

Private Members' Business

David Moore worked for the department for six years and James Finnamore was an employee of Revenue Canada for almost 18 years. We have lost two fine men, highly professional public servants, dedicated to their work and to the people of Canada. They will be missed dearly at home. They will be missed by those with whom they worked, who are both their colleagues and their friends.

I know all members of this House will wish to join with me after the statements of other party representatives to stand for a few moments to reflect on this tragic event and to remember these two fine individuals who died in service of this country.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre de Savoye (Portneuf): Mr. Speaker, very briefly and on a serious note, the members of the Bloc Québécois agree fully with the comments of the hon. Minister of Revenue. We wish to convey our deepest sympathies to the families and friends of Mr. David Moore and Mr. Jim Finnamore.

[English]

Mr. Elwin Hermanson (Kindersley—Lloydminster): Mr. Speaker, I join with members of the government as expressed by the minister and my Bloc colleagues in expressing the grief and sympathy of Reform members in the tragic deaths of Inspector David Moore and Superintendent Jim Finnamore.

I grew up beside the South Saskatchewan River and know first hand the beauty, the benefits and also the danger associated with our waterways. In fact, I remember as a young boy when my father lost an employee to the river. We sense the shock and pain and sorrow those involved in this situation are experiencing.

I have also visited the Perth—Andover area and I can envision the landscape and the beauty of the Saint John River valley and the rolling hills in western New Brunswick. I have met with some people in that region and I am sure they share in the grief caused by this accident. I am also confident that the community is rising to the situation and will give comfort and support to Kelly Moore and to Frances, Tamara, Brent and Peter Finnamore, as well as to other loved ones.

With my colleagues I express appreciation for the lives of Jim Finnamore and David Moore and our sympathy and prayers go out to their families and other loved ones.

The Deputy Speaker: I would ask that we rise and have a moment's silence.

[Editor's Note: *The House stood in silence.*]

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● (1110)

[English]

NON-CONFIDENCE MOTIONS

Mrs. Daphne Jennings (Mission—Coquitlam) moved:

That, in the opinion of the this House, the government should permit members of the House of Commons to fully represent their constituents' views on the government's legislative program and spending plans by adopting the position that the defeat of any government measure, including a spending measure, shall not automatically mean the defeat of the government unless followed by the adoption of a formal motion.

She said: Mr. Speaker, in the time available to me today I would like to explain my motion so that members of this House will clearly know what they are being asked to vote on.

As this is a votable motion, declared so by the procedure and House affairs committee, it will be the first time, at least as far as I can determine, that members will have the opportunity to express themselves on the issues of confidence and flowing from that the issue of freer voting in the House.

I would also like to address the history of voting in this House, a history which has been characterized by political party discipline or voting along party lines. I will refer to the experience in other jurisdictions such as Great Britain where there has been a noticeable relaxation of the party whip.

My research indicates that in Australia and New Zealand, while party discipline is somewhat less than in Canada but more than in Great Britain, there are clear avenues for backbenchers, private members, to influence the policies of their party.

I will conclude by dealing with the criticisms of allowing freer voting by members of the House of Commons. I must admit that I am surprised there are any criticisms because of the support this issue has received in the last two Parliaments. When I first spoke on this subject on January 21, the hon. member for Broadview—Greenwood took issue with my arguments and more recently at a meeting of the House of Commons committee on procedure and House affairs I was amazed by the arguments raised by members opposite.

I believe it is necessary that these be addressed, fears put to bed so that all members of the House may join together to support this motion. The motion refers actually to three matters: relaxation of the confidence convention, freer voting and representation of constituents' interests.

By relaxing the confidence convention I mean that only votes that are explicitly labelled as confidence votes when lost by the government bring about the government's resignation. There is a myth that has been spread about this place for many years that