issues facing urban first nations, youth and their families and examine the options we have to address them. He told me about the abysmal job that we were doing on graduating students.

We need better cultural programs, special literacy programs and more social initiatives. At Vancouver Technical Secondary School in Vancouver, I understand they are gathering just this week to discuss such issues.

● (1845)

The urban challenge is particularly difficult because there is no one first nations culture of course. In Vancouver we have Métis. We have northern aboriginals. We have coastal aboriginals. We have prairie aboriginals, so it is difficult to express and build one cultural identity, nor should we. However, what we can say is that these people are overrepresented in prisons and have lower educational outcomes. They are at greater risk for diseases such as H1N1 and poverty is the biggest factor that they face.

On the other hand, Mr. Agabob told me that there was a huge opportunity. Aboriginal youth represent the fastest growing population in our country entering the workforce. What a wonderful opportunity we have because this generation of first nations could be our next doctors, our next lawyers, our next architects, our next nurses, our next politicians.

I also want to single out the good work of Ms. Katanni Sinclair, a first nations cultural support worker at Mount Pleasant, who for years has quietly and competently worked with first nations people in that school and their families and is really making a difference in our country.

One of the ways the government can support urban first nations to come together as a community is also through friendship centres. Friendship centres are at the front lines of addressing the complex needs of the urban aboriginal community.

*Private Members' Business*

In May my office received a letter from Vera Pawis Tabobondung, president of the National Association of Friendship Centres. She heads a network of 118 such centres across Canada. She described the crucial role these centres play in improving the lives of urban first nations people. These centres offer recreational programs for aboriginal youth, cultural and arts programs. They have day cares, including supports for special needs children. They run literacy courses, offer parenting support services and advocate on behalf of children in transition with social services.

This is the kind of positive work that I call upon the government to support. However, I have heard from Ms. Tabobondung that friendship centres are struggling with crumbling physical infrastructure, outdated technological systems and escalating cost pressures. The financial difficulties have been exacerbated by the economic crisis.

I wrote the Minister of Canadian Heritage, asking him to include increased funding for friendship centres in the next federal budget so they could continue to provide the crucial services that Canada's urban aboriginal population desperately require. I echo that call today.

I want to congratulate the government side, and particularly the hon. member for Wetaskiwin, for championing what is a positive program in our country, one we can build upon so we can bring to our country the success that is owed—

• (1850)

**The Deputy Speaker:** Resuming debate, the hon. member for Brant.

**Mr. Phil McColeman (Brant, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to join in the debate on the motion before us today. Our government has been committed to implementing effective crime prevention programs since we were first elected in 2006 and to ensuring that at-risk young people in particular get the help they need to avoid becoming involved with gangs and other activities that can lead them into a life of crime.

We have refocused the national crime prevention strategy to ensure that initiatives are targeted, effective and long term. We have also taken steps to ensure that funding is permanent rather than subject to the sunset provisions, which the previous government had put in place.

As well, as my hon. colleagues have pointed out, our government has set up the northern and aboriginal crime prevention fund, which supports innovative and culturally sensitive crime prevention practices that aim to reduce offending among at-risk children and youth.

All in all, our government has invested nearly \$74.4 million in 46 national crime prevention centre projects across Canada this year alone, many of them targeted at helping aboriginal youth. I am therefore very proud of what we have accomplished to date and I am confident that we can and will do more.

Today the successive programs funded under the national crime prevention strategy rests largely on the fact that they are evidence-based and targeted to individuals most at risk of offending. They are also based on community partnerships and extensive community involvement and participation so initiatives are focused and will

have the greatest impact among the young people who need it the most.

All of this is important, given that our goal is to help young people at risk make smarter life choices and avoid becoming involved in a life of crime. Equally important is the need to continually monitor and evaluate projects to ensure they produce lasting results. That is one way we can be sure that taxpayer dollars are invested in a way that makes sense and produces the desired outcome. So far that is exactly what our government has done.

We have invested, for example, in several projects this year alone targeted at aboriginal youth, which meet all of this criteria. As my hon. colleagues have mentioned, we have invested in projects such as the helping youth to help themselves project in Yellowknife.

The Government of Canada is also investing close to \$166,000 over 15 months to help the department of justice, community justice division, of the Northwest Territories government continue to foster the creation of partnerships and networks to coordinate the crime prevention approaches and to support the practitioners to ultimately reduce crime.

The Government of Canada is also investing nearly \$160,000 over 15 months to help the Department of Justice of the government of the Northwest Territories research the development of a culturally sensitive prevention program that will target men who are at high risk of using violence in intimate relationships.

The leadership and resiliency program is a model program designed to enhance youth's internal strengths and resiliency, while preventing involvement in substance use and violence. This program has shown to be very effective when it has been implemented in other places and it has a strong record of reducing crime. This is why we are supporting two educational institutions to implement this program in communities in the Northwest Territories.

Our government is also funding the South Slave Divisional Education Council's leadership and resiliency program with over \$1.4 million over 60 months, and the Yellowknife Catholic Schools leadership and resiliency program, through the Public Denominational District Education Authority, with over \$7.1 million, also over 60 months.

In Halifax our government is committing funds of \$696,000 over three years to the Chebucto Communities Development Association so it can offer the seeds of change youth Inclusion program to youth between the ages of 14 and 18 who are at risk of criminal involvement.

• (1855)

This program will allow participants to learn new skills, get help with their education, and also focus on drug prevention and conflict resolution, so that young people can increase their social skills and sense of belonging.

*Private Members' Business*

As well, our government is investing \$469,000 over three years, so that the Aboriginal Women's Association of P.E.I. can deliver the "Gathering Together" program to at risk children, youth and young adults in first nations communities across P.E.I. in an effort to reduce incidents of violent crime and property crime associated with substance abuse.

This program will involve communities, families, service providers and youth in culturally sensitive activities which will help develop the skills needed to support effective crime prevention and reduction.

Each of these initiatives is important. They are community-based. They are founded upon a demonstrated capacity and interest in the community to get them up and running. They are based upon demonstrated links to studies which clearly establish that they work, and indeed, experience shows that they have been and will be successful in helping to reduce crime among at risk youth in our communities.

The motion before us today proposes in this regard:

That, in the opinion of the House, the government should examine First Nations cadet programs and develop a plan to facilitate, promote and help monitor First Nations community cadet programs across Canada.

Our government supports the motion in principle. Still, we need to move forward in a prudent and measured way in order to ensure that we continue invest taxpayers' dollars in projects that will work to help at risk youth and people to avoid a life of crime. That is what we have done to date and it is what we will do in the future as we continue to build safer communities for everyone.

**Mr. Laurie Hawn (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to speak in favour of this motion. I know that my colleague from Wetaskiwin has been working very hard in the preparation of this motion and is a great supporter of the cadet program that is bringing a positive choice to the youth of the four bands of Hobbema, all the while curtailing the tide of violence and the spread of gang recruitment that is plaguing those reserves.

Today, over 1,050 cadets have registered in this program. There are 65 registered cadet instructors. There is one Hobbema RCMP community cadet corps program coordinator and one RCMP provincial youth cadet program manager. There are also five parent volunteers and three senior cadets, who recently turned 18 and are waiting to be trained as adult cadet instructors. That is real teamwork.

I want to take a few minutes to outline why this motion should be passed and to speak of the successes currently happening in the Hobbema community cadet corps program.

First, and foremost, the cadet program started with the four individual bands and brought them together as a collective unit to solve problems, learn tolerance and work patiently with each other, resulting in their parents and elders working jointly.

The cadet program has attracted hundreds of members since forming four years ago. It was developed and implemented by the RCMP as a comprehensive crime reduction initiative, while

educating first nations youth on the dangers of gang activity, drug abuse and associated violence.

The program is recruiting first nations youth and is advising them on positive choices and alternatives to overcome daily negative obstacles that prevent them from obtaining future education and career opportunities. It has partnered up with local businesses to help members with scholarships and jobs.

I know that many of the involved youth are going to look back and think fondly of their experiences in the cadet corps as they embrace leadership positions as adults. Their time in the program might even lead to some becoming members of the RCMP, the Canadian Forces, or other similar groups.

The program is empowering young people to make decisions and solve problems affecting them and their cadet corps, as well as their families, schools and communities.

The cadet corps provides a safe, secure, positive peer group and a strong support system, allowing them to learn to grow and respect each other and themselves.

As well, the program teaches the Cree language to all the cadets, while the elders teach wisdom, knowledge and the understanding of the Cree culture.

With the co-operation of community agencies, such as social, mental health, police and fire and ambulance services, as well as youth development, the cadet corps is working collectively like never before. In light of this success story, it is my wish to see such an achievement repeated in first nations communities across Canada.

The Hobbema community cadet corps program is now known as the largest aboriginal cadet program around the world and has partnered up with the national inter-school brigade Jamaica police cadet corps program.

Since the cadet program was developed, school attendance has risen and crime has significantly been reduced in the community. The program's youth empowerment and crime reduction model has received national interest among aboriginal, academic and police communities. And with the passage of the motion, we can promote cadet programs in all of Canada's first nations communities.

I want to strongly encourage chiefs, elders, parents, sponsors, surrounding communities, and the RCMP to work with the cadet program organizers to ensure it continues and succeeds.

On a final note, I want the young people involved in the program to know that I am inspired and impressed with their dedication and hard work. They have built the program from the grassroots up and have made a tremendous difference in their community.

I represent an intercity riding in the city of Edmonton. The city of Edmonton has, as many people may know, or will shortly, the highest number of urban aboriginals in Canada. It is incredibly important that we address the challenges of aboriginal youth, whether it is in urban settings like Edmonton or rural settings like Wetaskiwin. They are some of our future leaders and we need to give them every encouragement and every opportunity to reach their full potential in a safe environment.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

Again, I urge all members of this House to vote in favour of this motion, and I want to thank my hon. friend from Wetaskiwin, who has worked tirelessly to advance this issue.

● (1900)

**The Deputy Speaker:** Resuming debate. There being no further members rising to continue debate, I will recognize the member for Wetaskiwin for his five minute right of reply.

**Mr. Blaine Calkins (Wetaskiwin, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, let me just say how delighted I am that this motion has been brought before the House of Commons. I want to thank all of my colleagues in all parties of the House who have spoken so eloquently in support of my motion to support, to enhance, and to monitor first nations cadet programs across our country.

I know I only have a few minutes, but I would like to take this wrap-up opportunity to thank all the organizers and founders of the Hobbema community cadet corps going back to Inspector Doug Reti, who in 2005 mounted a crime reduction initiative to disrupt gang activity, drug abuse and associated violence.

He assigned two people who have become two of my best friends in the line of work that I have as a member of Parliament, Sergeant Mark Linnell and Constable Richard Huculiak. These two extraordinary gentlemen are members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and they dignify the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in ways that cannot be enunciated with words. They are pillars of the community. They typify the excellence that is found in so many front line police officers across our country. They deserve every bit of the congratulations and every bit of the praise and recognition for the success of this program to date.

I should also mention that we are fast approaching November 22 or November 23, I cannot remember the exact date, that will mark the fourth anniversary of this successful program. It has started. It has blossomed. It has evolved. Now it is on the national stage here in the House of Commons. I am so pleased that I will be able to have an opportunity to attend the fourth anniversary in the very near future.

I would like to thank Samson Oil & Gas. It has a large warehouse building that is probably the largest building on any of the four band areas. It provides indoor space during the winter months and provides much needed space for the cadets to practice their drill and to participate in some of their activities. The company certainly needs to be recognized and thanked for its contribution.

I want to thank the chiefs and councils of the four bands for their support. They have a remarkable opportunity to demonstrate further leadership and a commitment to their youth by continuing to support this excellent program. I certainly encourage them to do so. They should know that I stand ready to support this program alongside them.

I want to thank all of the donors and sponsors who have given their time, their resources, their money to help the program continue for the better part of the last four years. There is just too many of them to name, but without their support this program would have floundered and would have found an unfortunate end. But because of their support and their commitment, this program is still alive and well, and moving forward and doing so many good things for the young participants.

I also wish to thank some of the volunteers who have done so much to help lead the program: David Huculiak, Salty Lee, Noreen Buffalo, Bryan Makinaw, Deanna Roasting, Wesley McCarthy, Deb Swanson. These are the volunteers who volunteer their time, put in countless hours, almost immeasurable in value, volunteer their efforts to assist Mark Linnell and Richard Huculiak, and make the Hobbema community cadet program so successful.

I would like to thank the local media, regional media, and even the national media for the coverage of the Hobbema community cadet program. There is often a lot of bad news that comes out of that community generated by a few people in that community. My experience has been there are so many good people there doing great things. The media certainly has had a role to play through its coverage of various events and through the documentaries to make Canadians aware of what is happening there.

I want to thank my province; the ministers, Gene Zwozdesky, Harvey Cenaiko, and Fred Lindsay; my local MLA colleagues, Verlyn Olson, Dianna McQueen and Raymond Prins; and Ron Hepperle, the first nations policing manager for the province of Alberta. The province has been a stalwart supporter financially and with other gifts in kind. The province of Alberta should be recognized for this.

I wish to thank the Government of Canada. The Minister of Public Safety has visited with the cadets and has shown a keen interest in helping and further advancing this program. I certainly do appreciate the support that Public Safety and Health Canada and other agencies have provided in not only supplying services but also small amounts of financing from time to time to help.

● (1905)

With that, I would like to say this is all about those cadets. It is about those young people. They are an inspiration to all of us and I hope that this motion will pass unanimously to show these young people that here in the House of Commons we believe in them 100%.

[*Translation*]

**The Deputy Speaker:** The question is on the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

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

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## ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

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

[*English*]

### THE ENVIRONMENT

**Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am rising to raise questions following the ones I posed to the Minister of Natural Resources on October 28. I would like to provide further details of the questions that I raised for the benefit of the minister and the House.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

We have frequently heard from the government about its efforts to work in sync with the United States of America on the U.S.-Canada clean energy dialogue. However, contrary to the information that is provided to us, the two governments do not appear to be in sync, and I would like to raise a number of questions and issues with the minister and would appreciate a more detailed reply.

We claim to be in sync and yet President Obama not only committed but actually issued approximately \$3.2 billion from the federal budget to incent new jobs through investment in green energy. Yet what we hear from the Conservative government is still simply a lot of talk about incenting genuinely green energy.

I wish to bring to the minister's attention that we have three very strong powers at the federal level, and I would like to inquire about whether the government is intending to pursue the exercise of these very strong federal powers to genuinely incent the shift in investment toward a cleaner, greener economy. Those three powers include spending power, regulatory power and taxation power.

As I mentioned, despite the commitment in the 2009 budget by the government for clean energy and for renewables, we are still relying on the 2006 budget allotment to incent renewable power. It was a very small amount specifically allocated to renewable power, as I understand it, \$100 million plus compared to the billions of dollars toward a broader so-called clean energy initiative.

I am advised that the eco-energy program was supposed to go right to 2011. Fortunately, there was so much interest in the program that the moneys are already allocated. The program was over-subscribed. There was incredible interest by investors and the industry sector in Alberta and in jurisdictions across the country towards investing in this. It is a clear indication that when there are federal monetary incentives, people shift over and invest in cleaner energy.

As for the regulatory area, my question to the government would be what action the minister has taken to reach out to the Minister of Finance, the Minister of the Environment and the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans to initiate laws that will trigger the investment in cleaner technology? For example, have they approved a building code? Have they pursued laws to put stricter standards on greenhouse gases, NO<sub>x</sub>, SO<sub>x</sub>, particulates and heavy metals?

In the taxation arena, the government has seen fit to give particular tax incentives, for example, to the tar sands, which have been very effective at triggering a massive shift of investment to the tar sands. Is the government giving consideration to and discussing with the Minister of Finance the possibility of giving similar subsidies to shift investment over to renewable power?

● (1910)

**Mr. David Anderson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to address those issues, because in terms of the spending power the government has had, the taxation power and the regulatory power we have had, we have been able to move on the whole spectrum of energy. We are not just dealing with renewables in isolation as the member would like us to do.

The interesting thing is that she has opposed each of those initiatives. The member and her party have stood against us. They

want to talk about energy but on every point, as with so much of that party's policy, members of the NDP have opposed good public policy particularly to do with energy.

The member has come out against carbon capture and storage, a major initiative by the government. It has the potential to make a major difference in the environmental situation across the country and yet the NDP has come out against that. The member in particular has spoken against it.

When we make a major commitment to the environment, she chooses to oppose it. A good example of that was the project announced by the Prime Minister recently in Keephills to reduce emissions from a coal-fired power plant. The member came out against that. The member has a cottage in the area. We really need to ask, does she oppose this because she dislikes economic development, because she is not really that interested in the environmental challenges that we face, or is this a case of NIMBY, not in my backyard, or does she not want this to take place because she has some investment in the community?

Worst of all has been her support for Bill C-311. She really needs to answer some questions about her role and her position on energy in Alberta. Bill C-311 would wipe out the Alberta and Saskatchewan economies. She supports it. It is a bill that would cost thousands of jobs. She still supports the bill. It is a bill that would cost up to and over \$20,000 per capita in some ridings. She continues to support it.

It is a bill, according to the report that was released last week by the David Suzuki Foundation and the Pembina Institute, that would cost Alberta 12.1% of its GDP and would cost Saskatchewan 7.5% of its GDP. She continues to support it. I think it was on *Power Play*, when she was asked about this report, she basically said that she does not think Alberta is coming out of this so badly. If a reduction of 12.1% in GDP is not a bad thing, I do not know what would be.

There is an energetic young man who is going door to door in Edmonton—Strathcona. Everywhere he goes he is asked how it is possible that there is an MP representing Edmonton—Strathcona who stands so strongly against the interests of Alberta. His name is Ryan Hastman. He is a Conservative candidate in Edmonton—Strathcona. He shares the disappointment that so many Albertans feel with the member. He would like to bring a different vision to this House, a vision that supports jobs, a vision that supports the Alberta economy, and a vision that supports the energy sector, both renewable and non-renewable, in ways that will lead us forward.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

•(1915)

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** Mr. Speaker, contrary to what the member has suggested, I have not opposed carbon storage and sequestration. What I have opposed is spending public tax dollars subsidizing the testing of unproven technology on the coal-fired sector, which is an additional subsidy for a dirty source of power, instead of taking at least half of that money and putting it toward the development and deployment of clean electricity. This is something which the majority of Canadians, and certainly people in Alberta, have been calling for.

I also object to the fact that we are subsidizing a project where there has been zero consultation with my community. I am not speaking on behalf of my personal interests; I am speaking on behalf of the first nation community that may be directly affected and all the people who live and work in that general vicinity.

What the member has suggested in fact is not the truth.

**Mr. David Anderson:** Mr. Speaker, again I need to come back to this. I challenge the member to start to represent the issues of her constituents.

We are speaking about energy today, but there is another issue. Less than an hour ago we saw a demonstration of the fact that the member is out of touch with Alberta and out of touch with what Albertans believe in, in the fact that she stood in this House and supported the continuation of the long gun registry. She cannot talk about opposing public money being spent in a variety of ways when she stands here and supports that wasteful \$2 billion gun registry.

The government is committed to supporting renewable energy. She should start to support that as well as part of a package that is good for the environment, that is good for energy production and that is good for Alberta. Again I will remind people that is what Ryan Hastman, the young man in Edmonton, is doing. That is what the residents of Edmonton—Strathcona really do want.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow morning at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 7:16 p.m.)

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