
Francis Scarpaleggia

Member of Parliament
Lac-Saint-Louis



PARLIAMENTARY REPORT

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HOUSE OF COMMONS
OTTAWA, CANADA

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Dear Constituents,

Since my last newsletter, my work has continued to focus on developing a national water vision for Canada.

Among other things, I have spent a better part of the summer writing the Liberal report from the House of Commons environment committee's study of the impacts of the oil sands on Canada's water resources. The report is now posted on my website.



I have also been active addressing other key issues for our community.

Like all Canadians, West Islanders consider healthcare a priority. One local focus has been on plans to transfer the federally-owned St. Anne's Veterans Hospital to the Quebec government. Many constituents are deeply concerned about maintaining the high-quality services Veterans, young and old, have always received at the hospital.

The West Island needs more chronic care beds. St. Anne's offers a unique opportunity to address this shortage to the mutual benefit of West Island Veterans and the larger community. Ottawa could enter into rental agreement for chronic beds with the Lakeshore General Hospital, which has already made such arrangements with facilities like Le Vivalis.

I have called on the Conservatives to be more transparent and keep West Islanders apprised of the nature and state of its negotiations with Quebec. Specifically, I have called on the Minister of Veterans Affairs to hold public consultations on the transfer, not only to respect the spirit of democratic accountability our Veterans fought for but also to tap the wisdom, experience, and insights of our West Island community. Unfortunately, this request was denied.

An open and transparent process is especially important given the potential financial consequences of a transfer for the Town of Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue. The town could lose close to 1.5 million dollars of annual budget revenues should a transfer proceed. This is because Quebec's *grants in lieu of taxes* to municipalities are calculated at a lower rate than

the federal government's grants. (Governments do not pay municipal taxes but instead give grants to the cities and towns where they own facilities.)

Not to be overlooked among West Islanders' healthcare concerns are home care and palliative care. My ongoing contact with both NOVA (formerly the Victorian Order of Nurses) and the West Island Palliative Care Residence has furthered my interest in both issues. I have spoken to Liberal leader Michael Ignatieff and the Liberal Caucus at length about the importance of addressing these growing needs within our population. I am pleased, therefore, that the upcoming Liberal election platform will include a commitment to home care. Meanwhile, I am a member of a new parliamentary committee that has been holding hearings on a future federal role in palliative care.

Another pressing West Island priority is public transit.

What is needed is an integrated West-Island-wide rail service to downtown with a stop at Trudeau airport. Clifford Lincoln, former West Island industrial commissioner Georges Nydam, and a coalition of West Island mayors and MNAs are promoting this vision, appropriately called the *Train de l'Ouest*. It is vital that Ottawa use its influence with other project partners to produce a plan that not only includes train service between the airport and downtown, but also improved service to the end of the island. The federal government must abandon its long-standing neutrality on the issue. It must wholeheartedly support the *Train de l'Ouest* project. West Islanders are federal taxpayers. Their priorities must be respected.

As the fall season begins, I wish all a safe and productive return to school and work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Francis Scarpaleggia', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Francis Scarpaleggia

Happy Birthday Beaconsfield!

The following is a statement I read in the House of Commons to mark the City of Beaconsfield's 100th anniversary.

Mr. Speaker, this year marks the 100th anniversary of the City of Beaconsfield, a magnificent community on the shores of the St. Lawrence River in Montreal's West Island.

The year started with great fanfare when young Ben Mumme carried the Olympic flame into Centennial Park, where it lit up the crowd and the winter night in anticipation of future Canadian Olympic glory.



Last Friday, I had the honour of riding in Beaconsfield's 100th anniversary parade with Mayor David Pollock; his council; MNA Geoffrey Kelley; former mayor Ed Briggs; former councillors Ernie Dahl and Jim Hasegawa; Beaconsfield's first mayor, Joseph Perron, personified by Christian Habel in 1910 period costume; Danièle Bouchard-Serhan, chair of the *Beaconsfield 100* committee; Judith Clark, coordinator of the evening's celebration; and Michèle Janis, the city's irrepressible cultural director.

Beaconsfield is known for those values that make a community strong: citizen engagement; caring for others through volunteerism; respect for difference; and concern for the environment.

I would like to invite all members to join with me in wishing a very happy 100th anniversary to the City of Beaconsfield.

House of Commons
June 11, 2010



Medal of Bravery

Constable Frédéric Couture, a resident of Kirkland, has received the Governor General’s Medal of Bravery for his selfless act of courage to save a life. In December 2006, constable Couture and another police officer, Martin Langlois, rescued a man from a burning apartment in Montreal. After being alerted by the victim’s neighbour, constables Couture and Langlois noticed thick, black smoke through the apartment windows. They managed to open the apartment door, and after several attempts were able to crawl inside despite the intense heat and smoke. In complete darkness, the constables reached the panicked victim and dragged him to safety.



Excerpts from Speeches in the House of Commons

Water and oil sands

Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to participate in tonight's Adjournment Debate.¹

The unfinished business that I would like to talk about tonight is in reference to a question I posed to the Minister of the Environment on April 1 about the contamination of the Athabasca River by oil-sands industry activities. In his very short response to my question, the minister betrayed his misunderstanding of three areas in particular: first, Dr. David Schindler's findings; second, the *Fisheries Act*; and third, the *Canada-Alberta Administrative Agreement for the Control of Deposits of Deleterious Substances*.

First of all, there is mounting evidence by very reputable scientists that the oil sands are contaminating the Athabasca River and its tributaries.

The minister called Dr. Schindler's research "allegations", which I think is disrespectful of one of the world's greatest water scientists. He [also] suggested that Dr. Schindler's findings, in a report that he presented to the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development, are related only "to airborne emissions as opposed to *Fisheries Act* issues".

It is true that Dr. Schindler's research found a link between oil sands development and the deposit of pollution from [airborne] particular matter that is settling in the Athabasca River.

¹ The Adjournment Debate is the last order of daily business in the House of Commons and is referred to by M.P.s as the *Late Show*. This short debate takes place in the early evening, typically following votes. During the *Late Show*, an M.P. who feels his or her question to a minister in *Question Period* was not properly answered can further question the government on the same topic. The *Late Show* format provides for slightly longer exchanges than the short thirty-five-second questions (and answers) allowed during *Question Period*.

However, while Dr. Schindler's research found high contamination of polycyclic aromatics, including several known carcinogens, in snow samples from the Athabasca River near the centre of oil sands activity



and at the bottom of the impacted Athabasca River tributaries, it also found high concentrations of several contaminants under the ice that are known to be high in tailings ponds. This was at sites just downstream of tailings ponds, indicating that there is some effect of tailings pond leakage under winter's low-flow conditions.

The federal government does not take its enforcement responsibilities seriously at all, and this is the problem.

The hon. member mentioned the *Canada-Alberta Administrative Agreement for the Control of Deposits of Deleterious Substances*, but the federal government has been absent, really, from this agreement. In fact, the Commissioner of the Environment stated only a year ago that the main coordinating committee of this agreement has not met for three years.

Also, the agreement has not been fully implemented. For example, under clause 5.2 of the agreement, Canada and Alberta envisioned establishing an arrangement relating to "complementary and co-operative monitoring programs with provisions for information sharing". However, it appears that no such arrangement was ever concluded.

The government is missing in action on this. I must remind the hon. member that under the *Fisheries Act*, one does not have to prove that the ecosystem is damaged, only that deleterious substances are being deposited, whether from air or from water.

House of Commons
June 1, 2010

Climate change

Climate change is a huge challenge. It is a complex problem, and as parliamentarians and as a society, when we are called upon to deal with complex problems like climate change, what is important at the very base of everything is truthfulness. This is not just a platitude. By truthfulness, I do not mean simply avoiding the spreading of flagrant falsehoods. I mean ignoring the temptation to indulge in political spin aimed at convincing people of the rightness of one's position. I am talking about the need to avoid specious arguments for the sake of political gain.

Science is never exact. It is a question of probabilities, but the fact that we do not have absolutes in climate change science does not mean that we should not do anything.

It is very clear that human activity since the industrial revolution has been adding to CO₂ in the atmosphere. There are measurements of CO₂ in the atmosphere. I think we are now at 385 parts per million, whereas for 10,000 years we were at 280 parts per million. When the industrial revolution came along in the 1750s, the amount of carbon in the atmosphere started to rise. It is measurable and this is fact.

We also know that temperatures are rising. We can measure that. There is a hockey stick phenomenon, as we all know, in which CO₂ was level until we hit the industrial revolution, and then it went up quite drastically and, of course, we see temperatures going up.

The climate change deniers say that we do not have really good readings of temperatures because the temperature monitoring stations are in urban areas, and urban areas are hot spots, and therefore the readings are all wrong. However, that myth has been put to rest, because we see that the readings in urban areas are really no different from the readings elsewhere.

House of Commons
April 28, 2010

The Budget

Mr. Speaker, as I was studying the budget document in preparation for this speech, like others in the House, I found that the title is a bit of a misnomer. The title perhaps should be “Missed Opportunities: Letting Others Take the Lead”.

The budget is a missed opportunity to begin or, in some cases continue, laying the groundwork for solutions to many of the problems we face today and will face in the future.

A good starting point in terms of comparing the weaknesses of this document to what it could have been would be to look at the Ontario throne speech, which was delivered only a few short days ago and which, contrary to the throne speech that was delivered here on Parliament Hill, has only half as many words yet says so much more. Let me read a few lines from that throne speech:

As part of its Open Ontario Plan, your government will introduce legislation that will build on Ontario’s expertise in clean water technology. The *Water Opportunities Act* would lay the foundation for new Ontario jobs and make our province the North American leader in the development and sale of new technologies and services for water conservation and treatment. The Conference Board of Canada estimates the global market for water technology at more \$400 billion US per year — and doubling every five to six years.

The question becomes: Why do the federal budget and the [federal] throne speech that preceded it not include visionary statements such as that? The reason is that the government does not believe in vision. [But] When we do not think in visionary terms, we miss opportunities. There are things staring at us that we cannot see, and that is the problem when we do not have a vision.

Now if the government were thinking in terms of a national water strategy, it would see the opportunities for actions like those the Government of Ontario has mentioned in its throne speech.

The budget also forgot to mention the St. Lawrence River, which is one of the 15 largest waterways in the world. Its watershed occupies one-third of the territory of the province of Quebec. About 40 percent of Quebec’s municipalities draw their drinking water from the river,

and more than 75 percent of Quebec's industrial facilities, including its large hydroelectric plants, are located on the St. Lawrence River. Finally, the St. Lawrence valley contains 70 percent of Quebec's population, yet we do not hear a word about the St. Lawrence River.

Why is it particularly important in March 2010 that the budget mention the St. Lawrence River? It is because the fourth instalment of the St. Lawrence Action Plan, which extended from 2005 to 2010, ended on March 31, 2010, and there is still nothing to replace it. It is one of the most important rivers in the world, in Canada and North America, and the government has not even begun to think about extending the St. Lawrence Action Plan. That is what happens when we do not have a visionary mindset.

The government has been dragging its feet with respect to RADARSAT on a water issue.

Ducks Unlimited, in partnership with Environment Canada and the Canadian Space Agency, had begun phase one of what is called the Canadian Wetlands Inventory. This is a project to map all of Canada's wetlands. The reason it is important is that Canada contains about 25 percent of the world's wetlands, more than any other country in the world. Wetlands are an essential part of the hydrologic cycle. This project had begun but was then starved of funding by Environment Canada.

Why did the government not take the opportunity in the budget to relaunch this project? This is an extremely important issue, especially in the oil sands. Last week we found out that the oil sands companies now say that they cannot afford to restore the wetlands they are destroying even though they previously made commitments to do so.

House of Commons
April 15, 2010

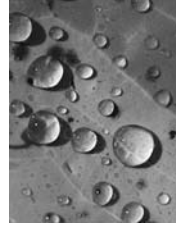


Celebrating Canada Day with Pointe-Claire seniors.



At the West Island Palliative Care Residence with (left to right) Rose De Angelis, Teresa Dellar, Senator Sharon Carstairs, Gary Fabian and Leslie Mitchell.

Water Facts



Water quantity

- 70 percent of the earth is covered in water.
- 97.5 percent of the earth's water is saltwater in oceans and seas; 2.5 percent is freshwater.
- 68.9 percent of freshwater on earth is in glaciers and permanent snow cover.
- 30.8 percent of freshwater is in groundwater, including soil moisture, swamp water, and permafrost.
- *Only* 0.3 percent of global freshwater is in lakes and rivers.

The water cycle

- The water in rivers is renewed on average every sixteen days.
- The water in the atmosphere is replaced every eight days.
- The water in lakes, glaciers, oceans, and groundwater can take hundreds to thousands of years to be completely renewed.

Water conservation

- Approximately 300 litres of water is required to produce 1 kilogram of paper.
- A 5-minute shower with a standard shower head uses 100 litres of water.
- A 5-minute shower with a low-flow shower head uses less than 50 litres.

Various

- The longest Canadian River is the Mackenzie River, located in the Northwest Territories, Alberta, and British Columbia (4,241 kilometres).



- The river in Canada with the greatest annual discharge is the St. Lawrence River (9,850 cubic metres per second).
- The world's largest inland freshwater delta is formed where the Peace and Athabasca rivers flow into Lake Athabasca.

Calling all Canadian change-makers aged 18-35!

WATERLUTION
PRESENTS



**THE
CANADIAN
WATER
INNOVATION
LAB**

October 21-24, 2010

YMCA Camp Chief Hector, Exshaw, Alberta

This October, 250 young Canadian leaders will come together with key decision-makers of all disciplines for four days of inspired dialogue on water issues. The Canadian Water Innovation Lab is a collaborative “unconference” event designed to cultivate informed future leaders, influence policy, and strengthen the Canadian water stewardship network.

Are you concerned about the sustainable development of your community? Seeking inspiration and ways to influence long-term change?

We are looking for outstanding young Canadians, aged 18-35 yrs, to join the Lab as participants. You do not need to have experience in water issues — water is everyone’s concern! This is a call for all future leaders to join the discussion on sustainable water management.

Successful applicants will stay on-site in the inspiring Rocky Mountains and engage in dialogue on water issues via experiential learning activities, field tours, mentoring and systems theory. The Lab will give you the inspiration, insight, tools and connections to work towards the sustainable management of your local watershed.

Don't miss this exciting opportunity! Spaces are limited.

APPLY NOW at <http://www.waterlution.org>

FOLLOW US! <http://www.twitter.com/thelab2010>

BEFRIEND US! <http://www.facebook.com/waterlution.canada>



NOVA West Island is a community-based organization that has been serving the West Island since 1911. NOVA was originally known as the Victorian Order of Nurses (VON).

Since the 1970s, the organization has been dedicated to bridging gaps in the public healthcare system by offering a range of both free and subsidized programs.

NOVA's primary mission is to provide experienced nurses for specialized care and support to cancer patients in their homes. NOVA home care is offered both during the course of a patient's illness but also, particularly, at the palliative stage.

NOVA offers bereavement sessions to both adults and youth, individually or in groups. The organization also operates Adult Day Centres for cognitively-impaired, fragile or elderly individuals. NOVA's Home Support Workers provide assistance with personal care and companionship. Finally, NOVA offers affordable footcare through home visits and weekly clinics.

NOVA receives no government funding and operates through the generosity of many community clubs, associations and individuals.

The volunteer-run Boutiques d'occasion pour NOVA — located in Beaconsfield, Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue and Kirkland — direct their proceeds to NOVA West Island. These thrifts shops offer quality affordable clothing, furniture, books and china — and a method of recycling!



For more information, please call (514) 695-8335 or visit www.novawi.org and www.thriftshopsfornova.com

Historic Site

The Pointe-Claire Windmill

Pointe-Claire's most recognized civic symbol is, without question, the windmill on the village "point". This communal mill is one of the oldest colonial remnants on the island of Montreal, and this year (2010) celebrates its 300th anniversary.

The windmill allowed for the West Island's early settlement, and served the area now covered by the cities of Pointe-Claire, Beaconsfield, Kirkland and Dollard-des-Ormeaux.

The windmill was built by the Sulpicians, the seigneurs of Montreal, who leased the property and collected rent. The initial contract for construction of the windmill's frame and mechanisms was given to Leonard and Charles Paillé – father and son – on December 23, 1708. On February 27, 1709 mason Jean Mars was hired to "well and duly perfect...the limestone and sandstone masonry, 12 feet from side to side, 24 feet in height above the ground floor." The mill was furnished with openings for muskets and surrounded by upright stakes, signifying its role as a lookout point for French soldiers and scouts on guard against Iroquois attacks.



Unfortunately, the mill was never able to fill its required quotas. After major repairs in 1824, the mill was sold in 1837 to Amable Saint-Julien, a farmer from Rigaud. In 1854, both the point and the mill were sold to the Dubois family who in turn sold them to the Congregation of Notre Dame in 1866, in an exchange with the *fabrique* (parish governing committee).

By around 1880, the mill was no longer in use. The Sisters had transformed the top level into a terraced observatory with a pump which fed their aqueduct before their convent became connected to Pointe-Claire's municipal water services. In 1962, the conical roof was restored and new wings were added in 1967 to mark Canada's centennial. Designed by architect Marc Angers, these new wings were probably inspired by the mills of Verchères and Île-aux-Coudres. On April 8, 1982, the mill was officially classified as a heritage site.