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—

Speaker: The Honourable Andrew Scheer

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, May 4, 2015

The House met at 11 a.m.

Prayers

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

• (1100)

[*English*]

UNITED NATIONS DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ACT

The House resumed from March 12 consideration of the motion that Bill C-641, An Act to ensure that the laws of Canada are in harmony with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Mr. John Barlow (Macleod, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou for introducing this bill and prompting this important discussion. His passion on this issue was quite evident and I want to recognize him for that.

While I may oppose the passage of Bill C-641, I agree that issues related to aboriginal rights are an integral part of Canada's past and future. My southern Alberta riding of Macleod has a rich first nations history, and I am proud to represent them here today.

It is well known that our government has been working on reconciliation and the implementation of aboriginal rights across Canada. As a member of the aboriginal affairs and northern development committee, I am particularly pleased to have the opportunity to address this subject.

In 2010, it was this government that endorsed the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples underscoring our commitment to reconciliation, to building a positive and productive relationship with first nations, Inuit and Métis peoples, and to improving the well-being of aboriginal Canadians. As we said when we endorsed the declaration, the government's vision is a future in which aboriginal families and communities are healthy, self-sufficient and prosperous. Just as much as that vision remains true today, it has guided the actions of this government from the beginning.

The Prime Minister's 2008 historic apology to former students of Indian residential schools, to their families and communities remains

the most public manifestation of this government's, indeed of any Canadian government's, commitment to reconciliation. The Prime Minister's heartfelt words will echo for generations, for they marked not a conclusion but a beginning of a new era of aboriginal relations in this country.

The creation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission as part of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement was another watershed moment. The commission's activities and outreach have been fundamental to the process of reconciliation. As hon. members are aware, our government has extended the commission's mandate by an additional 12 months, to June of this year. This will ensure it can report fully on this historic injustice and start Canadians on the path of reconciliation. The work of the commission will stand as a lasting reminder that there is no place in Canada for the attitudes that inspired the Indian residential schools system to ever prevail again.

Even more than this, our government has redoubled its efforts to work in partnership with aboriginal peoples to foster opportunities for a better future for aboriginal peoples throughout Canada.

It must be said that this work is achieving real results. Our government is delivering on economic development, on housing, and on child and family services. We are producing results with respect to education, access to safe drinking water, and especially governance. We are making concrete developments related to sharing benefits of natural resources development in traditional aboriginal territories, on the extension of human rights protection, and on matrimonial real property protection to first nations on reserve.

We are accelerating efforts to resolve the past grievances of first nations relating to Canada's obligations under historic treaties with tools such as the expedited specific claims process. This new process brought in under our government allowed the minister to clear away a backlog of specific claims left behind by the Liberal government.

Progress in areas such as the settlement of specific claims is essential to advancing reconciliation while establishing a more predictable climate for economic investment and increased prosperity for aboriginal communities, things that work to the benefit of all Canadians. These treaty agreements provide aboriginal communities with the lands, resources and the tools they need to determine their own destiny and take advantage of opportunities for economic development in ways that they could not have been able to before.

Private Members' Business

Our government has committed to reach specific claim settlements fairly and expeditiously through negotiation with first nations, and the results cannot be denied. Since 2007, 125 specific claims have been negotiated, representing some \$2.2 billion in settlements for first nation communities across the country. We are equally committed to negotiating fair settlements to self-government and comprehensive land claims, and we are responding to aboriginal groups and others who have long called for reforms to the federal approach.

In July of last year, the minister announced a number of measures to address key impediments to concluding modern treaties. This included making important changes to Canada's own source revenue policy and resuming negotiations related to the fisheries in British Columbia.

● (1105)

In addition, the minister also announced important new measures to promote reconciliation in advance of and outside of treaty. Canada will now consider proposals to negotiate incremental treaty and non-treaty agreements. These are two important new tools to help strengthen partnerships with aboriginal groups and help address their section 35 rights.

Incremental agreements could address one or more elements of an eventual treaty, or could exist as stand-alone agreements in the event a treaty is not concluded.

Moreover, our government has clarified Canada's approach to the resolution of shared territory disputes in the context of resource development, and we continue to take seriously our duty to consult with aboriginal groups, particularly those in priority areas of high resource development.

We are engaging aboriginal groups and other stakeholders in the renewal of federal consultation guidelines, including new industry guidance and a public statement to clarify Canada's approach to aboriginal consultation.

Our government is also working toward developing a new framework for addressing section 35 aboriginal rights through dialogue with aboriginal groups and other stakeholders.

As a first step in the development of this new framework, the minister appointed Douglas Eyford as ministerial special representative to lead engagement with aboriginal groups and key stakeholders on renewal of the comprehensive land claims policy. Over the past six months, Mr. Eyford has met with representatives from more than 100 aboriginal groups, federal, provincial and territorial governments, and industry.

Mr. Eyford's report is now in hand. Over the coming months, we will engage with aboriginal groups as well as other stakeholders to seek their feedback on Mr. Eyford's recommendations. At the end of the process, we hope to have an improved comprehensive claim policy that will ensure collaboration between parties and enhance the B.C. treaty process.

This is the Canadian way, to address these matters not unilaterally, but through a process of respectful partnership, consultation and negotiation, a process that supports reconciliation and one that leads

to shared solutions that work for aboriginal and non-aboriginal Canadians alike.

We believe that much of the work our government has done with first nations is actually compatible with the spirit of UNDRIP. However, our government has also been very clear. We continue to have serious concerns regarding certain clauses of the declaration that go well beyond Canadian laws. Canada has a constitutionally entrenched framework in place that ensures the recognition with, and when appropriate, accommodation of potential or established aboriginal and treaty rights with respect to crown activity.

This is important for good governance, sound policy development and decision-making. This framework balances the interests of aboriginal and non-aboriginal Canadians and has served as a model for nations around the world.

However well-intended the bill may be, it is the view of this government that supporting Bill C-641 would run the risk of hindering our ability to balance these interests and realize solutions that work for all Canadians.

For these reasons, I urge the House to join me in voting against it.

● (1110)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as has been indicated by the Liberal Party critic, we wholeheartedly support Bill C-641 moving forward. I think the vast majority of Canadians understand why it is important for us to deal with the issue of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. This is something that I believe crosses the different party lines. In listening to debates on issues of this nature, at times they can become quite partisan. I want to reflect upon a couple of aspects, maybe something different from what the Liberal Party critic commented on, just to personalize it.

We heard from the last speaker about the importance of consultation and working with first nations leaders, leaders of our aboriginal communities, and so forth. Over the last number of years, different pieces of legislation have been brought forward and ultimately passed, through time allocation, with very little real consultation taking place. There has been an exclusion of individuals who could be providing fantastic leadership on the issues which the House has to deal with in one form or another, but they have been excluded from the process in particular in the development of the legislation.

Working hand in hand and enabling the first nations leadership to develop good national legislation to empower different communities in all regions of the country is something that has been lost in good part because of the government's attitude toward working with the first nations.

I like to refer to what Paul Martin, a former prime minister, was able to achieve in a relatively short time span. I am referring specifically to the Kelowna accord. I look at the Kelowna accord as a model that could be achieved if government was prepared to focus its attention on dealing with the issue which I believe many Canadians want us to deal with.

Private Members' Business

The Kelowna accord was worked on for literally hundreds, if not thousands, of hours, at all different levels. It incorporated discussions between the federal government and first nations chiefs and councils, directly and indirectly. It incorporated provincial jurisdictions and territorial jurisdictions. There was a phenomenal amount of feedback. Ultimately, this led to an agreement which was signed off on. I believe there was a general consensus that that was the way in which we needed to operate.

It is with great pride that I look at Paul Martin not only as the prime minister who ultimately ensured that we had a Kelowna accord, but as someone who, even since being prime minister, has made a sincere and genuine effort to maintain many of the contacts and to continue to encourage co-operation in trying to improve and work with and support those who are trying to improve the conditions and the lifestyle of many of the first nations in all regions of Canada.

We look at the types of things and issues that are out there. We often hear about land claims and issues of that nature, but the issues that I believe do need to get more attention are issues specifically dealing with such things as housing, the quality of education, and employment opportunities.

● (1115)

From my perspective, those are some of the critical issues that we have to work with. We have to ensure and follow leadership from the first nations, and empower that leadership so we can move further on those important files.

I have had the good fortune of working with some fantastic individuals in the past, one being Elijah Harper. Elijah Harper, from the province of Manitoba, has been an inspiration to many, including first nations and Canadians as a whole. The late Mr. Harper and I had the opportunity to meet in 1988. We were able to work through and have discussions on the Meech Lake accord, in 1990, and we would visit in the lobby while I was a Liberal member of Parliament. Unfortunately, due to his untimely passing, I am no longer able to consult or work with Mr. Harper. However, I believe he left a lasting impression among first nations in particular, as he did with me. Many will look at the leadership he was able to provide, especially during the late 1980s and 1990s and the turn of the century.

Phil Fontaine is someone who has been absolutely critical in terms of his commitment in providing knowledge on important files. It is important for politicians to have an appreciation of that knowledge. This includes the issue of residential schools and where we should be going from here. I know first-hand how influential Mr. Fontaine was, whether within the Liberal Party or with political leaders of all stripes. I believe people had a decent understanding of issues after meeting with someone like Phil Fontaine.

I cite those names in particular because I believe there are many like Elijah Harper, Phil Fontaine, and Paul Martin out there who have a burning desire to make a difference. Given the opportunity and the platform to do so, I believe we would have an impact on issues such as improving employment opportunities and the quality of education and housing. These are very important issues. It behooves all of us to get a better understanding of them in order to enable our communities to provide the leadership necessary to tackle the many problems and issues that need to be resolved.

This is something that I myself am committed to. I look to the Prime Minister as an example. On many occasions, I have had the opportunity to raise the issue of murdered and missing aboriginal first nations women and girls and the call for a public inquiry. The public inquiry is something that my leader and the Liberal Party are committed to. We believe that this not only has to be done, but that the broader community would benefit by having it conducted.

There is so much that can be done. At the end of the day, I would like to see an enabling of first nations and aboriginal leadership from within, to make decisions and assist and educate the rest of us.

● (1120)

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, as always, it is a great honour to rise in the House representing the people of the Timmins—James Bay region. I am very proud to speak on the excellent work of my colleague from Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou on Bill C-641, an act that will ensure that the laws of Canada are in harmony with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

As I rise to speak today, 1,900 people from one of the communities that I represent, Kashechewan, are being put in evacuation centres across the province. Ten years ago I sat at the table with the federal government, senior representatives and all the key bureaucracies, and witnessed the signing of an agreement, a promise to move that community. When it came time for the chief to sign the piece of paper, we read the agreement, and none of the verbal promises that had been made were in writing. We were told that we could trust the honour of the Crown.

It shows the incredible power disconnect between the federal government, with all of its resources, and an impoverished community that had to trust the goodwill of the Crown. Well, we saw the goodwill and honour of the Crown. It ripped up the agreement. Ten years later, seven or eight evacuations later, the trauma continues in Kashechewan.

That is why we need to deal with this issue in the House of Commons. We are talking about the primary relationship on which this country is built, the primary relationship between the people who came here to settle and the indigenous people who lived here. In many areas, that was put in signed treaties. It was the agreement that told James Bay and Fort Albany, in 1905, that the agreement would last as long as the rivers run and the grass grows. The rivers are certainly running on the Albany River right now. However, the federal government has refused to recognize its obligations.

There is an unbroken line of abuse from those times until today, through successive Liberal and Conservative governments. It is to the point where bills are brought forward on which the justice department routinely does not bother to check if they are consistent with the basic treaty rights guaranteed under the Constitution. The response from the federal government, if it is challenged on this by any first nation community, is that it will take it to court. It has endless pockets and it knows that the communities that are standing up to this do not.

Private Members' Business

It is very interesting. In 2012-13, the legal costs in the Department of Indian Affairs were \$106 million, while the government spent only \$66 million for legal costs at Revenue Canada and \$37 million for legal costs at the RCMP. Are we to understand that it spent double, maybe triple, the cost fighting indigenous rights than it did going after international tax fraud and criminals? That appears to be the issue.

It is not just issues of legal rights in terms of the obligation to consult. We see that every single time the government has gone to court, it has lost. There is an unbeaten string of victories recognizing the obligation to consult, the duty to consult, the need to recognize the constitutional land rights of first nation indigenous people in this country. Therefore, why do we have a Parliament that continues to pretend that those rights do not exist?

I want to talk a bit about how some of these legal rights are being undermined, not so much about the treaties and land rights, but the rights of children. Canada is one of the 193 signatories to the rights of the child convention. It is the most ratified human rights treaty in the world and provides obligations for each signatory state to guarantee the rights of children. Article 4 of the convention requires that signatories take "all appropriate legislative, administrative, and other measures" for the realization of the rights of children. This is something that the justice department under the current government is very proud of. It is certainly willing to lecture other nations that sign this agreement.

The justice department website I was reading said the following:

Children...deserve special protection because of their particular vulnerability. This is the modern concept of the child on which the Convention on the Rights of the Child...is based.

....the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration in all actions concerning children.

In fact, the justice department says that signatories to this agreement cannot claim that domestic law supersedes the obligations of this international treaty.

● (1125)

It is very interesting that the government would take this position when it is talking about every other country in the world. However, when it comes to indigenous children in Canada, it has a bit of a different position.

I have a letter that was sent from civil litigation and advisory services of the Department of Justice to the Human Rights Tribunal that is dealing with the Conservative government's systematic discrimination against indigenous children. It talks particularly about the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The letter says:

The declaration is not a legally binding instrument. It was adopted by a non-legally binding resolution of the United Nations General Assembly. As a result of the status, it does not impose any international or domestic legal obligations upon Canada.

Therefore, the government will stand up and tell other countries that they have to protect the rights of children, but when it comes to protecting the rights of indigenous children in this country, the government will fight in court, spy on Cindy Blackstock, spend millions of dollars, and do whatever it takes to deny children their most basic rights.

What rights are we talking about? I will talk about the House of Commons standing in this House— and I was there on December 7, 2007—on the rights in Jordan's principle because the current federal government continually refuses to pay for basic medical care for children who are in care. The government will put them into foster care in the provincial system, but it will not pay for the most basic support.

In 2011, Maurina Beadle of Pictou Landing First Nation, in Nova Scotia, went to court to try to force the current government to get home care for her badly disabled son, 16-year-old Jeremy Beadle. Jeremy suffers from cerebral palsy, hydrocephalus, and autism. He only responds to feeding from his mother, and he can become physically abusive when other adults try to intervene. Jeremy's mother is the only person he responds to; otherwise, he could die. However, she has had to fight the government in federal court for years. In fact, the Pictou Landing First Nation's budget was going broke because it was trying to support this woman and her child at home.

The government lost the case. The courts noted that the current federal government stood up for Jordan's principle, yet had the nerve to go to court to fight its implementation. The Beadle family and Pictou Landing First Nation won, but the Conservative government appealed. Not only did it appeal, but it wanted the court costs of the federal government paid for by the family for having the nerve to stand up to it.

When that information got out, the government was forced to beat a hasty retreat because of the shame, people realizing that the government would go to this extent, go after a child who has the most basic need for support, and a mother who asking for what any mother in any community in this country would take for granted: the right to be able to look after her child in dignity.

We are talking about a fundamental breach that has existed. The current government has been militant in ensuring that this breach continues, which is the refusal to recognize the basic rights of indigenous people in this country.

My colleague has done great work on this at the United Nations level, but it is also about recommitting ourselves to the relationship that goes back to the royal proclamation that people could live in peace in this country. If members read the book *Champlain's Dream*, they would find it is a beautiful book about Champlain leaving France because he was tired of the violence and civil wars. He thought perhaps in Canada that there may be a different way to build a nation. We have to restore that fundamental relationship, because it is the relationship and it will continue regardless.

For my colleagues in the Conservative Party who believe that they can continue to treat the people on reserve as some kind of hostage population who stand in the way of access to resources, they are making a fundamental mistake. We will never be the nation we were meant to be until we restore that relationship.

We have to stop wasting enormous dollars fighting the rights of people in court. We have to respect those rights. Those are the rights on which our nation is founded.

Private Members' Business

• (1130)

Mr. Blake Richards (Wild Rose, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am thankful for this chance to speak today to Bill C-641. The bill provides us with an opportunity to reassure the House of our government's sincere desire to work co-operatively with willing partners to improve the well-being of aboriginal peoples across Canada. Our government's actions on this front demonstrate an impressive record of achievement.

In 2010, we endorsed the underlying principles of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People. However, it is important to remember that under this government Canada has been working to advance these rights and improve the quality of life on reserve since we were elected. As we endorsed the declaration, we made sure to issue a statement of clarification, because beyond the principles that guide the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People, there is a far more serious concern regarding Bill C-641.

Fundamentally, certain provisions of the declaration are incompatible with existing Canadian law or our Canadian context. Certain sections of the declaration, depending on how they are interpreted, go beyond our country's laws. Therefore, while we endorse its guiding principles, Canada interprets these principles in a manner that is consistent with Canada's Constitution, legal framework and cultural realities. Our government's position on this issue is well-known and has not changed since our endorsement of the principles of the declaration in 2010.

More integral to today's discussion is the fact that the work we are carrying out in partnership with aboriginals is already achieving the intent of the declaration. There are numerous examples of our government's investments and initiatives to improve the quality of life and standard of living of aboriginal peoples in Canada. We have taken steps to ensure people have reliable access to safe drinking water with the passage of the Safe Drinking Water for First Nations Act. Our government is currently working with first nations to develop enforceable federal regulations, which will ensure residents on reserve have health and safety protections for drinking water that is the same as those enjoyed by other Canadians. We are matching this legislative step with the funding and the investments required to implement it. Since our government was elected, we have completed roughly 200 major water and waste water projects or upgrades in first nation communities across Canada.

In addition, our government's aboriginal entrepreneurship program and the procurement strategy for aboriginal business have proven to be effective and successful tools in helping aboriginal people participate in Canada's economy through entrepreneurial and business pursuits. Through the establishment and capitalization of the Aboriginal Financial Institutions network in the mid-1980s, over \$2 billion has been loaned to aboriginal businesses. Since the launch of the procurement strategy for aboriginal business, contracts awarded to aboriginal businesses pursuant to the strategy have surpassed \$1 billion. Over the last 5 years, Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada has also helped aboriginal women to develop their business capacity development through 21 projects totalling just under \$3 million.

Just as vital, we are working in partnership with first nation communities and organizations, developing a range of initiatives to help young people lead more independent and self-sufficient lives by providing them with the skills and training they need to find and hold meaningful, sustainable employment. These initiatives include the income assistance reform. This will couple financial assistance to eligible on-reserve individuals, including pre-employment supports. These supports include life skills training, education upgrades, career counselling, apprenticeships, as well as wage subsidies aimed at encouraging employers to hire.

Our government understands that the best way to improve the quality of life on reserve is to give first nations people the tools they need to secure meaningful employment and fully participate in Canada's economy. Through this program, eligible first nation youth aged 18-24, through case management, develop individual action plans aimed at addressing existing barriers to employment. Youth can access a range of services and programs aimed at overcoming barriers to employment, increasing employability and providing support to transition into the workforce. Once job ready, first nations youth are referred to training programs that provide job coaching, skills assessments, personalized training and other activities geared to enable young men and women on reserve acquire good jobs and begin fulfilling careers.

Our government knows that a large portion of aboriginals in Canada live not on reserves but in urban centres.

• (1135)

To that end, on February 6, 2014, we announced the improved urban aboriginal strategy, investing \$53 million in 2014-15 and in 2015-16 toward increased participation of urban aboriginal people in the economy. The improved strategy will support Canada's growing urban aboriginal population by ensuring that urban aboriginal people are provided with the training and skills they need to participate in the economy. This new, streamlined approach will result in savings by reducing the cost of administering and delivering the programs, resulting in more funding being available for aboriginal organizations, projects, initiatives and programs.

Over and above these measures, our government has strengthened legislation to strengthen economic development on first nations land. For example, the First Nations Commercial and Industrial Development Act enables communities to register reserve lands to make the most of their real estate. Meanwhile, the First Nations Fiscal Management Act empowers first nations to build stronger business environments to attract investment. These collective efforts and investments are focused on outcomes and results.

Private Members' Business

Economic development, access to training and supports, and urban investments are focused on the shared goal of achieving stable incomes. Stable incomes help to create stable families and, in turn, a better future.

Community infrastructure is an important element that allows individuals to be able to realize their potential. This is why our government has been investing in community infrastructure on reserve. For example, in November, 2014, the Prime Minister announced \$5.6 billion in infrastructure funding across Canada. This included confirming the \$500 million announced as part of budget 2014 for on-reserve schools. This investment builds upon the \$1.9 billion invested between 2006 and 2014 to improve first nations school infrastructure.

Since being elected, our government has also provided \$2.3 billion in on-reserve housing to first nations. Collectively, this funding contributed to the construction of almost 12,000 new units and approximately 22,000 renovations. These numbers translate into a higher quality of life for first nations people.

Especially promising is that we are working with aboriginal organizations, other governments, and industry engaged in the natural resources sector to identify the best ways to involve aboriginal communities in development projects. Over the next 10 years, more than \$650 billion in new investments is planned for hundreds of major resource projects. Many of them are located within or close to aboriginal communities. Some 32,000 aboriginal people already work in energy, mining, and forestry jobs throughout Canada. With 400,000 aboriginal youth about to enter the labour force within the next decade, there will be unprecedented opportunities for aboriginal employment in the resource sector.

Speaking also to advancing economic development, our government is negotiating modern treaties and settling specific claims. Apart from creating certainty for investors, these settlements provide aboriginal communities with the lands, resources and authorities they need to determine their own destiny.

Taken together, these numerous and diverse actions hold the key to building a brighter future for aboriginal peoples in Canada.

Thus, while Bill C-641 is perhaps well intended, it is simply not necessary. Our government is already working with willing partners to improve the quality of life and prosperity of our aboriginal people in Canada, not because of the declaration but because of our government's commitment to the well-being of all Canadians. For this reason, I cannot support the proposed legislation.

• (1140)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Christine Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise to speak to the bill introduced by my colleague from Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou, because not only do I share his opinion regarding the bill, but we are also lucky enough to share a territory in the Abitibi area of his riding, namely Algonquin territory in Quebec.

Earlier we heard from my colleague from Timmins—James Bay, with whom I also share an Algonquin territorial borders. I am so glad that the two members with whom I share territorial borders have both had a chance to speak here today.

Before I speak directly to the bill, I would like to paint a picture of the aboriginal people of my riding. I feel it is important to do so because for the people of Abitibi—Témiscamingue, their relationships with the aboriginal communities of this area are very important. The principle of partnerships should be applied in all of our relationships with aboriginal communities.

In the administrative region of Abitibi—Témiscamingue, as opposed to the federal electoral district, there are seven aboriginal communities. There is the Abitibiwinni First Nation of Pikogan, which is in my riding, in the area near Amos. There is also the Timiskaming First Nation, the Wolfe Lake First Nation, the Eagle Village First Nation and the Long Point First Nation. All of those communities are located in the Témiscamingue area and in the territory of my colleague from Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou. The Abitibi area has two aboriginal communities: the Kitchisakik First Nation and the Lac Simon First Nation.

These communities are unusual in that they are often very young compared to the general population of Abitibi—Témiscamingue. Unfortunately, the level of education is often lower too. People struggle with various health and social problems that still need a lot of work. Communities are becoming increasingly aware of these problems. Often solutions come from within the communities themselves.

One of the most important features that characterizes the Algonquin communities of Abitibi—Témiscamingue is demographic growth. From 2009 to 2013, their demographic growth was 13.6%, compared to 1.5% in the general population. The population in some sectors, such as the RCM of Témiscamingue, would be shrinking if not for those aboriginal communities. However, because of the high birth rate in those communities, these RCMs are maintaining stable populations.

I would also like to remind everyone that, unfortunately, over 20% of the aboriginal people in Abitibi—Témiscamingue live below the poverty line. That is shameful, particularly considering the economic boom that the Abitibi—Témiscamingue region has experienced in recent years.

That should give everyone a sense of the communities that I represent. It is also interesting to note that “Abitibi” is an Algonquin word. Every time people say “Abitibi—Témiscamingue”, they are practising their Algonquin.

Ensuring that our federal bills respect the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples means, first and foremost, that we will be able to take action to enable first nations to become independent and emancipated. If we want to build a long-term and respectful relationship with first nations, the first thing we need to do is make sure we are relating as equals. I think we have some historical challenges to overcome after so many absolutely disastrous state interventions such as aboriginal residential schools. Many of the people I represent lived through that.

Private Members' Business

•(1145)

In the face of such examples, if we want to establish a real relationship with these communities and encourage their development, then we must respect their rights. That way they can become independent because they are not subjected to government decisions. They become involved in the decision-making. That is how to establish a relationship of equality.

Unfortunately, we have seen a lack of political will on the part of the Conservative government and the Prime Minister since they came to power. Just look at how the government turns a deaf ear to the issue of missing and murdered aboriginal women.

The problems in the communities can be resolved by taking the time to have an open discussion with them instead of focusing on meeting a deadline. Asking the first nations to help us find and develop solutions is the way to establish egalitarian and autonomous relationships and allow these communities to become independent.

These relationships will be established in harmony with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. It is extremely important to understand all this in order to understand the importance of this bill.

It is also important to note that this declaration was issued even before the current Conservative government took office. It is therefore high time to act. This Parliament is coming to an end and the government still has not done anything, when it could have done something a long time ago.

A great gift we could give Canadians for the 150th anniversary of Confederation would be to decide that from now on, we will maintain egalitarian relationships with aboriginal communities. That would be a very good goal, and we have time before the 150th anniversary of Confederation to build the egalitarian framework on which our future relationships would be based. This is a wonderful opportunity to show our willingness to learn from our mistakes in order to build a promising future for our aboriginal communities.

Another key element of this declaration is the nation-to-nation relationship. As it now stands, many aboriginal communities have never ceded their rights to their traditional lands. The Conservative government is not respecting the nation-to-nation relationship when it imposes laws without respecting the rights of aboriginal peoples and without consulting them. If we want to build the nation-to-nation relationship, we need to sit down with aboriginal governments and the organizations that represent aboriginal communities and build an egalitarian relationship.

Instead, the Conservative government spends its time challenging court decisions, often ones that are good for aboriginal people. We cannot build an egalitarian nation-to-nation relationship by behaving like that. We need to be prepared to show some humility and say that we can build a Canada that people will be proud of and happy to share.

•(1150)

By including aboriginal communities, we can also build a Canada where there will be sustainable development for everyone, with all the nations. In that way, aboriginal communities, other Canadians

and new immigrants will be proud of the country that we build together.

[*English*]

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to begin by acknowledging the very good work of the member for Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou and how important it has been for the House to consider Bill C-641.

I have been around for a number of years now. When many countries throughout the world endorsed the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Canada was a laggard. It was only through sustained public pressure and perhaps some international shaming that Canada finally came on board and agreed to endorse the declaration.

I want to put this a little bit in context. In the actual declaration itself there is a statement from the Chair of the UN Permanent Forum at the General Assembly on the occasion of the adoption, September 13, 2007. In this statement, the Chair said:

This Declaration has the distinction of being the only Declaration in the UN which was drafted with the rights-holders, themselves, the Indigenous Peoples. We see this as a strong Declaration which embodies the most important rights we and our ancestors have long fought for; our right of self-determination, our right to own and control our lands, territories and resources, our right to free, prior and informed consent, among others.

Further on in the statement, the Chair went on to say:

Effective implementation of the Declaration will be the test of commitment of States and the whole international community to protect, respect and fulfill indigenous peoples collective and individual human rights.

That is the important statement in this opening of the UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. I would argue quite strongly that the Conservative government has absolutely failed in terms of any efforts to work toward implementation when it initially endorsed what it promised was to take next steps, and we have seen virtually no activity.

I was not surprised, unfortunately, to hear the member for Wild Rose talk about the Conservative government issuing a clarification statement after it agreed to support the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. In their clarification statement, the Conservatives continue to claim, despite substantial legal analysis to the contrary, that the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples continues to undermine Canadian law and Canadian sovereignty.

I would like to point them to article 46 in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Article 46 says:

Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, people, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act contrary to the Charter of the United Nations or construed as authorizing or encouraging any action which would dismember or impair totally or in part, the territorial integrity or political unity of sovereign and independent States.

This UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is so important for our country moving forward in the 21st century in a more mature relationship.

Private Members' Business

I would argue that the colonialist and patriarchal approach that successive governments, since Canada's inception and before, have undertaken in terms of relationship with first nations, Inuit and Métis should truly be a thing of the past in the 21st century. Unfortunately what we continue to see, in case after case, is the continued lack of respect for the founding peoples of this country and the way forward in terms of free, prior, informed consent.

There are numerous examples of why this is important, but in my very brief time I want to briefly mention the New Prosperity mine. In an article written by Bill Gallagher, he said, "Native Legal Win # 191".

That highlights the fact that there is court case after court case largely to do with resource development or consultation and accommodation, which continue to reaffirm that first nations in this country do have the right to free, prior and informed consent, and do have to be included when decisions are made. In the New Prosperity mines, it was just one more example of how, if governments and business would come together and recognize that first nations have the right to determine what happens on their territories, then we would not have millions of dollars tied up in court cases where we continue to see industry not moving forward.

When we are speaking to leadership with first nations, Inuit and Métis, we find that the leaders and communities continue to say, "We are not opposed to development. We want to see our communities prosper. We want to see jobs created, but you need to include us."

• (1155)

In the most recent Tsilhqot'in decision, it is not just about consultation and accommodation, it is actual consent.

A number of others have talked about some of the ongoing problems, and I want to talk briefly about Jordan's principle, and the latest Auditor General report 2015: access to health services for remote first nations communities. Jordan's principle was unanimously passed in this House many years ago. In 2015, we continue to have a complete and utter failure in terms of providing health care services to first nations communities, and rural, remote communities and many other communities.

It is just one more example of how we are failing to respect those very important relationships. I would encourage every member in this House to support Bill C-641.

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): I now invite the hon. member for Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou for his right of reply. The hon. member has five minutes.

[*English*]

Mr. Romeo Saganash (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou, NDP): Mr. Speaker, *meegwetch*. Today I am proud to rise again to defend Bill C-641, an act to ensure that the laws of Canada respect the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. I would first like to thank the other opposition parties for their express support of this bill.

As a jurist, I have deep respect for integrity and the rule of law. Last month, I spoke here about the legal reasons why the Canadian

government must pass this bill. However, the federal government once again demonstrated its contempt for the rule of law.

We have long passed the time in history when it was thought acceptable for the Canadian government to make paternalistic decisions on behalf of indigenous peoples. Multiple international and national legal decisions reflect the shift society is making back towards the original spirit, intent and letter of the first treaties between our nations.

It is time for this Chamber to move forward honourably by respecting the Constitution and its promises.

In his response to my bill, the parliamentary secretary followed the well-established pattern used by federal government spokespersons when they address the rights of indigenous peoples. His speaking notes were filled with inaccuracies, showed a misunderstanding of the law and highlighted the government's ignorance of the will of indigenous peoples and, may I add, of all Canadians.

On April 13, a detailed legal response to the parliamentary secretary's comments was published by a coalition of organizations. It is a long list, and I will spare the House. However, I would like to take this opportunity to raise some of their points in the defence of my bill.

Contrary to the member's understanding, implementation of the declaration is a political, moral and, yes, legal imperative, without qualification. This was confirmed by a former special rapporteur, James Anaya. Since 2006, the Government of Canada has not fundamentally changed its adverse strategies and positions in relation to indigenous peoples' rights. Consistent with its international and constitutional obligations, the government has a crucial opportunity here to embark together with indigenous peoples on a collaborative and principled process supporting and adopting Bill C-641.

Yet, and this is troubling, the Canadian government applies a different and lesser standard to democracy, human rights, security and the rule of law when addressing the rights of indigenous peoples. That is shameful. This double standard is highly discriminatory.

In opposing Bill C-641, the federal government claims it is upholding core values and principles, and defending Canada's Constitution in the interests of all Canadians. It also insists that it is devoted to safeguarding aboriginal rights. Such claims do not withstand careful scrutiny.

In reality, the government willfully ignores the rule of law. This includes crucial rulings of the Supreme Court of Canada, which affirms indigenous peoples' right to give or withhold consent.

The government appears to view the declaration as a threat to the government's ongoing colonial domination. However, as underlined by a former special rapporteur on the rights indigenous peoples, "... no country has ever been diminished by supporting an international human rights instrument."

Government Orders

I am happy to say that my Bill C-641, if fairly implemented in close collaboration with indigenous peoples, could mark a new beginning. Canada could be tremendously strengthened for the benefit of all.

Again, as a country, we need to be consistent. We need to be consistent in our application of such principles and values as democracy, human rights, the rule of law and security. We cannot insist on upholding these principles in the face of terrorism while not doing so in the face of fundamental rights of indigenous people. There is a name for that, discrimination, and that is prohibited under international law and prohibited under our Constitution.

I urge all members of this House to support Bill C-641.

• (1200)

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): It being 12:03 p.m., the time provided for debate has expired. Accordingly the question is on the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): In my opinion the nays have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Pursuant to Standing Order 93, the recorded division stands deferred until Wednesday, May 6, immediately before the time provided for private members' business.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*Translation*]

ANTI-TERRORISM ACT, 2015

The House resumed from April 24 consideration of Bill C-51, An Act to enact the Security of Canada Information Sharing Act and the Secure Air Travel Act, to amend the Criminal Code, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service Act and the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act and to make related and consequential amendments to other Acts, as reported (with amendment) from the committee, and of the motions in Group No. 1.

Mr. François Lapointe (Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I could have spoken for 20 or even 30 minutes on this bill. It is always a great honour to be able

to address the House; however, I cannot say that I am pleased about the subject we are addressing here today, Bill C-51.

The bill has a very long title because, basically, it is an omnibus bill related to security issues that affect all Canadians. Of course, I am referring to An Act to enact the Security of Canada Information Sharing Act and the Secure Air Travel Act, to amend the Criminal Code, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service Act and the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act and to make related and consequential amendments to other Acts.

The government in power is going to ram this very cumbersome piece of legislation down our throats this week, even though the bill is being criticized to a virtually unprecedented extent in the history of committees, as we will see later.

Bill C-51 would considerably expand the mandate of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service. That is what people at home need to understand, aside from the fact that this bill has a ridiculously long title and that it is an omnibus bill. We are once again faced with the same problem with this government. A majority of Canadians, and even a majority of representatives from the official opposition, could support the main objective of the bill, which is to improve protections for Canadians, especially in light of some recent, troubling events associated with the threat from the Islamic State. In principle, we can understand the desire to do better.

Once again, the problem is in how the government is going about it. Once again, the government has introduced an excessively large bill, manipulated the debate, moved time allocation and presented positions that are completely out of touch with what Canada's leading experts are saying. The official opposition will therefore present 64 amendments to try to give a voice to the overwhelming number of experts who are systematically demanding that Bill C-51 either be withdrawn altogether or be significantly amended.

I am skeptical though. I doubt that the government will even look at our amendments. Unfortunately, there is no mistaking its intention to steamroll the bill through this week. Even so, I will try to bring forward some of the arguments these experts have made in the hope that the government in power will set aside its overly strong tendency to show contempt for the work of Parliament. In making an effort to present these legitimate arguments, I hope that someone on the other side will adjust even slightly his or her position on a bill that so many say is bad.

I would like to highlight the attempts that my NDP colleagues on the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security have been making in recent weeks to do what I am trying to do today. I particularly want to draw attention to the work of my colleague from Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca. We are now at third reading, and we will soon run out of ways to try to prevent Bill C-51 from being passed. Nevertheless, my colleague from Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca has been proposing amendments ever since second reading. He made a number of very good points that, unfortunately, still apply after the committee's study.

Government Orders

Bill C-51 threatens our way of life by asking Canadians to choose between their security and their freedoms. There is something my friend, the leader of the NDP, often says. He points out, and rightly so, that in the French version of Canada's national anthem, it says that we must "protect our homes and our rights". They are given the same priority. Even our national anthem notes the importance of applying our collective intelligence to ensure that we protect these two aspects of our lives. The remarks from across the way are veering more and more off track, suggesting that in order to protect our homes, some of our rights, including our right to privacy, may have to be negotiated or diminished. Let us not forget the wisdom of our national anthem, which emphasizes that the government has a duty to balance these two aspects and must never promote one at the expense of the other.

•(1205)

Another point that was made at second reading, is that Bill C-51 irresponsibly provides the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, CSIS, with a sweeping new mandate without equally increasing oversight. Later we will see how dire this problem really is. The bill also contains definitions that are broad and vague and that threaten to lump together legitimate dissent with terrorism. This point comes up all the time. The bill gives CSIS tremendous powers. If the net is cast that wide, are we really responding to an imminent problem of a potential terrorist threat or are we facilitating abuses that could violate Canadians' rights? The answer to that question is quite worrisome.

The Liberals voted against these amendments—and that is typically the Liberal way—despite the fact that former Liberal prime ministers wrote a letter stating that they strongly disagree with Bill C-51. From the beginning, the current Liberal leader painted himself into a corner by saying that he would vote for the bill, probably for a very sad reason. In fact, the first poll showed that 80% of Canadians were in favour of the bill. Support for the bill has subsequently collapsed and now 60% of Canadians do not support Bill C-51. However, the Liberal leader painted himself into a corner and unfortunately will vote for the bill.

There are some worrisome observations in the amendments presented by my colleague, and they are now shared by more than 60% or 70% of Canadians. I have never seen that. This is one of those rare bills that people know by name. In federal politics, it is very rare for people to ask me to assure them that I will vote against Bill C-51. It is obvious just how much Canadians are interested in and concerned about this bill, given that they are calling it by its official name.

In our opinion, not enough leading experts on privacy and personal information were invited to appear before the standing committee. However, most of the witnesses who did appear said that this bill should be struck down or heavily amended.

The debate on Bill C-51 is so important that I want to highlight some of what the witnesses said because this is an issue that goes beyond party lines. We need to have an opportunity to raise awareness of the fact that Bill C-51 should not be passed, particularly as it now stands. I will begin by quoting Daniel Therrien, the Privacy Commissioner. He said:

...the proposed changes to information sharing authorities are not accompanied by measures to fill gaps in the national security oversight regime.

That is what he said and he is very knowledgeable about the subject. The truth of his statement is obvious given that, in the 2012 budget, the Conservatives eliminated the position of inspector general of CSIS, who was responsible for internal oversight by ensuring that all of CSIS's activities complied with the law.

When an organization is granted vast surveillance powers, we always have to ask ourselves who watches the watchers, when their powers could, for example, threaten a person's right to privacy. Who watches them? Experts agree that the minister's and the government's answers are completely inadequate.

The Minister of Public Safety rejected the need for additional oversight of CSIS, calling it needless red tape. I fell off my chair. It is unbelievable that the minister would consider the need for proper oversight of those who have surveillance powers to be red tape. I am prepared to work 60 hours a week to ensure that business owners do not lose too much time to red tape. However, referring to the need to watch the watchers as red tape floored me. That is unacceptable.

Here is one last quote from the commissioner:

This Act would...allow departments and agencies to share the personal information of all individuals, including ordinary Canadians who may not be suspected of terrorist activities.

This is what the NDP and my colleague fear. Those were the words of the Privacy Commissioner. Canada's top privacy official concluded that there were some serious concerns with Bill C-51.

•(1210)

To conclude, in the debate on Bill C-51, we were faced with a string of time allocation motions and we had a limited number of witnesses in committee, despite the fact that almost all the experts demanded that Bill C-51 be withdrawn or significantly amended. I fear that this is not what will happen this week.

Bill C-51 will be rammed through the House and will be a threat to Canadians' privacy.

[English]

Ms. Roxanne James (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC): Mr. Speaker, a wide array of information has been pushed out by the NDP, whether it be intentionally or through a complete lack of understanding of the bill. Even in committee, when we were going through clause by clause, the critic for the NDP actually felt that the information sharing act, not the CSIS Act, would determine the subject of CSIS's activity. The officials who were on hand at that committee had to correct him, on the record, and tell him he was wrong.

The fact that the NDP still is pushing out information that is inaccurate is very harmful to this country with respect to national security and the protection of Canadians.

Government Orders

I will just ask the member a very brief question. Is that member intentionally pushing out information that is inaccurate, or is it because he has a complete lack of understanding of the bill?

•(1215)

[*Translation*]

Mr. François Lapointe: Mr. Speaker, when more than 80% or 90% of the competent individuals and experts associated with matters relating to protection of privacy and personal information strongly criticize the bill, the government has to start reconsidering how it sees things.

It is not people like the NDP members who are spreading false information. There is a huge amount of information from competent individuals about how Bill C-51 is troubling and inadequate and should be amended or withdrawn.

I wish I had the exact number from my colleague's last count, which was about 14 of the first 15 witnesses. They stated that Bill C-51 should not be passed as is and asked the government not to pass it.

The last ones on the list—who could in no way be described as far left—were part of an association of entrepreneurs in emerging technology and said that Bill C-51 as currently written is completely unacceptable. That is factual information.

Will I repeat that so all Canadians hear it? Yes, I will keep saying it until the election and make sure that we take power and overturn these decisions that are literally a threat to the privacy of Canadians and small and medium-sized businesses working in emerging technology.

[*English*]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I believe that the NDP is confused on this issue. The member just finished saying that if it forms government, the NDP is going to dismiss it, implying that it is going to get rid of it.

Let me tell him what his leader says about the bill. Tom Clark, on Global TV, asked, “If you become the government, would you scrap this piece of legislation?” That is what he asked the leader of the New Democratic Party. His response was, “We would change it for sure”.

That does not mean they are going to scrap it. In fact, members of this House have stated that when they form government, they are going to change it.

I believe that the NDP is in a very awkward position. It recognizes that this legislation would build on powers of preventive arrest and that it would make better use of the no-fly list.

There is no doubt that there is a need for serious amendments, and in about 15 minutes, I am going to talk about that. However, my question is this: Who is right here, the member of who just made his statement or the leader of his party?

[*Translation*]

Mr. François Lapointe: Mr. Speaker, one expression that I have never used in the House is “a desperate attempt”. This looks very much like a desperate attempt.

The Liberals now totally disagree with former Liberal prime ministers. They realized in committee that this bill cannot be supported by basically anyone who has expertise in this field.

For the benefit of those at home, there is no question that we will change a law and that my friend the Leader of the Opposition will continue to say that we will change a law, because that is how Parliament operates. You have to take the existing law and turn it into something completely different, even if we want to transform it altogether.

There is no inconsistency in the NDP's position on this issue, not at all. The most—

Mr. Alain Giguère: Pathetic.

Mr. François Lapointe: Yes, Mr. Speaker, pathetic.

The most pathetic inconsistency that we have seen in this House in quite some time is the Liberals' inconsistency. They plan to stand up and vote for Bill C-51 even though the greatest leaders in the history of their own party have said that we should not vote for such a thing.

[*English*]

Mr. Scott Armstrong (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister of Labour, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak today to Bill C-51, the anti-terrorism act, 2015. During my time today I will be addressing the elements of part 4 of the bill. These elements would broaden CSIS's mandate to include the authority to disrupt threats to Canada's national security. In particular, I would like to outline the legal parameters of this new authority as well as the robust accountability framework from which threat disruption measures would be taken by CSIS and how these would be authorized and reviewed.

I want to be clear. The international jihadi movement has declared war on Canada and its allies. Canadians are being targeted by terrorists simply because these terrorists hate our society and the values it represents. That is why our government has put forward these measures to protect Canadians against jihadi terrorists who seek to destroy the very principles that make Canada the best country in the world in which to live.

Throughout its history, CSIS has played a vital role in investigating and advising the government on national security threats, but it has also been limited to those functions of collection and advice, even as it has encountered early opportunities to disrupt threats in the course of these investigations. How frustrating that must be.

Today we must reconsider this narrowly constructed mandate and the tools required to protect Canadians. The threats from terrorism we face today demand that we do this. These threats are also the reason we are investing \$292 million over the next five years in our intelligence and law enforcement agencies, as announced in this year's budget.

In the context of this bill, and specifically of the new mandate for CSIS, we must consider the rigorous framework in which CSIS's threat disruption activities would take place.

Government Orders

CSIS has established a 30-year history as an intelligence service. It is respected globally and is known for its rigorous framework of ministerial accountability, judicial authorization, and independent review. I want to expand on that point.

Canada is unique in that judicial, not executive, authorization is currently required for CSIS to engage in intrusive investigative techniques. That means, for example, that for the past 30 years, before CSIS has tapped a phone, it has been required to seek a warrant from the Federal Court, which is a rigorous and thorough process. The key tenets of the current warrant process are laid out in the CSIS Act. Among other things, the law requires that warrant applications to the Federal Court first be approved by the minister.

All of the activities of CSIS are also subject to ministerial direction, and the minister is kept apprised of CSIS's operations, routinely and through a detailed annual report. These reporting requirements are laid out in both the CSIS Act and through ministerial direction. In addition, as set out by the CSIS Act, all CSIS activities are subject to review by SIRC. This model of judicial authorization review is routinely cited as embodying the best practices in the area of intelligence service governance.

I would like to direct members to the 2010 report of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on good practices in legal and institutional frameworks for intelligence agencies, in which CSIS received positive mention several times. It is in this context, and in today's threat environment, that we introduce this legislation to expand CSIS's mandate.

Pursuant to this bill, CSIS would have the authority to disrupt threats to our national security. This would provide the government with an invaluable and flexible new tool to combat threats to our security and safety, which we know have now increased, both in tempo and in complexity. We saw another tragic attack in the United States today.

Make no mistake, this bill would not give CSIS a blank cheque to do whatever it wishes; far from it, in fact. This legislation, in numerous provisions, would require that all threat disruption measures undertaken by the service be reasonable and proportionate. These measures would not be arbitrary, and they would be narrowly focused on disrupting a particular activity that constituted a threat to the very security of our nation. This threshold is clearly articulated in law.

• (1220)

Ray Boisvert, the former assistant director of CSIS, said:

...the warrant process is the most onerous warrant process of its kind, in my estimation, around the world... The enhancements being proposed will add layers of requirements, giving direction to the judiciary and...those who are composing the warrant... [Seizure] warrants typically go on for hundreds of pages per target, explaining the rationale and making the case to be able to obtain those powers that allowed us...to lawfully intercept some of these communications... I am still encouraged that this will not change. My sense from reading the legislation is that those safeguards are protected and are further enhanced.

I would also like to point out the key differences between CSIS's collection mandate and the proposed disruption mandate of this legislation.

CSIS may investigate activities suspected of constituting threats to the security of Canada, an entirely appropriate threshold for its

investigative mandate. The threshold for engaging any threat diminishment activity, however, would be much higher. For CSIS to disrupt a threat, the bill states that there would have to be reasonable grounds to believe that a given activity constituted a threat to the security of Canada. That is an important distinction between those two roles and those two activities.

Let me be frank. Some have raised the spectre of what are, quite frankly, disturbing scenarios or outcomes due to this legislation. I want to put those concerns to rest here and now.

The legislation would specifically prohibit certain activities. Let me emphasize that this bill would also not make CSIS a law enforcement body. Our Conservative amendments have reinforced this point for greater clarity.

Further, this new threat disruption mandate would be subject to new ministerial direction, managed within a rigorous framework and subject to an independent review by SIRC.

The bill clearly states that when a warrant was required, a judge would determine if a measure was reasonable and proportionate in the circumstances in regard to the nature of a threat, the nature of the measures, and the reasonable availability of other means.

In addition, the judge could include any terms or conditions deemed advisable in the public interest: judicial authority; judicial power. Further, these warrants would be narrowly time bound, with a maximum duration of 120 days, and would only be able to be renewed twice, as they would be time limited.

To provide added assurance about the nature and implementation of the threat disruption measures, this legislation would also impose specific reporting requirements on both CSIS and SIRC. CSIS would be specifically required to report to the minister on the measures it has taken. SIRC would then be required to annually review at least one aspect of the service's performance in taking these measures and to report on the number of warrants issued for these activities.

For added assurance, as members will know our government just announced its intention to double the budget of the Security Intelligence Review Committee, providing an additional \$12.5 million over five years to further strengthen SIRC's capacity to review the activities of CSIS. This is on top of announcing \$300 million that we put in place to combat terrorism here at home. These elements combined, namely our rigorous system of judicial authorization, enhanced independent review by SIRC, and specific statutory prohibitions, are designed to assure Canadians that this mandate would be exercised by CSIS responsibly.

This is a regime Canadians can feel confident is in keeping with their values and is a framework in which the imperatives of national security will always be duly balanced with the rights of an individual.

This legislation would protect Canadians, enhance our national security, and keep in place what we value dearly: our rights and freedoms.

Government Orders

•(1225)

Mr. Craig Scott (Toronto—Danforth, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate some of the effort by my colleague to indicate some of the safeguards in the bill. Nobody is saying that safeguards were not written in, in certain ways. However, this bill lacks adequate oversight and review and equivalent powers for oversight agencies to match the beefed-up powers in this bill for CSIS and other agencies that can now exchange information more broadly than they could before. It does not beef up their powers; it just means that they have more information to use their powers with. That is a huge problem.

I would ask my colleague this. Would he accept that one of the strongest critiques of the sharing of information act is that these new provisions do not come with the corresponding power for review bodies to share information for a more integrated form of review? That is one of the central concerns of the commissioners who have spoken out against the bill.

Mr. Scott Armstrong: Mr. Speaker, in my discussion I talked about the supervision, the authorization and how we had increased the resources for review agencies like SIRC to ensure CSIS followed its mandate appropriately. With every step of the way, there is ministerial and judicial review, and we have an enhanced SIRC to provide enhanced authorization to enhance CSIS.

The nature of the bill is solely to protect Canadians from an international terrorist threat that we have all seen both in Ottawa and in Quebec, but also in the nightly news around the world. This government must protect the citizens of this nation. It is one of the primary things a government is expected to do. Canadians would expect that different departments in this government would share information with the ability to stop a potential threat.

•(1230)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, why did the government not recognize the value of having parliamentary oversight on this issue? It has surprised a great number of Canadians. For example, our Five Eyes partners, New Zealand, England, Australia and the United States, all recognize the importance of parliamentary oversight, yet the Conservative government does not seem to understand or appreciate the importance of parliamentary oversight.

Why has the member's government changed its opinions on parliamentary oversight and is not prepared to incorporate that into the legislation we have today?

Mr. Scott Armstrong: Mr. Speaker, the government has been clear that there is oversight for the bill; it is judicial oversight. Canadians from coast to coast to coast and in my riding would put their trust in the judiciary to oversee CSIS's activities before they would put it in the hands of a bunch of elected politicians. We believe the judicial oversight is in place. It is robust and it will ensure that CSIS operates well within its mandate to ensure that the rights and freedoms of Canadians are protected.

At the same time, we have to give our security agencies the tools they need to keep us safe. That is what we are doing. We have judicial oversight. We believe the mandate of CSIS will have proper oversight both for CSIS and the minister.

Ms. Roxanne James (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am glad parliamentary oversight was brought up and the fact that my colleague spoke about the importance of having judiciary oversight for review of warrants for the activities of CSIS. I cannot imagine for a moment that CSIS would have to come to partisan politicians to determine whether it could carry out an activity. Through this bill, we would give that to a non-partisan body, the courts, the judge, to make those decisions. When Canadians think about that for a moment, they will recognize the importance of that and the reason for it.

I also want to clarify this for the record. When it comes to the information sharing act, that there will be review of that. The Privacy Commissioner as well as the Auditor General have the ability to review any aspects of that as well as internal processes. Therefore, that is certainly not an issue.

Again, this is misinformation being pushed out by the opposition parties. Could my colleague comment on what that really means to national security if we actually start to listen to the opposition?

Mr. Scott Armstrong: Mr. Speaker, it is one thing to have criticism of legislation based on fact. It is another thing to twist the facts to try to put someone in disrepute. This legislation has been put forward by the government in response to an international threat of terrorism. Jihadi terrorists have declared war on our country. They have declared war on our allies. They are encouraging people to take violent action against our military and our police. In response to that, we need to put the measures in place so our security agencies have the powers to deal with this threat.

This effort by the NDP to try to say that somehow we are trying to beef up CSIS so it can spy on the average everyday citizen in our country is totally false. In fact, I believe it is totally irresponsible. The target of this legislation is terrorists. The target is terrorism and the target is to ensure that we keep Canadians safe.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I believe a majority of Canadians were shocked to find out the number of young Canadians being radicalized and leaving Canada to work with ISIL. It is important for our country to recognize that we need to deal with a very real, tangible issue.

We now have before us legislation that attempts to deal with the issue of security and, at the same time, impacts the freedoms of Canadians. The Liberal Party's approach in dealing with this issue has been very straightforward, transparent and, most important, consistent. We are a party of the Charter of Rights. We recognize the importance of individual rights. At the same time, we are very much concerned about the safety of Canadians.

Government Orders

The legislation before us is a step in the right direction. There are things incorporated in the legislation that would make our society safer. However, there are major flaws and shortcomings in it that the government has failed to act upon, which means the legislation will not be as robust as it could have been if the government had been more sensitive to the need to make more amendments to the legislation. Had it chosen to do that, we would have far better legislation.

I will not try to rationalize the NDP's approach to dealing with Bill C-51. It appears to be more political in trying to position itself with the Liberal Party, quite honestly, than it is about the safety of Canadians. However, I will let the New Democrats reconcile their inconsistencies on it. What I am concerned about is the lost opportunity by the government, but it is still not too late. The government can still make a difference.

Let me provide a specific example, which I posed in the form of a question for the previous speaker. Why did the government not choose to bring in parliamentary oversight? It is a legitimate question. It is a concern that Canadians have. It would deal with a lot of the issues that have been raised with regard to Bill C-51. If the bill included parliamentary oversight, it would be better legislation, and the government knows that.

In fact, the member for Mount Royal, when he was the minister a number of years ago, brought in legislation and the Minister of Justice supported the idea of parliamentary oversight. When the Conservatives were in opposition and the Prime Minister was the leader of the official opposition, he supported parliamentary oversight, and for good reason. Canada is not asking to go it alone on the issue of parliamentary oversight. It is not an issue of politicians versus judicial oversight. Canada has very strong allies in fighting terrorism. The United States, Australia, New Zealand and England are all part of the Five Eyes, of which Canada is one. There is a great deal of coordination among those countries, yet Canada is the only one that does not have parliamentary oversight.

A few years ago, today's Minister of Justice argued that we should have parliamentary oversight. Therefore, I do not understand the government's change of attitude. I do not believe it is the answer that the member across the way provided. I do not quite understand it. I would have appreciated a better explanation from the government on its flip-flop on this very important issue. To be honest with Canadians on this issue, the government should bring in parliamentary oversight. It is not too late to do that.

●(1235)

If the Conservatives are a little confused in what mechanism to use or how to put it in place, the leader of the Liberal Party of Canada has provided great detail as to how parliamentary oversight would look and work. I would suggest the government give serious consideration to that. It is not too late.

When we talk about the opportunity to bring in robust legislation, the Conservatives would be doing a disservice by not acting on that amendment. We have argued for it since second reading of the legislation.

Back at second reading, we were fairly clear on the issue. We indicated that we would support the legislation because it would

build on the powers of preventive arrest. It would improve and make better use of the no-fly list. It would allow for more immediate and coordinated information sharing by government departments and agencies. Those are all positive things that would assist us. We should not be fearful of that.

However, I have had concerns. I have had the opportunity in Winnipeg North to meet with many constituents regarding this issue. They are very much aware of these concerns. I have had the opportunity to meet with Cindy Woodhouse and others regarding the issue of how the definition of protests would be deemed and dealt with by our security agencies. We brought forward a series of amendments that would have dealt with some of those concerns.

I have indicated very clearly that if the government fails, and continues to fail, to make those important changes and amendments, the Liberal Party is prepared to make the issue a part of an election platform. In other words, on the big issue of parliamentary oversight, if the Conservatives continue to resist it, as it would appear they will, it will become a part of the Liberal Party's election platform for the following reasons.

First, we recognize that it is very important to have robust laws that will have an impact on the issue of terrorism in our country and abroad. Quite frankly, Canada has a leadership role to play on this issue, but it has failed to meet that leadership role.

Second, where the government has failed to recognize the importance of bringing in some of those amendments to provide those assurances, whether perceived or real, the Liberal Party will make those necessary changes. However, it would be a mistake to prevent the legislation from passing in order to make some of those changes.

We realize we live in a world that has changed. Over the last numbers years, we have seen legislation brought forward to try to deal with the issue of terrorism across the world. The events of 9/11 had a profound impact in a very real way in the minds of Canadians. Their expectation is that good government will provide sound laws that will give Canadians the confidence that it knows what it is doing and that is moving in the right direction.

●(1240)

As I indicated, many Canadians were shocked when they found out the degree to which we have young people who are becoming radicalized. Even that aspect, in part, has some dealings in the legislation.

In closing, I have appreciated the opportunity to share those few words with members.

●(1245)

Mr. Craig Scott (Toronto—Danforth, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask my colleague from Winnipeg North if he could firmly go on the record one way or the other about what the position of the Liberal Party is, considering the general position is in favour of the bill. A huge part of this bill has to do with the pre-authorization by judges of violations of Canadian law or of infringements of the charter, with no limits in the act other than that they could not engage in bodily harm, affect the sexual integrity of a person, or obstruct justice.

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There are all kinds of problems. There would be secret judicial proceedings. CSIS itself would decide whether or not to go to a judge. There would be no oversight after a judge's pre-authorization of interference in the form of disruption. All commentators with a legal background have completely panned this provision as completely incompatible with the role of judges.

As the party of the charter, as the member likes to say, I would like to know whether or not my colleague is in support of this new system.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I for one believe in Canada's institutions, our judicial institutions and our many different law agencies, that are out there. It does not necessarily mean that checks cannot be put in place. I believe that checks need to be in place. Some of those checks range from a simple regulation to our Constitution in the frame of our Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

There is no doubt there are aspects to the legislation we currently have that could have been amended to narrow some of those definitions, maybe even exclude some. The Liberal Party critic had the opportunity extensively through the committee stage to make suggestions on ideas for potential amendments to the legislation, to bringing forward amendments in itself.

I would not argue that this is perfect legislation, but I do believe it is in Canadians' best interests that the legislation pass. However, it needs to be changed and a Liberal government—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Order. Questions and comments, the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, it grieves me to hear my hon. colleague from Winnipeg North take a partisan jab at the official opposition for what is a principled position opposing dangerous legislation. The Green Party opposes this legislation and does not believe it would make us safer.

I have learned a lot about security since this bill was first brought forward. I have heard a lot of experts from our Five Eyes partners who talk about how Canada has a system with the least oversight of any of the Five Eyes partners and actually has adopted a system that would make us less safe, more vulnerable to terrorist attack as a result of Bill C-51, and the creation of disruption activities from CSIS agents without any requirement to report them to RCMP or have any pinnacle level of oversight.

I still hold out the hope that the Liberals will change their minds and vote with the official opposition, and that some Conservatives of conscience will vote with us so we can stop this monstrosity before it becomes law.

On the subject of radicalization, we have not done what the U.K. did in creating anti-terrorism law that actually creates anti-radicalization programs in institutions like prisons and schools. As well, we have done something unprecedented in Canadian law. We have not exempted personal conversations. We have created thought chill around radicalization and will make our youth less vulnerable to being able to hear from those who would talk them out of it.

Does my hon. colleague from Winnipeg North not think this legislation, once it has passed, should be repealed if an election takes place?

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, we will have to agree to disagree. The Green Party would be on its own in regard to the member's last statement that the legislation should be repealed. There is somewhat of a need for aspects of the legislation, and even the New Democrats, with all their failings, recognize that they would not repeal the legislation. The leader of the New Democratic Party has said that.

The leader of the Green Party made reference to radicalization. Maybe she can honestly say that she might actually believe it, but I do believe that there are aspects of the legislation that would in part deal with the radicalization of our young people through websites and so forth. There is reason for us to appreciate that there is value to the current legislation, even though there are a number of issues on which the government could have improved the legislation and there are a number of things that it could have been introduced.

There is the need for amendments to change some of the wording and for bringing in something else, such as parliamentary oversight. Had the government done that, the bill would have been far more robust in dealing with terrorism. That is what Canadians would have wanted.

●(1250)

Mr. Robert Sopuck (Dauphin—Swan River—Marquette, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to rise and speak to Bill C-51, the anti-terrorism act, 2015. I will most certainly be supporting it.

First, I would like to digress and congratulate the Minister of Finance on economic action plan 2015. This is a balanced budget, but it also invests in one of the key priorities of my constituents, namely, national security. The budget set aside almost \$300 million to counter terrorism in Canada, funds which our security and law enforcement agencies will use to keep all Canadians safe.

During my time today, I would like to speak about the threat environment in Canada and globally, how it has changed since the inception of CSIS and why we must respond accordingly, particularly by allowing CSIS to disrupt and prevent terrorist threats from developing further.

Let me be perfectly clear. The international jihadi movement has declared war on Canada and her allies. Jihadi terrorists have stated their intent to target Canadians because they hate our values, our freedom, and our prosperity.

In 1984, when the CSIS Act entered into force, the primary national security concerns were cold war era espionage. The actors were well known. The threat environment today is much more complex. Enhanced by technology, the threats are global and can develop very quickly. While this applies to the full range of threats, espionage, foreign interference and proliferation concerns, we know all too well that the twin spectres of violent extremism and international jihadi terrorism in particular require a robust, and very importantly, flexible response.

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Our Conservative government is tackling this important issue. That is why we have tabled the legislation which is before us. It is why we have made significant investments in the budget to protect national security.

The legislation contains a critical new tool for the government to improve our capacity to act, to deter and to diminish threats at an early stage. It is a threat disruption mandate for CSIS.

Creating a new threat disruption mandate for the service to take authorized and focused action against threats would increase the range of response options that may be brought to bear against those who would do us harm. However, let us be clear. In no way does threat disruption amount to police powers. This is a complete falsehood spread by the opposition. Policing would rightly remain with the RCMP and local law enforcement. The amendment adopted by the public safety and national security committee provides even greater clarity on this point, which I strongly support.

For 30 years, CSIS has been singularly charged with investigating, assessing and advising on threats to Canada's national security. In doing so, it has proven itself to be a respected and highly professional Canadian institution. In fulfilling the new mandate to disrupt threats to the security of Canada, CSIS would build upon its existing capabilities and expertise. CSIS develops and maintains unique and unparalleled access to intelligence on threats to Canada, which provides it with unique insights and operational leads.

The director of CSIS has been quite clear in his appearances before parliamentary committees, stating that the jihadi terrorist threat to Canada has never been as direct and immediate as it is today. Unfortunately, this is no longer simply a threat. In recent months and years, Canada and most of our close allies have been directly impacted by the scourge of terrorism. Our citizens have been both perpetrators and victims of terrorist attacks here at home as well as in allied countries and in conflict zones.

Canada has a responsibility to the international community to prevent and deter our citizens from engaging in such activities both at home and abroad, and the anti-terrorism act, 2015 would accomplish these tasks. As we have seen, such activities can destabilize countries and whole regions and cause significant harm.

We must also be concerned about individuals who return to Canada after having spent time abroad engaging in terrorist activities. While their terrorist experience abroad may vary greatly, we must consider their radicalizing influence on others, their ability to facilitate other people's terrorist activities, or the potential for such individuals to engage in attacks here.

●(1255)

We should not be so naive to think that Canada is immune to such threats in this age of global travel and ubiquitous communications technologies. It is incumbent upon us in such an environment to reassess our approach and ensure appropriate authorities are in place so that we may take reasonable and necessary steps to protect the safety of Canadians.

Many of our closest allies already exercise similar authorities and view them as vital to their own investigations. We must ensure that the tools at our agencies' disposal keep pace so that Canada can work effectively to address threats and contribute to global efforts to

combat terrorism. To do so, we are harnessing all relevant capacity and expertise to build a robust and agile system that allows us to bring the right tools to bear at the right time.

I think all members can agree that preventing terrorist acts proactively is certainly preferable to a reactive posture, and this bill would ensure that.

While I have focused my remarks on terrorism, I would remind members that authorizing CSIS to diminish threats would allow it to take measures to address all threats to national security identified in the CSIS Act. These threats include not just terrorism, but also proliferation, espionage, sabotage and foreign interference. This new mandate would allow CSIS to take authorized measures to disrupt the threat posed by sophisticated and determined cyberspies whose activities are contrary to the security of Canada.

These measures could also be used against proliferation networks active in Canada which seek to covertly and illicitly export our technologies and expertise to weapons programs.

When CSIS was created, the threats we faced as a country and as a global community were markedly different from those we must combat today, threats that are agile, diffuse and evolving rapidly. The terrorists' ability to use modern social media is becoming very well known, as we see on almost a daily basis around the world.

I think all my colleagues must agree that we cannot expect CSIS to fulfill its duties and functions with dated legislation crafted for another era, another environment, and indeed, a more innocent time.

I would also remind members opposite that CSIS is not the enemy. ISIS is the enemy. It is important that we focus on who the real enemies are in these threats to our country.

We must take the necessary steps now to ensure that we as a government and as a nation can protect the safety and security of our citizens at home and abroad. This new legislation creates a clear mandate for CSIS within a well-established and rigorous system of accountability and review by the Security Intelligence Review Committee, or SIRC, whose budget our government doubled through economic action plan 2015. Yet again, this is another measure from one of the finest budgets that a government in Canada has ever brought in, as is evidenced by the widespread support for economic action plan 2015. Such an increase in funding for SIRC will provide it with greater capacity in order to assure both Parliament and Canadians that CSIS will appropriately exercise its threat disruption mandate.

It never ceases to amaze me that members in the opposition view this as a zero-sum game. They automatically assume any measures that we take to protect Canadian security come at the expense of personal liberties. Clearly, this is nonsense. The measures we are taking under Bill C-51 would not only improve security, but they would also increase the freedom of Canadians.

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Most important, the bill would provide the necessary tools for CSIS to play its part in protecting Canadians and in being a responsible international partner in the fight against global terrorism.

I am very proud to be part of a party that labels terrorism and terrorists for what they actually are, and we are not afraid to use those words.

In conclusion, I hope all members will rise in this House to support the bill.

• (1300)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Hélène LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I listened carefully to the Conservative member's speech. I am really concerned because Bill C-51 is an omnibus bill.

Neither the government nor the member's speech has shown why this bill, which is very broad in scope, is necessary. When this bill was examined in committee, almost all of the witnesses expressed serious reservations about it. What is more, the international community is watching Canada very closely when it comes to this bill.

Did the Conservatives look carefully at what was being done elsewhere when they drafted this bill? We need to keep Canadians safe, but this bill does not take Canadians's safety into account and especially not their fundamental freedoms.

[*English*]

Mr. Robert Sopuck: Mr. Speaker, it never ceases to amaze me. The NDP opposite claims to want to protect the security of Canadians, but each and every time that this and any other government moves actively against terrorism, it is automatically against it.

I would remind the member opposite of the history of her party. One of the founding fathers of the party, J.S. Woodsworth, actually voted against Canada's participation in the Second World War. Can members imagine that? Had Canada followed that advice, who knows what the consequences for the world would have been. The NDP's sorry track record on protecting Canada's security is there for all to see.

In terms of the opponents of our particular bill, I would quote Justice John Major regarding the letters from the lawyers on the bill. He said the criticism goes “way over the top. You’ve got to come back to what we’re dealing with – a serious problem of terrorism in Canada. You can’t have a halfhearted war against that”.

I agree.

Hon. Judy Sgro (York West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I first want to say that the fact that the committee accepted the Liberals' request for removal of the word “lawful” from Bill C-51 is a good step forward when it comes to allowing people to protest. I want to acknowledge that.

However, my concerns continue to be on the issue of parliamentary oversight.

The government knows that there is huge opposition to Bill C-51. Why is that it continues to be so resistant about putting some dollars into the budget to provide that and to committing to parliamentary

oversight? Every other country has it. It is a common thing that should be there to ensure people's rights are protected.

I would like to hear from my hon. colleague as to why he and his government continue to refuse to do that.

Mr. Robert Sopuck: Mr. Speaker, first, we want to dispense with the point that there is massive opposition to Bill C-51 because there is simply not. My constituents in Dauphin—Swan River—Marquette are strongly supportive of the security measures.

Again, as a member of the governing party, and thankfully so, I see no lack of criticism, or commentary and demonstrations and opinions, on what this and any other government does. Therefore, to suggest that Canada is less free or would become less free is complete nonsense.

In terms of the oversight for the CSIS, I would again quote Justice John Major, who said, “I don't think Parliament is equipped as a body to act as an oversight...which is what is being proposed”.

Clare Lopez, from the Center for Security Policy, said, “the use of an intermediary review committee rather than direct parliamentary oversight has advantages..”.

• (1305)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alain Giguère (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin, NDP): Mr. Speaker, first of all, let us look at what is really happening.

Just because the NDP does not blindly follow the dictates of the Conservative Party does not mean that we are in favour of insecurity and letting the terrorist movement do whatever it wants. We want to combat the terrorist threat and do so in an effective manner, not make terrorists our allies.

I had an internationally recognized strategy teacher, Professor Garant. He said that terrorism has an incestuous relationship with the media. Terrorism scares people, and the media and politicians avidly repeat the message that it sends and make the threat seem bigger than it really is. This is the same problem that arose in the debate between Pierre Elliott Trudeau and Tommy Douglas on the invocation of the War Measures Act in October 1970.

Bill C-51 seeks to make permanent the measures that that legislation sought to impose in October 1970. Under the War Measures Act, 400 Canadians were imprisoned for absolutely no reason. No charges were laid against them. Tens of thousands of Canadians had their rights restricted. For what? For nothing.

The FLQ, which was a real threat, was dismantled by a classic police operation. The police did not use any special laws or illegal means; they simply did their police surveillance work to look for and find the suspects. The FLQ was dismantled. I want to stress that the special laws served absolutely no purpose.

Why was the War Measures Act invoked? A minister said it was outrageous that thousands of FLQ members were preparing to overthrow the government, as though here in Canada the Islamic State were preparing to invade with tens of thousands of big bad Muslims. Well, no. It is not true.

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Two unfortunate events unfolded. The first involved a young man whose father begged the authorities to commit his son for psychiatric reasons. The young man did not have a gun. He used a motor vehicle and a knife. Everyone around him knew how he was and therefore removed any chance for him to use a firearm. The second event involved a young addict who wanted to go to prison for detoxification treatment.

Now, the government wants to deprive us of our rights because of those two incidents. However, everyone is saying that the new laws in Bill C-51 never would have prevented those two unfortunate incidents from happening. That speaks volumes.

The famous sentence uttered by the then Liberal prime minister was “Just watch me”. Well, we are watching the Leader of the Liberal Party of Canada, and we see that he has an image, but not much more than that. There is no substance to his message, and when we try to listen to what he says we are dismayed that there is nothing there.

Later on there was the debate on the charter, which was a protection. In the debate between Ed Broadbent and Pierre Elliott Trudeau, Ed Broadbent said that economic rights needed to be replaced by human rights. Thank goodness that debate took place. We would be at a disadvantage today if it had not occurred.

Claude Ryan, a man of common sense, said that the charter was there to protect citizens from the worst and most dangerous abuses, those of the state, and he was right.

• (1310)

I remind members that 1,000 aboriginal women—not two—are currently missing in Canada. That is a big number, yet there is still no special legislation. However, we are not asking for special legislation. We are asking for an inquiry into why the police have failed to prevent these crimes and whether there are any social programs in which we could invest to combat this problem. Unfortunately, there is absolutely nothing. We are so used to seeing first nations people being systematically dismissed that it has almost become routine. It is hardly newsworthy.

However, when two Canadians die, it is a whole other story. It is unfortunate, but at some point it needs to be said. How can this government make a big issue out of two sad events that need to be addressed, yet it does absolutely nothing to find 1,000 missing women? It does not care. It is just looking for media coverage. It has an incestuous relationship with the media.

Furthermore, organized crime is still a problem. Attempts to settle scores among criminals—and sometimes their victims—account for about 100 murders in Canada every year. About 5,000 people fall victim to illicit drugs every year. For example, there are people who sell low-quality heroin in Montreal. It is hard to get accurate data, since there are always a number of suicides, but thousands of Canadians still die.

What does this government do? It withdraws police personnel tasked with combatting organized crime and assigns them to combatting terrorist activities, which have so far been far less effective than organized crime. In fact, organized crime causes much more harm in Canada.

A majority of experts—even those from the government—agree with us and believe that this is not good legislation, that it will not combat terrorism and that it will not pass the charter test. That will make this law illegal. The government is currently batting zero at the Supreme Court. All of its laws have been deemed ultra vires. Unbelievable.

Even though 48 witnesses, including jurists and former prime ministers, told them that they would get in trouble again with this, they say the Supreme Court will side with them this time. When it comes to credibility, I am more inclined to trust all of the experts, prime ministers and eminent jurists who say that the government will get in trouble than I am to trust the government's legal opinion, which is not worth much.

Don Quixote tilted at windmills believing they were giants. Well, my distinguished Conservative Party colleagues have the mental age of Don Quixote. Once again, they are inventing giants and trying to fight them.

Clearly you do not like what I am telling you, but here is something even better: the vast majority of Canadians agree with me and reject your position.

Polls indicated that you had 85% support, but now that Canadians realize you are attacking their rights, they are withdrawing their support.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): I would remind hon. members to address their comments to the Chair rather than to other members.

The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness.

• (1315)

[*English*]

Ms. Roxanne James (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC): Mr. Speaker, once again, the NDP has proven that it has sympathy for the perpetrators of these terrorist acts. Throughout the member's entire speech, he talked about them being, more or less, victims, including the two jihadi terrorists who came to Montreal and Ottawa and took two lives. He referred to those two lives as simply “unfortunate incidents”.

I absolutely cannot believe what I just heard.

A lot of what he said in his speech was absolutely untrue. He also mentioned that none of the measures in this bill would have stopped those incidents, but I would read a quote from testimony that we heard before committee:

If C-51 had been in place on October 19, Martin Couture Rouleau would have been in prison and my brother would not be dead today.

Who said that? Louise Vincent, sister of slain Warrant Officer Patrice Vincent.

My question for the member is would you like to explain to Louise Vincent why the person who killed her brother is a victim, and why her brother is just an unfortunate incident?

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The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Just another reminder for hon. members to direct their questions and comments to the Chair. That takes the personal aspects out of it.

The hon. member for Marc-Aurèle-Fortin.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alain Giguère: Mr. Speaker, the same arguments apply to what happened in October 1970 when Pierre Laporte was killed during a terrorist attack.

Should all Canadians have been punished because the FLQ murdered a man? No, only the FLQ should have been punished. That is what we are saying. We want to protect all Canadians, not just those who think they share the government's view.

I will provide a very specific answer because I like answering questions, unlike the Conservatives. My colleague indicated that the only person who spoke in favour of Bill C-51 said that she wished that her brother were still alive. I understand and accept that. Her brother would not have been killed if that man had been committed.

[*English*]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this member and other members have made reference to the FLQ crisis and painted it in such a way that they say, with hindsight, that it was a terrible thing that occurred in terms of the War Measures Act that was put into place.

Given that the member likes to answer questions directly, does he believe that Prime Minister Trudeau, back then, made a mistake by listening to the premier of Quebec and the mayor of Montreal when they asked for the federal government to do just what he did? Is there an obligation for the Prime Minister of Canada to actually listen to the premier of Quebec and to the mayor of Montreal?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alain Giguère: Mr. Speaker, Jean Marchand told the House that he had information indicating that 4,000 terrorists were threatening the government.

Then, the people of Quebec, the Premier of Quebec, and the Mayor of Montreal were asked what they thought about that. They said that the government needed to respond. However, the 4,000 terrorists was something the Prime Minister made up at the time. He lied to the House.

This is evident because none of the 400 people arrested were prosecuted. The FLQ was completely dismantled. It had less than 30 members. Where are the 4,000 terrorists? They exist only in the active imagination of the Liberal Party representative.

• (1320)

[*English*]

Mr. John Barlow (MacLeod, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today I am happy to rise in support of the anti-terrorism act, 2015 and our Conservative government's ongoing efforts to protect Canadians. In my remarks today I would like to discuss the value of information sharing between federal government departments and why this is a necessary and important tool for CSIS in particular.

However, before I address the substance of the bill before us today, I would like to take a moment to applaud our hard-working

Minister of Finance for our government's investments to enhance national security through this year's budget by almost \$300 million. Such funding will give the tools to our police and our national security agencies to keep our families and our communities safe.

Now I will turn to the bill. The security of Canada information sharing act is an important new tool. This would ensure a coherent framework is in place for our intelligence and security agencies to reliably gain access to important information they need to investigate threats against Canadians. It will also be done in accordance with the mandate and lawful authorities of our intelligence and security agencies. Having such information sharing capabilities will allow and help CSIS to fully investigate and provide advice on terrorist plots and related activities before they develop, helping to ensure our national security.

Over the last several years, the national security landscape has changed considerably. The threats we face today are more complex, more widespread and can materialize more quickly than ever before. Accordingly, efficient and responsible information sharing across federal institutions is crucial. In today's complex and connected world, timely and effective information sharing is essential to the identification and investigation of these threats. Co-operation between a range of institutions, including those not traditionally part of the national security community, is required for investigative bodies such as CSIS to fulfill their mandate.

The CSIS Act sets out legal authorities for the service to investigate and advise on threats to the security of Canada. CSIS collects information to the extent that it is strictly necessary from a wide variety of sources, including in some cases other government agencies. Many government departments collect information of direct relevance to active CSIS investigations. This information can be vital and yet, while CSIS has a clear authority to collect information to fulfill its national mandate, many other government departments face uncertainty when deciding whether or not they have the authority to disclose information relevant to national security. This is an issue we need to address. The legislation we are talking about today will address this shortcoming in our current security framework.

To date, agencies and departments have operated in an ambiguous environment, having relied on a patchwork of authorities not designed to facilitate information sharing for such purposes. This lack of certainty surrounding disclosure can cause delays and it can even prevent access to information directly relevant to protecting Canadians. With this current legal landscape in mind, with its delays and hurdles and uncertainties, I am happy to say I am speaking in favour and support of this legislation designed to ensure effective and responsible information sharing.

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The security of Canada information sharing act, which is included as part of Bill C-51, is the latest effort of our government's ongoing efforts to protect Canadians and our national security. In recognition of the impediments to the sharing of vital national and security-related information between government departments, our government is taking clear action to protect Canadians. The security of Canada information sharing act would provide a clear authorization to Government of Canada institutions to disclose information related to national security purposes.

I really want to stress this next point, especially after what the opposition has been saying today. This act has been specifically tailored to incorporate safeguards in order to ensure the privacy and rights of Canadians are protected and respected. One such vital safeguard is that institutions can only disclose information to other Government of Canada institutions that have jurisdiction or responsibilities relating to activities that are relevant to the security of Canada. In effect, the act would encourage and facilitate domestic information sharing in order to aid in lawful and authorized investigations.

• (1325)

As I have said, CSIS has the legal mandate and authority to collect information from a variety of sources. The collecting of information must be done to the extent that is strictly necessary to the investigation of threats to the security of Canada. This would ensure that federal departments have a clear and unambiguous authority to share information relative to our national security. To be clear, it does not alter nor does it expand the mandate of designated recipients.

Over the past several weeks, I have had the opportunity to speak with many residents in my riding of Macleod. I can say that they are overwhelmingly in support of Bill C-51. However, some of the feedback I did receive was on ensuring that the right of lawful protest was protected. With that in mind, I am pleased the public safety and national security committee passed an amendment to make it clear that protest, dissent and civil disobedience are not activities targeted by this legislation.

I am in support of this amendment as it would provide greater assurance for Canadians' civil rights. Their civil rights will be protected and respected. That is essential, and I know the residents in my riding of Macleod are going to be pleased that we have listened to their feedback.

The anti-terrorism act, 2015 would ensure a reliable and effective framework is in place for CSIS to request access to the information it needs to investigate threats against the security of Canadians. In addition to those safeguards, this legislation would not affect or override any existing statutory prohibitions that govern domestic information sharing. Therefore, safeguards against the disclosure of particularly sensitive information remain in place. CSIS will continue to collect only the information strictly necessary to carry out its mandate. That is the law.

In addition to the safeguards contained within the legislation, there is also an important existing safeguard in the form of SIRC, the Security Intelligence Review Committee. SIRC has a robust and wide-ranging mandate with access to all of CSIS' holdings with the exception of cabinet confidences. Canadians can be sure that SIRC

plays an important review role in the activities of CSIS, including in relation to the new measures proposed in Bill C-51.

Again, it is important that we provide SIRC with the resources it needs to take on this important task. Through the recently announced budget, SIRC's funding will be doubled, providing it additional resources to ensure that CSIS uses information sharing appropriately, effectively and within the bounds of the legislation before us today.

In addition, it should also be noted that CSIS' activities can be and are regularly reviewed by the Privacy Commissioner, and those recommendations can be, and are, made public.

As members can see, the security of Canada information sharing act provisions included in the anti-terrorism act, 2015, encourage responsible and efficient information sharing between Government of Canada institutions for the purpose of protecting national security. Simply put, this legislation would protect the rights of Canadians while also allowing CSIS to protect our security. The anti-terrorism act, 2015, is another clear example of our government's ongoing efforts to strengthen national security and to ensure Canadians are protected from an emerging and multi-faceted threat.

I think it is clear that times have changed. This is not 1970 any more. We are talking about new, high-tech, global threats facing Canadians such that we have never faced before. These threats are not only around the world, but unfortunately, here at home.

The security of Canada information sharing act along with other measures in Bill C-51 complement a number of existing and recently introduced tools. These important tools will help protect Canadians from the considerable and complex threats we are now facing today to our national security. Those also include the RCMP's engagement with local communities to counter radicalization, which is also an important component of Bill C-51.

I urge all members to support Bill C-51 and the budget, which will provide much-needed resources to enhance the capacity of our security and our law enforcement agencies, and also of SIRC.

Mr. Craig Scott (Toronto—Danforth, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would sincerely like to thank my colleague for his speech, because I think it was very honest. He talked about how this legislation is about national security in a very broad way, and the legislation is.

The legislation is called, falsely, the “anti-terrorism act, 2015”, but with so much in it, it goes much beyond that. I wonder if my colleague thinks that part of the problem we have had in this debate is that the government has been presenting the bill as being almost entirely about combatting terrorism when, for example, in the new information sharing act, when the Conservatives define “undermining security of Canada”, seven of the eight headings are not about terrorism. One is about terrorism.

Government Orders

Would the member agree that we would all be further ahead if the government had not been spinning the bill constantly as being only about terrorism?

• (1330)

Mr. John Barlow: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the member's question.

A main impetus of this bill is what happened here in Canada this fall. What we are facing as Canadians is much different than anything we have faced before, whether it was what happened on this property in October, or what is going on around the world.

I found it interesting that my colleague from the official opposition was saying that there have only been two victims. He should ask people in Iraq, Syria, and Yemen what they feel about these two victims and about what ISIL has done.

This is a piece of legislation that is going to protect Canadians here at home. On a broader perspective, this is something that is going to protect Canadians and people around the world, not just here in Canada but in other places.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the member in regard to—

Mr. Craig Scott: Mr. Speaker, on a brief point of order, I want to put on the record that when my colleague referred to “my colleague”, he did not refer to me, as might be interpreted in the context.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): I appreciate the hon. member's clarification. Questions and comments.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, we have had all sorts of opportunity, in second reading and at the committee stage, to identify where the legislation could have been improved.

I want to go a little off track and bring this closer to the budget issue. It is one thing to bring in legislation; it is another thing to properly resource our different agencies, whether it is the Canada Border Services, RCMP, special forces and so forth.

Can the member explain why the government has not allocated those resources? It is more of a shuffling of current resources that we see taking place.

Would the member agree that both of them should have been brought forward and that the government should have been more proactive on the budget level?

Mr. John Barlow: Mr. Speaker, the member's question is very misleading and disingenuous.

As I said in my speech, in economic action plan 2014, we allocated \$300 million to augment the RCMP, and doubled the budget for SIRC, the Security Intelligence Review Committee. These are resources that are going to ensure that the legislation, and the changes that are going to be part of Bill C-51, is going to be enacted and protected.

We have allocated the resources that are going to be needed by our police, as well as our intelligence agencies, including SIRC.

Ms. Roxanne James (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC): Mr. Speaker, again the NDP members are either intentionally pushing out information that is incorrect, or simply showing that they do not

completely understand the bill. I think it may be that they do not completely understand the bill.

The previous member asked a question with regard to the information sharing act. He indicated that there were seven points and none of them had to do with security. We heard from witnesses who spoke about how critical the information sharing aspects of this bill are. When they get pieces from different areas, they can put it together to solve a puzzle and are able to hone in on the issue of terrorist activity.

Once again, I would like to ask that member what he thinks of the NDP misleading Canadians and what a serious impact that would have if Canadians actually believed the opposition.

Mr. John Barlow: Mr. Speaker, this is disappointing, the misinformation the official opposition is putting out there that this is going to somehow take away from Canadians' civil liberties and that people are going to be arrested off the street for no reason whatsoever. It is very clear that we have judicial oversight as part of this document, as well as oversight and review from SIRC.

Can the official opposition show me anywhere in this act, specifically in Bill C-51, where it says that Canadians are going to be surrendering their civil rights? It is absolutely not true. This bill is going to ensure that CSIS and other security and intelligence agencies are allowed to share critical information to prevent terrorism and acts of violence before they happen.

• (1335)

Mr. Pat Martin (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, you will probably notice that I rarely get to my feet these days in this 41st Parliament. There are very few occasions that I feel are important enough that I should contribute. Usually the points that I need to have on the record I hear very capably put on the record by others.

However, in this case, on behalf of the constituents that I represent in the riding of Winnipeg Centre, I feel it is important that I rise today to express how profoundly disappointed I am in the government, how profoundly I disagree with the tone, the content, and the process we are dealing with in this important piece of legislation, the subject matter of which deals with the very rights and freedoms by which we define ourselves as Canadians.

One does not deal with that kind of potential infringement on our rights and freedoms in a day-and-a-half debate, with closure imposed at every stage of this bill. It is fundamentally wrong, and I condemn the Conservative government for tampering and tinkering with these rights and freedoms in such a frivolous manner. It offends the very sensibilities of Canadians who profess to value our democratic principles.

Government Orders

Let me begin with the process. For the 95th time in the 41st Parliament, the Conservatives have moved closure on a bill. One may ask how many times or on how many bills the Conservatives have moved closure; the answer would be all of them. Every single time, they have decided to run roughshod over everything that is good and decent about our parliamentary democracy. Every chance they get, they abuse the powers. They do away with all the checks and balances that were put in place so that our Westminster parliamentary democracy is the best in the world. They do away with the checks and balances that protect us against the abuse of power, which is indeed possible under this system.

Why do they have to deny the other elements of our democratic process, which is the legitimate right of the opposition to bring forward the concerns of the constituencies that we represent? I can tell members that the people in the riding of Winnipeg Centre are horrified by Bill C-51. I know that because I stood with them in front of city hall, in front of a crowd of 1,500 people, who gathered to object to the potential infringements on their rights and freedoms to privacy, the right to assemble, and the various other elements that could be affected by this bill.

I know this because right across the country, Canadians have had to take to the streets. That is because their elected representatives, those of us in the chamber, are denied the opportunity to bring forward their valid points of view through the conventional method, which is reasoned debate and amendments. What the Conservatives do not understand is that what makes our parliamentary democracy work in this Westminster style is that there is a duty to accommodate the legitimate concerns, at least some of them, of the majority of Canadians who did not vote for their members.

One of my mentors was Gary Doer, the former premier of Manitoba. When he was first elected, he explained that we have an obligation to represent all of the people, not just those who voted for us. If the majority of Canadians have legitimate concerns on this bill, they deserve the right to be heard. They should not be shut down by closure at ever stage of this bill, just like every stage of every other bill.

At the committee stage, which used to be the last vestige of some semblance of non-partisan co-operation, for this broad-sweeping bill that impacts our rights and freedoms, they contemplated three meetings of two hours each per meeting, allowing for a few witnesses. Then, of course, they used their majority on the committee to stack the witnesses so that more witnesses who were in favour of the bill than opposed it were heard.

It was only through Herculean efforts that we managed to get a lousy eight or nine meetings. Again, these were not all-day meetings; these were two-hour meetings. These matters are of such substance and weight that they deserve the full consideration of the chamber, until every member is satisfied that his or her voice has been heard, and, let me say, some accommodation has been made to the legitimate concerns brought forward by those of us representing constituencies that are not governed by the ruling party.

• (1340)

Let me say in the limited amount of time I have, and I mean limited, that we are facing the biggest bait and switch in Canadian history. Until a few months ago, the current Conservative

government wanted to go into the next federal election with the ballot box question being the economy. What happened then was that the price of oil tanked.

When they have no industrial strategy and they put all of their eggs in one basket, and that basket drops and all the eggs break, they have nothing left but to switch to that old neo-conservative hobby horse, the politics of fear. Now the Conservatives want the ballot box question to be on who is going to protect Canadians from this jihadist that is going to sneak into their bedrooms and murder them when they are asleep. That is the ballot box question they want now. It is the cheapest, most cynical style of politics in the world, and they specialize in it.

I can give example after example of the Conservatives' criminal justice bills. They bombarded my riding with leaflets, which were illegal mailings I would argue. They sent parliamentary privilege mailings into my riding. The leaflets are of a guy sneaking into a bedroom with a knife held up, showing that this junkie is going to murder Canadians in their sleep unless they vote for the Conservatives who are going to protect them. That is the kind of cheap debate and politics that we are subjected to here, instead of the real and legitimate concerns of global terrorism, on which we are perfectly happy to have a debate.

In the final minutes that I have, let me say that I do not understand the strategy of the third party. All of the opposition parties have condemned this bill as being a potential infringement of the rights and freedoms by which we define ourselves as Canadians. However, the members of the third party, in a gutless, spineless, and feckless approach, have said said that they oppose it, they are against it, but they are going to vote for it. Is there any reasoning? That is the most convoluted pretzel logic I have ever heard in my life.

My only message for Canadians is to use their vote, that most valuable thing they as citizens have in a democracy, and to say to whomever is on their doorstep in the federal election, "Is your party voting for Bill C-51? Because if it is, I am not voting for you".

Ms. Roxanne James (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have never heard so much rhetoric about nothing. The member made a point of saying that it was so important to speak to the bill, but I did not hear anything about the bill in his entire speech.

What is interesting is that the member said that we stacked the witnesses so we would have them all coming to committee in favour of the bill. The previous NDP member who stood up in this House said that there was only one witness at committee who actually favoured the bill.

Clearly the New Democrats have not read the bill. They did not watch committee. They did not see our credible witnesses who came, some with more than three decades of experience in law enforcement, intelligence gathering. Even with those who have been studying terrorism, every single one of them talked about the threat being real, that it has evolved and it is growing. The witnesses also talked about the need for this legislation to fill the gaps that have been identified by our security agencies.

Government Orders

I do not know whether I can ask the member a question about the bill because he clearly has not read it. It is not a laughing matter, but surely there are Canadians right across this country who are laughing now.

Could the member please stand in this House and indicate for Canadians, first, whether he read the bill. Second, why is the NDP intentionally pushing misinformation about the bill, or is it simply a lack of understanding?

● (1345)

Mr. Pat Martin: Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives have done their best to sanitize their language in dealing with this bill. They have done their best to try to downplay the potential impact, but the impact is not lost on Canadians.

I have met with first nations groups who are increasingly concerned that this bill is not about trying to make Canadians safer. This bill is more about having the Conservative administration snooping on its enemies. There is a Nixonian quality to this bill.

As we get closer to the election and the Conservatives lose their major premise for the ballot box question, they get tighter and smaller in their world view. They are paranoid to the point where they think they are surrounded by nothing but their enemies. It is embarrassing to watch, as we see the death rattle of a political administration infringing on rights and freedoms in a last desperate effort to hang on to power.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member for Winnipeg Centre does have a way with words. I will give him that much.

He made reference to the Liberal Party's position on this. It is safe to say that the Liberal Party has been consistent through the debates on Bill C-51.

I wonder if the member could provide some clarification. I will provide him with a direct quote I noted this morning. It is from Tom Clark of Global TV. He asked the question of the member's leader, "If you become the government, would you scrap this piece of legislation?" The leader of the New Democratic Party stated, "We would change it for sure".

I see that he is consulting right now as to what is to be said, but we have had New Democratic members inside the Chamber say that they would want to change it. Therefore, they have recognized there is some value to the legislation. Otherwise they would scrap it, like the Green Party.

There seem to be only three political entities in the House that are consistent: the Greens, the Liberals and to a certain degree, the Conservatives. What is the NDP position if the bill passes? Would it scrap it, or would it just make changes, as the leader of the New Democratic Party has stated?

Mr. Pat Martin: Mr. Speaker, he asked for some clarification on the language that I used. The language that I used was "gutless", "spineless", "feckless" and "political cowardice", all to describe the Liberal Party's position.

In answer to his question, the leader of my party and the critic for this area have both said clearly it would be repealed in an NDP

administration. The member for Winnipeg North is selectively misquoting or paraphrasing a comment that was quite dated.

Repeal, repeal, repeal instead of the gutless, cowardly, feckless performance by the Liberals who say they cannot stand the bill on principle but they are going to vote for it because they are afraid someone might use it against them if they vote against it. That does not show a political backbone. That is classic Liberal policy. It is like trying to nail Jell-O to a wall, trying to figure out how to deal with Liberals.

When one stands for everything, one stands for nothing and trying to be all things to all people makes one useless in the political sphere, in my view.

Mr. Rick Norlock (Northumberland—Quinte West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, many of us in this House can start calling each other names, such as spineless and gutless. There are over 10 police officers in the Conservative caucus, and I would say hundreds of years of police experience. We are anything but gutless and spineless and all those other words.

It says something in this House, with a person's God-given ability to put together a speech, that they person cannot put something together that does not have to result in calling other people names and casting disparaging remarks against them and everything they stand for. What people in this country need to realize is that the member talked ad infinitum, and never talked about one thing of total consequence, except being able to read that secret Conservative conspiracy out there because of the price of oil.

Nobody believes what that member has to say because he uses too much emphasis on calling people names. He has a good use of the English language. It is too bad he could not put it to some more positive use.

I am pleased today to speak to the antiterrorism act, Bill C-51. This important bill provides additional tools and greater flexibility where required to meet threats to our national security which, as we know, have never been more direct.

I am also pleased to highlight that our government will invest almost \$300 million to significantly enhance the investigative capacity to counter terrorism.

During my time today, I would like to speak about the proposal to create a new threat disruption mandate for CSIS. These important changes, found in part 4 of the bill, are another key element of our strategy to help prevent terrorist attacks and keep Canadians safe.

In particular, I would like to elaborate on how this mandate for CSIS fits into broader efforts by the government, and how it complements and enhances existing tools in place to combat terrorism. I will also address the governance and authorization framework within which CSIS will exercise this new mandate.

It goes without saying that the international jihadi movement has declared war on this country. Canadians have been highlighted in jihadist propaganda as a target simply because of our freedoms, our values and our prosperity.

Government Orders

In fact, several months ago Canadians were victims of horrific jihadi attacks. These victims were targeted solely because they were wearing the uniform of the Canadian Armed Forces. We will never acquiesce to the Liberal desires that we sit on the sidelines in fright. We are all participating in the military mission to degrade and destroy ISIS abroad and we must also take strong action here at home. That is why the bill before us today is all about anti-terrorism.

CSIS has a strong record of responsibly exercising its authority and has matured as an organization over its 30-year history. The Security Intelligence Review Committee, CIRC, consistently found that CSIS has carried out its duties in accordance with the CSIS Act and ministerial directives. That is an exemplary record I must say.

I have full confidence that CSIS will continue to comply with its statutory mandate as it relates to the proposed threat diminishment mandate. Given its well-established, investigative and analytical capacity and singular focus on national security, CSIS is well-positioned to act directly to disrupt threats to the security of Canada, which are clearly defined in the CSIS Act.

I must emphasize that this definition has anchored CSIS' national security mandate for over 30 years, and will continue to do so. Nothing in the current bill before us will change that. Taking reasonable and proportionate measures to disrupt threats to the security of Canada is a natural extension of CSIS' existing investigation. By giving CSIS the authority to disrupt threats, we will leverage existing expertise within the national security community to create a significant new capacity to meet today's complex threat environment.

We will also harness the unique insight and expertise CSIS has developed through its investigation and analysis of a full range of national security threats.

• (1350)

CSIS would now be able to take the logical next step of disrupting “threats to the security of Canada” as clearly defined in the CSIS Act. It is important to note that, in this regard, the definition has been in place for more than 30 years and would not change with Bill C-51.

This does not, however, mean that CSIS would go at it alone or act in a vacuum. CSIS has well-established relationships with its federal and provincial partners, and would continue to work closely with these partners in support of its mandated activities. Just as CSIS co-operates with partners as it investigates threats to the security of Canada, it would likewise co-operate with partners as it takes reasonable and proportionate measures to disrupt such threats.

As an example, CSIS and the RCMP have a strong working relationship guided by an overarching framework and protocols for working effectively together in accordance with their respective mandates. Ultimately, this framework for co-operation recognizes the primacy of public safety and would serve as a foundation for co-operation and de-confliction between CSIS and the RCMP as the service exercises this new authority. CSIS' relationships with all relevant partners would be similarly reinforced to reflect requirements associated with this new mandate.

Moving to the authorization framework for this mandate, the bill is clear in describing what conditions must be met. Any measures

that CSIS takes must be reasonable, proportionate and necessary to address the threat at hand. Additionally, the bill contains a number of express prohibitions, including a prohibition against any measure that would cause death or serious bodily harm. Moreover, in no circumstances may such measures be used to wilfully attempt to obstruct the course of justice. These prohibitions are consistent with and modelled after those found in the Criminal Code, establishing a firm foundation in Canadian law.

The bill also clearly identifies when CSIS would have to seek a warrant and what conditions would have to be satisfied for the Federal Court to authorize certain measures. As with the current warrant regime, CSIS would require ministerial approval before seeking such a warrant. Much like the existing warrant regime, the requirement to seek judicial authorization would allow a Federal Court judge to determine whether a proposed measure contravenes the charter and, if so, to determine whether the measure represents a reasonable limit on the right or freedom and is, therefore, in accordance with the charter as a whole.

In addition to ministerial accountability and the warrant regime, the exercise of this new mandate would be subject to review by the Security Intelligence Review Committee, or SIRC, which is required by law to review at least one aspect each year. As an added measure of assurance, our government would double the budget of the Security Intelligence Review Committee by providing \$12.5 million. This would increase SIRC's capacity to review CSIS activities.

The new mandate for CSIS would not be introduced into a vacuum. Building on existing expertise and leveraging existing capacity makes sense, and it would enhance the government's ability to protect Canadians. I therefore urge all members of the House to support the bill.

• (1355)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Hélène LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I listened carefully to the Conservative member's speech.

I note that several Conservative members are police officers. What concerns us on this side of the House is ensuring the security and safety of people while protecting their rights and freedoms. That is part of the foundation of our democracy.

My colleague mentioned the wide range of activities and the broad scope of the bill, which provides little protection. I would like to hear what he has to say about that. Does he believe that this bill goes too far when it come to the surveillance of ordinary Canadians?

*Statements by Members**[English]*

Mr. Rick Norlock: Mr. Speaker, this bill deals with a broad spectrum of government officials, such as CSIS, RCMP, Canadian Border Services members, all of whom have taken an oath to uphold the laws of Canada, of which the Charter of Rights and Freedoms forms a basic part. I do not believe any of those individuals would act in any other way than in good faith, knowing their rights and responsibilities.

The member asked if the legislation went too far. It absolutely does not go too far, and there are several reasons why. Any part of this comprehensive legislation that would begin to infringe on any right or freedom of Canadians would have to be scrutinized by a judge before a warrant would be issued. Therefore, Canadians have the right to know, and should know, that these individuals have sworn to keep the laws of Canada and that a judge will oversee any warrants that may be obtained for actions to be taken. Canadians can rest assured that this act is in compliance with and respects the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

•(1400)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Order, please. There will be two and a half minutes remaining in the period for questions and comments for the hon. member when we next return to debate on the question.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

*[English]***SNOWBIRDS**

Mr. Ray Boughen (Palliser, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mention that residents of Moose Jaw and area gathered to watch the 45th season of the Snowbirds take flight on this past Friday afternoon.

This year, they will be marking the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Britain and they will be forming new formations, including one called after a World War II bomber. These new formations represent some of the aerial combats seen in the skies of England during the Battle of Britain.

To further commemorate the battle, they will display 75th anniversary decals on the tails of their airplanes.

Like the pilots who flew in the Battle of Britain, the Snowbirds aim to carry on their tradition of professionalism, teamwork and dedication. They are an inspiration to all Canadians.

This year, they will take flight in 40 locations across North America. I encourage everyone to check out a Snowbirds show as they pass through different hometowns this year.

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*[Translation]***NEPAL**

Ms. Alexandrine Latendresse (Louis-Saint-Laurent, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to share with you the experience of Marc-André Laterreux, a Canadian who was in northern Nepal during the

earthquake, and acknowledge the perseverance of his sister, Karine Dionne, a resident of Louis-Saint-Laurent, and her determination to help her brother.

First of all, I recognize that it is impossible to predict such a catastrophe, and that it is out of our control. However, it is embarrassing for a G7 country to have such a disorganized response to an emergency situation.

Like too many Canadian families, Karine hit a wall of inefficiency and lack of understanding. Obtaining service in French was difficult, voice mail boxes were full, there were no concrete answers and the Dionne-Laterreux family was met with confusion every day for seven interminable days.

Marc-André managed to get to New Delhi with the help of Chile, Colombia, Israel and the United Kingdom. The fact that he is now safe is due to his survival instinct, his sister's determination and international solidarity. They have a simple request: provide an emergency telephone line that truly meets the needs of survivors. This could have changed everything for all Canadians caught in this terrible tragedy.

To all the families with loved ones in Nepal, take heart. Our thoughts are with you.

* * *

*[English]***NEPAL**

Mr. Bob Dechert (Mississauga—Erindale, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our thoughts and prayers continue to be with all those affected by the earthquake in Nepal.

I am proud of Canada's strong and quick response. Our government immediately responded to the emergency with a \$5-million contribution to provide lifesaving assistance. Foreign affairs officials worked tirelessly in order to ensure that any Canadians affected by the earthquake were safe and accounted for. Many Canadians have been evacuated from the region by the Canadian Forces.

This past weekend, we announced that a full DAR team would be deployed to the region.

As requested by the Canadian Nepali community, our government has created the Nepal earthquake relief fund, a matching fund, where the Government of Canada will match individual donations.

As the president of the Non-Resident Nepalis-National Coordination Council, and resident of my riding, Anil Thapa said, "This is a time for all of us to support the distressed people in Nepal, their families in Canada and all over the world".

I encourage all Canadians to give generously to earthquake relief in Nepal.

*Statements by Members***THE NETHERLANDS**

Hon. Carolyn Bennett (St. Paul's, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as we celebrate the 70th anniversary of the liberation of the Netherlands from the unspeakable evil of the Nazi regime, we pay tribute to the bravery and sacrifice of the 175,000 Canadian soldiers who played such a pivotal role.

My father, Sergeant Jack Bennett, was in Major Conn Smythe's 30th Battery and, after landing at Juno Beach, fought in the Battle of Normandy and the Battle of the Scheldt and then defended the bridge at Nijmegen.

When I was 19, I stayed with the Dutch family that billeted my father during the war and I experienced first hand the bond that these events forged between our two countries. They took me to Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery. I walked between the white gravestones with the engraved maple leaves. I was struck by just how young so many of the 7,600 Canadians had been when they gave their lives in the defence of freedom.

May the tulips on Parliament Hill always remind us of the ultimate sacrifice of those brave men and women 70 years ago and may every day we honour and support the current members of our armed forces who continue to serve in harm's way.

* * *

• (1405)

PETER "SAB" SABOURIN

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Upper Ottawa Valley is known for its unique style of Canadian culture. From fiddle players in the remote logging camps, our brand of rock and roll, to country star Jason Blaine, music is in our blood.

It is with great sadness that I mark the passing, after a courageous battle with cancer, of Peter, "Sab" to his friends, Sabourin, "The King of the North". Sab rocked with the likes of Dr. Hook, April Wine, Downchild Blues Band, rockin' Ronnie Hawkins and Kris Kristofferson.

In recent years, Sab had moved back to his grandfather's farm in the Ottawa Valley, where I got to know him as the driving force behind "Sabstock", a weekend-long celebration of rock and roll, and his Thanksgiving Jam for the food bank.

Sab made himself a household name for music fans from North Bay to Timmins to Thunder Bay, and all stops in between.

Sab lived life to its fullest and left us far too soon.

The show will go on with this year's Sabstock on the farm, from July 3 to July 5.

May his widow, Tina, and his daughters, Chessa and Talia, all be together one day on the *Far Side Banks of Jordan*.

* * *

[Translation]

MONTMAGNY

Mr. François Lapointe (Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Montmagny is definitely

one of the most vibrant cities in the Chaudière-Appalaches region. It is a wonderful place to live and is home to many leaders in every sphere, including the political, municipal, business and non-profit communities.

Recent initiatives speak for themselves. Here are a few examples. A fantastic municipal library just opened its doors. Magasin Lévesque, with the help of community volunteers, hosted a fashion show that raised \$14,000 for the Foundation of the Centre de réadaptation en déficience physique Chaudière-Appalaches. The Fondation Hélène-Caron is holding a very successful fundraising campaign called "As-tu ton pied?", which gives residents the opportunity to buy a square foot of land on which a future centre of expertise on palliative care will be built. Fréchette Ford will be opening soon and will join the many other car dealerships, such as Thibault GM, Lapointe Automobiles, Montmagny Hyundai, Montmagny Mazda, Montmagny Toyota, Honda de Giro and Montmagny Kia, in making Montmagny the best place south of Quebec City to buy a vehicle.

Finally, I would like to invite all Canadians to visit Montmagny this summer. Our downtown has plenty of history and a waterfront with beautiful views of the river.

* * *

[English]

ORGAN DONATION

Mr. Peter Goldring (Edmonton East, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this year makes five that have passed since my sister, Sue, received the gift of freedom, of renewed life's normality. She was the recipient of a kidney, which has allowed her the fullness of daily living since. Sue's dialyzing for hours every day is for her and her family but a distant and fading memory.

This gift five years ago was a godsend to my eternally grateful sister, as well as a blessing to her loved ones and friends who all silently prayed for her day of liberation to come. We joined in one voice to thank the medical doctors, donors and the families who selflessly contributed to this extraordinary gift in such a moment of grief.

Organ donation is truly a liberating gift, removing the shackles that bind one to a machine and, indeed, many times giving life itself.

On this the 4th day of May, I thank all donors everywhere, knowing that my sister Sue will have a happy birthday today.

* * *

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE MIDWIFE

Ms. Lois Brown (Newmarket—Aurora, CPC): Mr. Speaker, tomorrow is International Day of the Midwife, a day to recognize the essential contributions that midwives make to ensuring safe quality care to mothers and babies around the world.

Midwives in Canada are represented by the Canadian Association of Midwives. Their organization provides leadership and advocacy for midwifery as a regulated, publicly funded and vital part of the primary maternity care system.

Statements by Members

Our government's renewed commitment to maternal, newborn and child health will continue to help train midwives internationally and increase women's access to quality midwifery services.

In June 2017, Canada will host the International Midwives Global Midwifery Conference in Toronto. It will be an opportunity to demonstrate Canada's contribution internationally and how vital midwifery is to our health care system domestically.

On the International Day of the Midwife, please join me in celebrating the profession of midwifery and in thanking midwives for the health services they provide.

* * *

MAYWORKS HALIFAX FESTIVAL

Ms. Megan Leslie (Halifax, NDP): Happy May Day, Mr. Speaker. May Day celebrations in Halifax and Dartmouth are in full swing, thanks to the organizers of Mayworks Halifax.

The goal of the first Mayworks Halifax festival in 2009 was to build bridges between the organizations of workers and artists throughout the Halifax region to create a fun, entertaining festival that would engage people in both a cultural and political way, and to build capacity in the labour movement, training new activists and creating new coalitions. That was three years ago and today, the festival is eagerly awaited by activists, artists and socially engaged audience members throughout the region.

Events include the Reel Justice film festival, plays like *How Often Do I Dream*, a workshop on the future of precarious work, and "Stand Up", a mixed genre performance inspired by the life and legacy of Viola Desmond.

I thank the Halifax and Dartmouth District Labour Council for helping to build a culture and society that celebrates and recognizes the history and struggle of working people in Nova Scotia.

* * *

● (1410)

CANADIAN ARMED FORCES

Mr. Ted Opatz (Etobicoke Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, ISIS is a brutal death cult that carries out unspeakable atrocities against children, women and men. It has specifically called for brutal attacks against Canadians here at home.

On behalf of my constituents in Etobicoke Centre, I wish to thank the men and women of the Canadian Armed Forces who are far from home and are working to stop this death cult. They stand on guard to protect us all.

These are the types of missions our men and women are engaged in: advising and assisting, a mission that is carried out by our special forces; our CF-18 Hornets have conducted over 500 sorties; our Polaris aerial refuellers have delivered over eight million pounds of fuel to coalition aircraft; and, our Aurora aircraft have conducted over 140 reconnaissance missions.

Our heartfelt thanks to our brave men and women, to our army, our navy and air force personnel.

AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

Mr. Mathieu Ravignat (Pontiac, NDP): Mr. Speaker, community members in Shawville mobilized themselves, along with the Pontiac Agricultural Society, in order to erect the most beautiful stables in at least a 100-kilometre radius. These stables will welcome competitors from all over on Canada Day and during the Shawville Fair.

I would like to take this opportunity to say hats off to all those who made this incredible project possible.

[*Translation*]

Agriculture is important. The New Democrats believe this industry should be strong, and we are working to help farmers, for example, by supporting the demands by milk and cheese producers to protect their supply management systems.

We agree that food labels should contain more information, and we are looking for solutions to the problems facing bees and other pollinating insects that are so important to agriculture.

The public can count on the NDP to develop a national food and buy local strategy and to implement tax measures to help small farmers grow and remain competitive.

* * *

[*English*]

TAXATION

Mr. Joe Daniel (Don Valley East, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it should come as no surprise that our Conservative government is the only one that stands up for middle-class families. Through our low-tax plan for families, our government is helping 100% of families with children receive the benefits they need so that they can put their hard-earned money towards their own priorities.

What do we hear from the other side of the House? We hear about new taxes, high debt and the removal of these benefits we brought forward for Canadian families. The leader of the Liberal Party is promising to raise taxes on families earning less than \$60,000 who use tax-free savings accounts to save their money, and will raise taxes on millions of families who receive the universal child benefit.

We will make no apology for keeping more money in the pockets of Canadians.

* * *

TAXATION

Mr. Marc Garneau (Westmount—Ville-Marie, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada can only be strong when our middle class is thriving, something the Conservative government does not understand. The Conservatives' income splitting only helps 15% of Canadians and largely favours those who are better off. Middle-class families have not had a real raise in decades. It is time to change that.

Under the Liberals, a family with two children earning \$90,000 a year would get \$490 a month under the Canada child benefit. That is \$5,875 a year, fully \$2,500 more than what the current government is proposing.

Oral Questions

[Translation]

Single-parent families do not get anything from the government with income splitting, but under the Liberals, a single-parent family with an income of \$30,000 would receive \$533 a month tax free.

[English]

In addition, the middle-class tax cut would put up to \$670 per person every year back into the pockets of middle-class families.

• (1415)

[Translation]

The Liberal plan will restore fairness to our tax system and stimulate the economy by putting—

The Speaker: Order. The hon. member for Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière.

* * *

OPERATION IMPACT

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I know that security is an issue that people in my riding, Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière, are very concerned about. Today I rise to thank the men and women who protect us.

Last week, 95 members of the Canadian Armed Forces came back to Canada after participating in Operation Impact. They were all deployed when our operation began in October.

The fight against the Islamic State is ongoing. Some 600 members of the Armed Forces, including soldiers, support personnel and members of an air task force, are still deployed. Thanks to their collaboration with our international allies and their exceptional work defending the values of freedom and democracy, they are a model for the whole world.

On behalf of the people of Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière, and myself, I thank them. We will be eternally grateful to them.

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LABOUR LAW

Mr. Pierre Nantel (Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher, NDP): Mr. Speaker, labour law in Canada is not some sort of à la carte legislation where we can choose the parts that suit us and disregard the rest.

We in the NDP have explicitly chosen to put workers first and defend their rights at all costs. As we say back home, it is important to walk the talk. We are proud to be the first federal party to have unionized employees.

Whether the Liberals like it or not, defending workers means more than just making nice speeches to get higher ratings in the polls and then changing their tune. Unions are not fools.

Jerry Dias, the president of Unifor, was quite clear in his comments about the Liberal House leader's criticism. Here is what Mr. Dias had to say:

[It is] completely unacceptable [and leaves the impression that] workers' rights can be disregarded in the cause of cheap political theatre.

Five labour federations are outraged by the hypocrisy of the Liberal Party, a party that signals left and then turns right when it comes time to respect workers' rights.

In October 2015, workers will be able to choose a party that respects them: the NDP.

* * *

[English]

TAXATION

Mr. Brad Butt (Mississauga—Streetsville, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it should come as no surprise that our Conservative government is the only one that stands up for middle-class Canadian families. Through our low-tax plan for families, our government is helping 100% of families with children receive the benefits they need so that they can put their hard-earned money toward their own priorities.

What do we hear from that side of the House? We hear about new taxes, high debt and the removal of all of these benefits we have brought forward for Canadian families. The leader of the Liberal Party is promising to raise taxes on families and those who use tax-free savings accounts to save their money, and raise taxes on millions of families that receive the universal child care benefit.

We will make no apologies for keeping more money in the pockets of Canadians.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[Translation]

TAXATION

Ms. Megan Leslie (Halifax, NDP): Mr. Speaker, under the Conservatives, we have lost 400,000 well-paying jobs in the manufacturing sector alone. The middle class is struggling to make ends meet because their incomes are stagnating. The Conservatives' answer is reckless measures that further help the wealthy.

Today, we learn that income splitting is in fact more beneficial for the Conservative MPs. Why do the Conservatives insist on helping the wealthiest Canadians and abandoning the middle class?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our family tax cut and child care benefit increase will help 100% of families with children. Income splitting will save every family nearly \$2,000 and we are increasing the benefit to almost \$2,000 for every child under 6 and \$720 for every child between 6 and 17.

The Liberals and the NDP would withdraw these benefits and increase taxes for families. We will not let them do that.

[English]

Ms. Megan Leslie (Halifax, NDP): Mr. Speaker, hundreds of thousands of Canadians have lost their jobs under the Conservatives. Manufacturing and retail are especially hard hit, and yet Conservatives are still focused on handouts for the wealthy few.

Oral Questions

The Conservatives' income-splitting scheme will give billions to the wealthy while 85% of Canadians will get nothing at all. It turns out that Conservative MPs stand to benefit more than most.

Why are the Conservatives stubbornly sticking to their income-splitting scheme that helps the wealthy while leaving middle-class families behind?

• (1420)

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our family tax cut and benefits help 100% of families with kids.

Through the family tax cut or income splitting, families will save up to \$2,000. The increased universal child care benefit will give families up to \$2,000 per year for every child under 6, and \$720 a year for kids ages 6 through 17.

The NDP and Liberals would raise taxes on these families and take these benefits away. They would replace the family tax cut with a family tax hike, but we will not let them.

* * *

[Translation]

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Ms. Megan Leslie (Halifax, NDP): While the Prime Minister was traipsing around Baghdad and Kurdistan, coalition bombs killed 52 civilians, including seven children, in northern Syria. Since the start of the aerial offensive, the bombings have killed more than 2,000 people.

Can the Prime Minister finally tell us how and when he intends to get our troops out of this war?

[English]

Hon. Rob Nicholson (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have been very clear with respect to our engagement, and we have indicated that we are there for up to 12 months. We put that matter here before Parliament.

The member should take at least some comfort in knowing that we are doing the right thing. We are standing up to ISIL, which is a threat in that region and a threat to Canada.

Mr. Jack Harris (St. John's East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, this weekend in Kuwait, the Prime Minister made a very troubling comment. He said that we cannot know whether or not the military bombing mission in Iraq is effective, yet he has ordered Canadian Forces to bomb in both Iraq and Syria while we raise this very question in debate in this House.

Why is the Prime Minister focused more on campaign-style photo ops than on answering to Canadians about the war in Iraq and Syria?

Hon. Rob Nicholson (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this is a precision mission that we are carrying out in concert with our allies. We have been very specific, very clear on that.

What the hon. member should be doing is getting up and thanking the men and women in uniform and all those who are standing up for what is right in this world.

Mr. Jack Harris (St. John's East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, there are also new and troubling allegations published today in *La Presse* concerning Canadian military police treatment of prisoners in Afghanistan.

We understand—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order. The hon. member for St. John's East has the floor. I will ask members to come to order so we can hear the question.

The hon. member for St. John's East.

Mr. Jack Harris (St. John's East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we understand the Military Police Complaints Commission is looking into this matter, the same commission that the Conservatives stonewalled in the past incidents involving Afghan detainees.

Was the then minister of national defence made aware at the time of these instances and the investigation that took place in 2011, and what was done about it?

Mr. James Bezan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government takes all allegations of inappropriate conduct or abuse very seriously. We had been informed that this case was investigated several years ago by the Canadian Forces National Investigation Service, and it found that there was no mistreatment of Taliban prisoners.

On April 18, 2011, after a thorough and complete investigation, the Canadian Forces National Investigation Service concluded that the evidence did not warrant the laying of charges.

* * *

[Translation]

TAXATION

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Beauséjour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, middle-class families are tired of being ignored by this government. They are asking for help, and today the leader of the Liberal Party promised Canadian families tax-free benefits that will primarily help the middle class. That is in sharp contrast to the Conservatives' plan.

Their TFSA increase and income splitting benefit the wealthy. Why do the Conservatives insist on giving the most help to those who need it the least?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal leader announced today that he would raise taxes for those earning less than \$60,000 a year. Almost two-thirds of the people who maxed out their tax-free savings accounts earn less than \$60,000 a year. They will have to pay more with the tax hike proposed today by the Liberal leader.

The Liberals will eliminate the family tax cut and bring in a family tax hike. They will get rid of the universal child care benefit. Families trust us because we keep our promises.

Oral Questions

● (1425)

[English]

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Wascana, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is clearly possible and desirable to have one comprehensive and better Canada child benefit, one that is more fair and more generous than that which exists today, one that supplies a bigger, rock-solid monthly cheque, absolutely tax free, to all middle-class families and all those working so hard just to get there. But the government is preoccupied with benefits to high-wealth households, which means that those in the middle and at lower-income levels get short-changed. Why not fix that? Why not be fair?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal leader announced today that he will raise taxes on people earning less than \$60,000 a year. Most of the people who have maxed out their tax-free savings accounts earn less than \$60,000 a year. The Liberal leader admitted that he would raise their taxes. He would replace our family tax cut with a Liberal family tax hike, including on low- and middle-income households. Finally, he announced that he would get rid of the universal child care benefit, which Liberals have long said parents simply blow on beer and popcorn.

They will take money out of the pockets of families. That is the Trudeau tax.

The Speaker: The minister will remember not to use proper names, but ridings. I ask the minister not to put me in the position of having to make that kind of determination and to just steer clear of proper names.

The hon. member for Wascana.

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Wascana, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, he just makes it up. It all depends on one's conception of fairness.

The government's \$2-billion tax break pays a nice bonus to some families with incomes over \$200,000, but 86% of Canadians can never qualify. A family with a single mom or dad gets nothing. A double-income family, where the breadwinners are two teachers at typical average salaries, can never qualify. Why not have one larger, fairer, non-taxable child benefit and cut the tax rate across the board on middle incomes?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that is not what the Liberal leader proposed. Today the Liberal leader said he would raise taxes on those earning less than \$60,000 a year.

The facts are clear. Most of the people who max out their tax-free savings accounts earn less than \$60,000 a year. The Liberal leader announced that he would raise their taxes. He would replace our family tax cut with his family tax hike, including on low- and middle-income families. Finally, he admitted that he will scrap the universal child care benefit, which Liberals have long said is wasted on beer and popcorn. We will not let them do that.

*[Translation]***NATIONAL DEFENCE**

Ms. Christine Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, NDP): Mr. Speaker, this morning, the media reported that Canadian military police mistreated prisoners being held in Kandahar. A new complaint has just been filed regarding the incidents, which allegedly occurred between December 2010 and January 2011.

It seems an investigation was conducted, but no charges were laid. That is rather troubling given the alleged behaviour.

We have just been informed that the minister knew about this when it happened. Is there a report on the incidents, and if so, exactly what information did the minister have?

[English]

Mr. James Bezan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as I have already said, we take these allegations of inappropriate conduct and abuse very seriously. We have always been committed to ensuring that individuals who are detained by the Canadian Armed Forces are handled and transferred in accordance with international law.

Members of our Armed Forces consistently demonstrate tremendous professionalism, in particular with respect to protecting and promoting human rights. I am very proud of our members of the Canadian Armed Forces and the great work they are doing around the world.

[Translation]

Ms. Christine Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, NDP): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration confirmed that the government had still not received the report or reports concerning the tragic death of Sergeant Doiron on the front line in Iraq. At the same time, the Chief of the Defence Staff, General Lawson, indicated that battle fatigue among the Kurdish soldiers was the likely cause of the Canadian soldier's death.

Will Canadians ever know the truth about the circumstances surrounding Sergeant Doiron's death? When will the reports be made public?

● (1430)

[English]

Mr. James Bezan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our thoughts and prayers continue to be with the family and friends of Sergeant Doiron during this very difficult time. As the Chief of the Defence Staff just stated, these reports will be publicly released very shortly. We intend to release the parts of the reports that do not impact on confidential military operations, but let us remember that we are there to work with the Kurdish peshmerga, the Iraqi security forces, and all of our allies to stop this terrible jihadi terrorist organization.

Oral Questions

[Translation]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Ms. Rosane Doré Lefebvre (Alfred-Pellan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the appointment of two new people to the Security Intelligence Review Committee—no matter how competent they may be—does not fix anything. One of the many problems with Bill C-51 is that there is no proper, independent oversight mechanism for the additional powers granted to CSIS.

Currently, the committee simply reviews activities after the fact, and there is no ongoing oversight to ensure that our rights are protected.

Does the minister understand the difference between review and oversight?

Hon. Steven Blaney (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there are a number of oversight and review mechanisms in Bill C-51.

Canada can be proud that our model is the envy of the world. If the New Democrats truly want to act in the best interests of Canadians and protect the rights and freedoms of Canadians, they should stand up because we are doubling the budget of the Security Intelligence Review Committee. Furthermore, I am proud that a Quebecker will chair the review committee. He has an excellent reputation. He will continue to ensure that our intelligence services protect the Canadian public.

Ms. Rosane Doré Lefebvre (Alfred-Pellan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, ever since the Conservatives introduced their anti-terrorism bill, the rumblings of discontent across Canada have been growing steadily. In Calgary, Edmonton, Halifax, Vancouver, Ottawa and Montreal, thousands of Canadians have demonstrated against Bill C-51.

Aboriginal communities, unions, business people and experts in every field are telling the Conservatives that this bill is useless and dangerous. Even four former prime ministers are concerned about the absence of an oversight mechanism.

How can the Conservatives and the Liberals still vote for such a controversial bill?

Hon. Steven Blaney (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after hours of debate, after witnesses including members of the Muslim community and the sister of Warrant Officer Patrice Vincent came to Ottawa to ask the government to give our police officers tools to protect us from the terrorist threat, the only real question is this: why does the NDP oppose these reasonable and sensible measures to protect Canadians?

I am proud to be part of a government that really cares about keeping Canadians safe.

[English]

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, SIRC is a review body, not an oversight body. Judges will give CSIS warrants, but who will make sure that CSIS respects these warrants?

For months we have heard experts, first nations, business people, and Canadians from across the political spectrum all say the same thing: giving CSIS sweeping new powers without providing any independent oversight is a dangerous mistake. How is it possible, after everything we have heard, that Liberals and Conservatives

continue to stand in their places and vote in favour of a bill that they know is wrong?

Hon. Steven Blaney (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would ask the New Democrats to read and understand Bill C-51. They would realize that there are many checks and balances. Every time the rights of Canadians could be infringed, the RCMP or CSIS will have to seek a warrant and the consent of the Attorney General. There is an oversight body, for which we are doubling the funding.

We are waiting for the NDP to get on board and take the measures necessary to protect Canadians.

* * *

PENSIONS

Mr. Murray Rankin (Victoria, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the current government has made it harder and harder for seniors to retire in dignity. The Conservatives have raised the age of old age security and have offered an increase, at the same time, to the tax-free savings account, which will mostly benefit wealthy Canadians.

Meanwhile, almost 90% of Canadians want to see the Canada pension plan benefits expanded, a policy that would help the growing number of seniors who just do not have enough savings to retire. Why is the government blocking all attempts to expand the Canada pension plan?

● (1435)

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the New Democrats should read the facts. If they did, they would know that almost two-thirds of those who have maxed out their tax-free savings accounts earn less than \$60,000 a year. They are seniors who might downsize their homes and have some proceeds from the sale to put aside for a tax-free income. They are people who have a small inheritance from a deceased loved one. We are allowing them to keep more of their money to save it and grow it. The New Democrats and Liberals want to raise taxes on these middle-class, hard-working people who earn less than \$60,000 a year.

[Translation]

Ms. Isabelle Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine, NDP): Mr. Speaker, of course the Conservatives still want to give gifts to the wealthy. That is nothing new.

However, one survey showed that 90% of Canadians prefer the NDP's plan, which will help them save for a decent retirement by expanding the Canada pension plan and Quebec pension plan. That is what Canadians want.

Will the Conservative government ever work with the provinces to expand the Canada pension plan benefits, instead of creating tax loopholes for their wealthy friends?

Oral Questions

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the NDP and the Liberals are talking about raising taxes because that is their plan. They need money to pay for their plans. The only way they can get it is by raising taxes for small and medium-sized businesses and workers. That will kill jobs, which is why we rejected that.

We are helping people save by lowering their taxes. The Liberals and NDP would do so by raising taxes. That is the difference. We believe that people should be able to keep more of their money, and we have delivered for taxpayers.

* * *

MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the middle class is losing ground under the Conservatives.

Quebec's manufacturing sector has lost more than 100,000 jobs since the Conservatives came to power. In January and February, manufacturing output stagnated.

However, regardless the economic performance of this or any other industry, the directors of these companies will continue to benefit from a lovely little tax loophole worth about \$700 million thanks to their stock options.

Are the Conservatives going to help the middle class and stop giving gifts to their friends?

Hon. James Moore (Minister of Industry, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we must certainly protect and promote the manufacturing industry. What is more, as a government we must put policies and approaches on the table to increase employment gains in that sector. That is why, in our budget two weeks ago, we introduced a plan to support Canada's manufacturers and exporters. They say that our economic action plan contains many important measures for investment and that these measures will have a very positive impact on the manufacturing sector.

I could provide other examples. However, we are doing everything we can to help the sector and to promote and create manufacturing jobs in every region of Canada.

[*English*]

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, last week, another 1,000 auto workers were told they would be out of a job, tragically joining the more than 400,000 manufacturing workers in this country who have lost their jobs just since the Conservatives took office. Yet rather than helping out working- and middle-class Canadians, the Conservatives are stubbornly insisting on maintaining a \$700-million tax loophole for CEOs.

Conservatives believe in income splitting for the wealthiest 15%; New Democrats believe in affordable child care. Conservatives believe in loopholes for their CEO buddies; New Democrats believe in giving working-class Canadians a break.

When are Conservatives going to get onside and help out middle- and working-class Canadians?

Hon. James Moore (Minister of Industry, CPC): Mr. Speaker, of course, that is not true. Specifically, he opened his question talking about those people in Oshawa and at GM who lost their jobs.

Of course, we feel terrible for those who have lost their jobs, but we have an obligation as a government to ensure that we have a competitive auto industry going forward. That is why we have put in budget 2015 the automotive innovation strategy to support the supply chain. We have the auto innovation fund, as well, and we have free trade agreements that are going to allow for automobiles that are assembled and made in Canada to be sold all over the world.

We do look forward to GM continuing to grow in Canada as it has committed to do, in Oshawa and elsewhere, as we move forward with the best policies possible.

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[*Translation*]

THE BUDGET

Mr. Emmanuel Dubourg (Bourassa, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians are finding it difficult to make ends meet, and the Conservatives are ignoring them.

There is nothing for economic growth or job creation in the budget they tabled, which was two months overdue. The Conservatives continue to give gifts to the people who need them least.

Why are the Conservatives continuing to give money to the rich instead of helping the middle class?

• (1440)

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals believe that people who earn less than \$60,000 a year are too rich.

The Liberals believe that they have to increase the taxes of Canadians earning less than \$60,000. Those Canadians are the ones who are contributing the maximum amount to their tax-free savings account and they are the ones we are helping by increasing the TFSA contribution limit.

The Liberals want to eliminate these accounts and attack the savings of people who earn less than \$60,000 a year. That is shocking.

[*English*]

Hon. Judy Sgro (York West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, middle-class Canadians are struggling, and the Conservatives continue to ignore them.

After months of delays, they finally tabled a budget with clearly no plans for growth or for jobs. Instead of fairness for middle-class Canadians, Conservatives are choosing instead to target those who need it the least.

Oral Questions

Why do the Conservatives insist on giving wealthy Canadians the break, while not doing anything to help middle-class Canadians?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals believe that anyone making even less than \$60,000 a year is rich, and the Liberals admit that they want to raise taxes on these people by scrapping the expanded tax-free savings accounts.

Almost two-thirds of people who have maxed out their tax-free savings accounts earn less than \$60,000 a year. It is them we are helping by expanding their tax-free savings accounts. It is them the Liberal leader would target with his tax increase that he announced today. That is the Trudeau tax.

The Speaker: I ask the minister to be mindful of using proper names. I hope that I do not have to ask him again. It does lead to a great deal of disorder.

The hon. member for Westmount—Ville-Marie.

Mr. Marc Garneau (Westmount—Ville-Marie, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, all the talking points in the world will not hide the fact that the Conservative plan is fundamentally unfair, ignores the middle class and gives the most benefits to the wealthy. Whether it is the rise in the TFSAs paid for by raising the retirement age to 67, income splitting which only benefits 15% of Canadians or monthly child benefits that go to the wealthy, Conservatives choose to help those who need it the least.

Why is the Conservative priority the wealthy, instead of the middle class and those trying to join the middle class?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, those earning less than \$60,000 a year are the middle class. That is why we have cut their taxes by allowing them to contribute more to their tax-free savings accounts. Two-thirds of those who have maxed out their tax-free savings accounts earn less than \$60,000 a year.

The Liberal leader would raise their taxes. The Liberals would replace the Conservative family tax cut with a Liberal family tax hike, and they would strip away the universal child care benefit, because Liberals have long believed that parents simply use that money for beer and popcorn.

We put money in the pockets of parents.

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[Translation]

VETERANS

Mr. Sylvain Chicoine (Châteauguay—Saint-Constant, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the government is pleased to contribute millions of dollars to commemorate wars. However, when it comes time to take care of veterans, there is no end to the cuts.

Under the Conservatives' watch, services for veterans have been cut, regional service offices have been closed, and support staff have been laid off. It is not surprising that one-third of veterans are dissatisfied with the services offered by the department.

Why is the government not treating our veterans with the respect they deserve?

[English]

Mr. Pierre Lemieux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Veterans Affairs always strives to improve support for Canada's veterans and their families. Recently, the Minister of Veterans Affairs announced that over 100 new case managers and over 100 new disability benefits employees are being hired to improve processing times. Within our economic action plan 2015, there is a long list of benefits that we are offering to veterans and I would like to know why this member is voting against those benefits.

Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims (Newton—North Delta, NDP): Mr. Speaker, 34% of veterans surveyed by the Royal Canadian Legion say that they have been poorly served by the Department of Veterans Affairs. This is after the department got rid of its own survey to monitor satisfaction. The Conservatives closed regional offices of Veterans Affairs. They took veterans to court and spent hundreds of thousands of dollars in the process.

When are we going to see an action plan to expand and improve services and to reopen those offices?

• (1445)

Mr. Pierre Lemieux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the reality is that under our government, we have opened 600 new access points for veterans to service Veterans Affairs Canada benefits. In addition, we have opened nine new offices to provide new mental health support to veterans and their families, and the minister just announced recently the hiring of 100 new case managers and over 100 new disability benefits employees.

Why are the New Democrats turning their backs on veterans when it comes time to vote for important new measures like the ones we are announcing?

* * *

HOUSING

Ms. Peggy Nash (Parkdale—High Park, NDP): Mr. Speaker, thanks to Conservative economic mismanagement, Ontario's affordable housing wait list has hit a record high. More than 168,000 households are now waiting an average of four years for affordable housing, 78,000 of those households in Toronto. It is yet another indicator of the growing inequality in our country. Canadians are working harder and falling further behind, with 1.3 million out of work and so many in need of affordable housing.

Will the Conservatives finally admit to the economic damage they have done?

Oral Questions

Hon. Candice Bergen (Minister of State (Social Development), CPC): Mr. Speaker, the list that the member is referring to is a list of people, many of them in housing, looking for a less expensive rent. Certainly, we support the Province of Ontario if it wants to use its investment in affordable housing money to help subsidize cheaper rent for those individuals. We also have people who are homeless. We have our homelessness partnering strategy to address that need.

We are making life more affordable for middle-class Canadians so that they can afford the rent and the housing in the regions that they live in. That is increasing the universal child care benefit for all families with children under the age of 18, that is family tax cuts, as well as supports for families who are vulnerable.

We will continue to make smart investments and help the provinces so that Canadians can live in affordable housing.

[Translation]

Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet (Hochelaga, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the demand for social housing far exceeds the supply. Under the Conservative government, the waiting lists have grown so much that, today, in Ontario alone, over 165,000 families are waiting for social housing. The average wait time is four years, but in some areas, families have to wait up to 10 years. There is a desperate need.

When will the government propose a real strategy to make sure that Canadian families have access to affordable housing?

[English]

Hon. Candice Bergen (Minister of State (Social Development), CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have already done that. In fact, in our most recent budget we announced a measure whereby co-op housing and not-for-profit housing can renegotiate their mortgages so that they can continue to provide affordable housing to the people they are serving.

The NDP has no plan to help people with housing. All it wants to do is raise taxes. It wants to raise taxes on every sector in the Canadian population. That does not help those who are vulnerable. It does not help those who are trying to make more money, get better skills, earn more money so that they can afford the housing in their region. We want to help every single Canadian family, including those who are vulnerable.

* * *

NEPAL

Mr. Wladyslaw Lizon (Mississauga East—Cooksville, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the loss of life and the destruction of civilian homes in Nepal is overwhelming. Canadians from across the country have been giving generously to help those in need. Canada's response has been swift, with the immediate deployment of an assessment team to gain first-hand situational awareness of the immediate needs on the ground.

Can the Minister of Foreign Affairs please update the House on Canada's efforts to provide assistance to the people of Nepal?

Hon. Rob Nicholson (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canada remains deeply concerned about the impacts of the earthquake in Nepal, and that is why the Prime Minister has directed Canada's disaster assistance response team to be deployed to Nepal. The DART is a vital asset and is critical in meeting three needs:

water purification, primary medical care and engineering help. The immediate deployment of aid is made possible by C-17 Globemaster airlift craft, which is a capability that our government both secured and recently enhanced for the Royal Canadian Air Force.

We will continue working with our international partners to meet the urgent needs of the people of Nepal.

* * *

RAIL TRANSPORTATION

Mr. Matthew Kellway (Beaches—East York, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Transport announced that Canadians would have to wait 10 more years for the full phase-out of unsafe rail tank cars.

The announcement was an admission of the enormous risks we face, but it was also a response that is far too casual in the face of those risks. We cannot afford more derailments like Gogama and Lac-Mégantic.

Do the Conservatives really think it is acceptable to wait 10 years to protect our communities?

• (1450)

Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Transport, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to update the House on our announcement that happened in Washington on Friday with the Secretary of Transport, Secretary Foxx.

We made the announcement together because by nature, these cars go back and forth across the border. It was the culmination of years-long amount of negotiation work with the United States to balance what can be done, reasonably and pragmatically, with respect to the phase-out, and Canada's very real desire to get this done as quickly as possible.

I am very proud of the work that the officials of Transport Canada did and I am proud of our government for moving forward on this.

[Translation]

Mr. Hoang Mai (Brossard—La Prairie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Canadians are still worried.

Unsafe tank cars will continue to pass through our communities for another 10 years. While the Americans announced a deadline for implementing a safer braking system, Canada is doing nothing.

Can the minister show some transparency and tell us when these cars will be required to have safer brakes?

[English]

Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Transport, CPC): Mr. Speaker, once again I am very pleased with our announcement on Friday.

If we look at the details of the actual phasing out, we will see very clearly that Canada is a full eight months ahead of the United States in the first phase-out. That is a very important step. We said we would be geared to April 2017, and indeed, we will be doing so.

With respect to the ECP brakes that the hon. member pointed out, we continue to do our testing here in Canada. We have agreed that those would be operating rules not attached to the tank car standard. That is the appropriate way to manoeuvre.

* * *

[Translation]

MINING INDUSTRY

Mr. Claude Gravelle (Nickel Belt, NDP): Mr. Speaker, a number of mining companies have projects that would create excellent jobs here in Canada and that are also environmentally friendly.

Unfortunately, the Conservative government is doing nothing to help them. The president and chief executive officer of the Mining Association of Canada called out the government for ignoring its duty to consult with first nations. He even said that his organization consults first nations more than the government.

Why is the government undermining the efforts of developers and why does it not do more to help them get their projects off the ground?

Hon. Greg Rickford (Minister of Natural Resources and Minister for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canada is recognized as a world leader in promoting transparency and accountability in the extractive industry and around the world.

This legislation sets fair rules for companies that operate in Canada and abroad, minimizes uncertainty over investments and strengthens the integrity of Canadian extractive companies.

[English]

Mr. Claude Gravelle (Nickel Belt, NDP): Mr. Speaker, sustainable development of our resources can grow our economy while protecting the environment, but the Conservatives keep dropping the ball.

The Mining Association of Canada is calling out the Conservatives for ignoring their duty to consult with first nations. In fact, the CEO said, "I think we are doing more of the consulting than they are".

When will the Conservatives stop ignoring the potential of sustainable development? When will they stop ignoring their duty to consult and start living up to their responsibilities?

Hon. Greg Rickford (Minister of Natural Resources and Minister for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have two quick points. First, we have undertaken extensive engagement with aboriginal communities during roundtable sessions across the country, specifically around the extractive sector, in mining. In fact, this year alone, we have engaged 83 aboriginal organizations through these sessions.

This is in addition to numerous meetings that have occurred in years prior. Legislation establishes a level playing field for

Oral Questions

companies, domestically and abroad, and aboriginal consultation has been important.

That aside, everything we do for mining, that member votes against, and people in northwestern Ontario, in particular, Ring of Fire, all told, they know he votes against them.

* * *

[Translation]

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Hon. Irwin Cotler (Mount Royal, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we learned this morning that two complaints were apparently filed in December 2010 and January 2011. Two Canadian military police officers allegedly created a culture of intimidation in the prison that they were in charge of in Afghanistan.

When did the government learn of these actions and what has it done since to ensure that prisoners are treated in accordance with international and Canadian law?

● (1455)

[English]

Mr. James Bezan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as we already discussed earlier today, our government takes these allegations very seriously. These types of inappropriate actions of abuse are thoroughly investigated. The Canadian Forces National Investigation Service found that there was no mistreatment of these Taliban prisoners and decided that there were no grounds to lay charges.

I want to congratulate all our members of the Canadian Armed Forces who are currently deployed in protecting Canada and those veterans who served in Afghanistan.

Ms. Joyce Murray (Vancouver Quadra, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Sergeant Doiron lost his life due to friendly fire in northern Iraq almost two months ago. It was only through media leaks we learned that three investigations are now completed as well as a few details about what happened that terrible night.

A lack of transparency is the Conservative government's hallmark, but disclosing through selected leaks and not directly to Parliament and Canadians is very disrespectful of Sergeant Doiron and his family.

Will the minister commit to release these reports and appear before the defence committee to discuss them?

Mr. James Bezan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Armed Forces chose to conduct a summary investigation into Sergeant Doiron's death. It is thorough, but it is much less time consuming and will allow the Canadian Armed Forces to make any required changes much faster than through a normal board of inquiry.

On top of these two investigations, the United States, as coalition leader in Operation Impact, is also doing an independent investigation that will inform our investigations, and we will release those publicly very shortly.

*Oral Questions***GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS**

Mr. Paul Dewar (Ottawa Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, access to information requests show that IT contracts at the Department of Foreign Affairs frequently exceed budgets. According to *La Presse*, a \$62,000 contract ended up ballooning to more than \$400,000, and a \$1 million contract exceeded almost double the cost that was budgeted. This is on top of an internal investigation into IT consultants fabricating time sheets.

Why is the Conservative government throwing money at high-priced consultants? What happened to transparency? What happened to oversight? Where is the accountability from the Conservative government?

Hon. Rob Nicholson (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what the hon. member suggests is completely false.

The contracting process across government often includes option years which have a value of zero dollars up until the point that the option is actually exercised. Actual contract expenditures are always reported through the usual parliamentary processes, such as public accounts and the quarterly financial reports.

I know that is upsetting to the hon. member, but that is the way it works.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Hélène Laverdière (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, this is utter nonsense. Not only have many of the IT contracts for Canada's Department of Foreign Affairs gone way over budget, but additional costs are often higher than the initial contract amount. For example, there is a contract for \$1.13 to which \$770,000 was added.

What is a contract for \$1.13? Is that a contract for a pack of gum? Can the minister tell us if this is abuse, favouritism or just Conservative mismanagement?

[*English*]

Hon. Rob Nicholson (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is not actually any of those. The hon. member has it completely wrong.

There are processes in place. As I indicated, all expenditures are reported through the usual parliamentary processes, such as the main estimates, public accounts and quarterly financial reports.

An hon. member: They don't read them.

Hon. Rob Nicholson: Mr. Speaker, I guess if they do not read them, then they would not know about them.

* * *

TAXATION

Mr. John Carmichael (Don Valley West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government's low-tax plan is helping middle-class Canadian families balance their budgets while we balance ours. That is why we have introduced the family tax cut and enhanced universal child care benefit.

Would the Minister of Employment and Social Development please tell this House about the important announcement he made

Friday on keeping more money in the pockets of hard-working Canadian families?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I announced again the family tax-cut benefit which helps 100% of families keep more money. Today the Liberals announced that they would take that money away. They would replace a Conservative family tax cut with a Liberal family tax hike. They announced that they would raise taxes on those earning less than \$60,000 a year who contribute the max to their tax-free savings accounts.

These are the tax increases they will admit. We know that their billions of dollars in uncosted spending promises would require many more taxes on the middle class.

* * *

● (1500)

NEPAL

Hon. Carolyn Bennett (St. Paul's, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, last night I joined hundreds of Canadians at the candlelight vigil in Toronto to remember and honour the victims of the recent devastating earthquake in Nepal.

During the ceremony, the Nepalese community urged the federal government to commit to three concrete actions: one, substantially increase the current \$10 million aid commitment; two, double the time for matching donations; three, ease the family reunification requirements for those affected by this terrible tragedy.

Will the government commit to these three clear requests?

Hon. Christian Paradis (Minister of International Development and Minister for La Francophonie, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have been at the forefront of the global response. Canadians can be proud of this.

We have established a matching fund for humanitarian donations. We have made available supplies from Canada's emergency stockpiles in Mississauga and Dubai.

Canadian support is helping to provide safe drinking water and food to those in need, and is providing medical supplies and shelter, deploying a mobile hospital which will help up to 200 people a day, and deploying a DART assessment team.

Canadians are very much at the forefront of this crisis. We have an integrated approach, and we are making a difference on the ground.

* * *

CANADA POST

Ms. Chris Charlton (Hamilton Mountain, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives' cuts to Canada Post and the plan to phase out urban door-to-door mail delivery have been an outright disaster.

Instead of putting a stop to it, the Conservatives are allowing Canada Post to ignore city bylaws and railroad unwanted mailboxes into our communities. The City of Hamilton is taking Canada Post to court, just so it can have input on where those mailboxes go. Incredibly, Canada Post is going to court to strike down the bylaw.

Will the minister take responsibility, intervene and finally put a stop to this?

Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Transport, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as part of their five-point plan to ensure self-sustainability, Canada Post is converting the last third of addresses to community mailboxes.

In siting these mailboxes in municipalities, it must work with the municipality. In fact, it sends out a survey to each and every homeowner who will be affected by the move to the community mailbox. It gets this information back and it is supposed to work with the municipalities.

We expect Canada Post to do exactly that, and to be sensitive to the needs of municipalities. With respect to the jurisdiction, however, that is a matter before the courts, and I expect that will be solved there.

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NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mr. John Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister and the Minister of National Defence were recently in Iraq, where they met with Iraqi and Kuwaiti leaders about challenges in the region and reaffirmed Canada's role in the fight against ISIS.

Having been on the ground in Baghdad on a 2011 human rights issue, I can personally attest to the importance of our role in Iraq today. Can the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence give this House an update on our mission against the ISIS death cult?

Mr. James Bezan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government is very proud of the men and women of the Canadian Armed Forces who are working to bring peace and stability to the region and keep Canadians safe.

I am pleased to inform the House that the Royal Canadian Air Force has now conducted over 800 sorties in the Iraq region. Our Canadian special operations forces continue to work with our allies in an advisory and assistance role by providing strategic and tactical advice to Iraqi forces.

On Saturday while visiting the region, the Prime Minister announced that we are providing Iraqi forces with bomb disposal robots and night vision goggles to help them degrade the terrorist ISIL's threat.

* * *

[Translation]

EMPLOYMENT

Mr. Louis Plamondon (Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet—Bécancour, BQ): Mr. Speaker, Quebecers are unanimous in their opposition to the temporary foreign worker program reform. The reform does not take Quebec's unique circumstances into account. We are talking

Oral Questions

about jobs in agriculture as well as in engineering, high tech and medicine. The federal government is once again acting unilaterally. It could not care less about the impact of its decisions on the economy of Quebec and its regions. Things are so bad that companies are talking about relocating to the United States.

Can the government tell us if it will keep turning a deaf ear to Quebec's requests and let well-paid jobs go elsewhere?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is wrong.

First of all, there is a specific program for the agricultural industry. Second, there are allocations for better-paid industries. In addition, our reform ensures that Quebecers have priority for jobs in Quebec. We will never allow Quebecers to be passed over in favour of a temporary foreign worker.

• (1505)

Mr. Louis Plamondon (Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet—Bécancour, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Couillard government, the National Assembly, the Quebec labour minister, the Conseil du patronat, unions, academics and research centres—everyone agrees that the government is headed in the wrong direction. Do the government and the minister understand that their actions suggest that they think they are right and everyone else is wrong?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there are Quebecers who are out of work. They should be first in line for jobs in Quebec. Perhaps the Bloc Québécois, the federal Liberals and the NDP believe that jobs in Quebec should be reserved for temporary foreign workers, but we will protect jobs for Quebecers.

* * *

FORESTRY INDUSTRY

Mr. Jean-François Fortin (Haute-Gaspésie—La Mitis—Matapédia, FD): Mr. Speaker, private forests are facing a serious crisis. Over 200 jobs in forest management will be lost in eastern Quebec because the forestry job creation program has been eliminated. The situation is truly disastrous for the small communities that depend on forestry.

The Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec has already received an appeal from the Fédération des producteurs forestiers du Québec. That organization wrote a letter dated March 13, condemning the federal government's decision to no longer fund this key sector. They are asking for a mere \$10 million over two years to help Quebec's private forest producers and all the affected local communities.

Will the minister listen to them?

Routine Proceedings

Hon. Denis Lebel (Minister of Infrastructure, Communities and Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, CPC): Mr. Speaker, never in the history of Canada has a government done as much as we have for the forestry industry, and without raising taxes or interfering in other jurisdictions. Speaking of jurisdictions, there is no doubt that the NDP would like to centralize everything in Ottawa, but we respect the provinces and we will continue to work very hard. We also respect the fact that forest management is a provincial matter.

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**PUBLIC WORKS AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES
CANADA**

Mr. Jean-François Fortin (Haute-Gaspésie—La Mitis—Matapédia, FD): Mr. Speaker, it will be five years next month since the federal government launched its shipbuilding procurement strategy. It has been five years and not a single ship has been built. In fact, the only thing progressing is the number of cost overruns and missed deadlines. Since some of these ships, including the icebreakers, urgently need to be replaced, why does Ottawa not fix the situation, stop turning up its nose at Quebec's shipyards and give them a share of the contracts to speed up the production of ships?

Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government is determined to provide our men and women of the armed forces with the equipment they need to do their jobs. Our national shipbuilding procurement strategy is expected to create 15,000 jobs with \$2 billion in benefits every year. Nearly 200 businesses in Canada have already earned nearly \$500 million in revenues.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS*[English]***GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS**

Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to three petitions.

* * *

WAYS AND MEANS

NOTICE OF MOTION

Hon. Kevin Sorenson (Minister of State (Finance), CPC): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 83(1), I wish to table a notice of ways and means motion to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on April 21, 2015, and other measures.

Pursuant to Standing Order 83(2), I ask that an order of the day be designated for consideration of the motion.

● (1510)

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

Mr. Bev Shipley (Lambton—Kent—Middlesex, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the eighth report of the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food in relation to a study of the main estimates for the fiscal year 2015-16.

TRANSPORT, INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMMUNITIES

Mr. Larry Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the eighth report of the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities in relation to Bill C-52, An Act to amend the Canada Transportation Act and the Railway Safety Act. The committee has studied the bill and has decided to report the bill to the House with amendments.

* * *

PETITIONS

SEX SELECTION

Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise to present petitions, all of them dealing with the same material. A CBC documentary has revealed that ultrasounds are being used in Canada to tell the sex of an unborn child so that expectant parents can choose to terminate the pregnancy if the unborn child is a girl. There are currently over 200 million girls missing worldwide. This gendercide has created a global gender imbalance crisis resulting in violence and human trafficking. Therefore, the petitioners are calling upon members of Parliament to condemn discrimination against girls, which is occurring through sex-selective pregnancy termination.

[Translation]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Hoang Mai (Brossard—La Prairie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have the pleasure and the honour to present a petition signed during a day of action in my riding. My constituents are asking members of the House of Commons to put an end to the Conservatives' attacks on civil liberties by following the leadership of the NDP caucus team and voting against Bill C-51.

[English]

IMPAIRED DRIVING

Mr. Bev Shipley (Lambton—Kent—Middlesex, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions to present. In the first petition the petitioners acknowledge that the current impaired driving laws in Canada are too lenient. In the interest of the public safety, they want to see tougher laws and the implementation of new mandatory minimum sentences for those persons convicted of impaired driving causing death. They also want the Criminal Code of Canada to be changed to redefine the offence of "impaired driving causing death" to "vehicular manslaughter".

SEX SELECTION

Mr. Bev Shipley (Lambton—Kent—Middlesex, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the second petition is with respect to ultrasounds being used in Canada to tell the sex of an unborn child so that expectant parents can choose to terminate that pregnancy if the unborn child is a girl. There are over 200 million girls missing worldwide. This gendercide has created a global gender imbalance crisis resulting in violence and the human trafficking of women.

The petition states “Therefore, we, the undersigned, call upon all Members of Parliament to condemn discrimination against girls occurring through sex-selective pregnancy termination”.

The Speaker: I would just remind the hon. member that the practice is to provide a summary of the petition but not to read the petition itself.

The hon. member for Victoria.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Murray Rankin (Victoria, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the House today to table a petition generated in Victoria, British Columbia, calling upon the government to move from what it terms “militarized security” to what is characterized as “common security”. More specifically, it urges the government to do three principal things: first, reallocate military expenses and end the subsidizing of the fossil fuel industries; second, ratify the arms trade treaty and cancel the \$18 billion arms deal with Saudi Arabia; and, third, end the invasion of Syria, withdraw Bill C-51, both of which the petitioners claim violate true security, being common security.

AGRICULTURE

Ms. Lois Brown (Newmarket—Aurora, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to stand today and present a petition on behalf of my constituents in Newmarket—Aurora, which calls upon the government to adopt international aid policies to support small family farmers, especially women, and recognize their vital role in the fight against hunger and poverty, ensure that these policies and programs are developed in consultation with small family farmers, and protect the rights of small family farmers in the global south to preserve, use, and freely exchange seeds.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Ms. Peggy Nash (Parkdale—High Park, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present petitions from many of my constituents in Parkdale—High Park who are very concerned about the government's Bill C-51. The petition calls for keeping Canadians safe without sacrificing our freedom.

Frankly, I have never seen a reaction like I have had in talking to my constituents about Bill C-51. Of course, people recognize that terrorism is a real threat and that we have to be kept safe from that, but they are fundamentally opposed to sacrificing our basic civil liberties and human rights in order to do that. Petitioners are calling on the House of Commons to stop this attack on our civil liberties and to join with the New Democrat caucus to vote down Bill C-51.

• (1515)

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I rise to present three petitions.

Routine Proceedings

First, I have a petition from the Vancouver area and Victoria area calling on the House assembled to reject all aspects of Bill C-51, as a bill that fails to protect Canadian constitutional rights and also fails to protect us from terrorism.

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, the second petition is from residents of my constituency of Saanich—Gulf Islands, calling for the use of a system called fee and dividend to apply a carbon price at source and to distribute the revenues collected equally to every Canadian over 18 as a carbon dividend.

CBC/RADIO CANADA

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, lastly, petitioners from Saanich—Gulf Islands, as well as locations in Ontario, call for stable and predictable funding for our public broadcaster, the CBC.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Matthew Kellway (Beaches—East York, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I too have a petition to present with respect to Bill C-51. The signatories to the petition all agree that terrorism is a real threat that needs to be confronted. However, they wish to draw the attention of the House to the fact that the bill is dangerous, vague, and ineffective, and that it would threaten our rights and freedoms by giving CSIS sweeping new surveillance powers without proper oversight. They ask the House to stop this attack on our civil liberties by joining with the NDP caucus to vote down Bill C-51.

PENSIONS

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have a petition signed by many residents of Winnipeg North who are in opposition to the Prime Minister's decision to increase the age of eligibility for OAS from 65 to 67. They believe that people should continue to have the option to retire at the age of 65 and that the government not in any way diminish the importance and value of Canada's three major seniors programs: OAS, GIS, and CPP.

AGRICULTURE

Mrs. Stella Ambler (Mississauga South, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have a petition signed by 167 constituents of Mississauga South who ask that the Government of Canada and the House of Commons commit to adopting international aid policies that support small family farmers, especially women, and recognize their vital role in the struggle against hunger and poverty.

Privilege

Also, they would like the government and the House to commit to ensuring that Canadian policies and programs are developed in consultation with small family farmers and that they protect the rights of small family farmers in the global south to preserve, use, and freely exchange seeds.

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Kennedy Stewart (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise to present a petition from constituents in Burnaby who are calling on the government to immediately prevent the new Kinder Morgan oil pipeline from being constructed in our city. The petitioners cite that the existing pipeline has already leaked 40,000 barrels of oil since it was built, and that it will not create any new jobs, nor refine any oil for British Columbians.

AGRICULTURE

Mr. Rodger Cuzner (Cape Breton—Canso, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I stand today to present two petitions from the good folks in Pork Hawkesbury, a number from around Margaree Valley and down West Bay Road. They are very concerned about multinational seed companies that are gradually replacing the immense diversity of farmer seed. They are calling upon the Government of Canada to adopt international aid policies that support small family farmers, especially women, and recognize their vital role in the fight against hunger and poverty. Also, they would like the government to ensure Canadian policies and programs are developed in consultation with small family farmers and that they protect the rights of small family farmers in the global south to preserve, use, and freely exchange seeds.

SEX SELECTION

Mr. Mark Warawa (Langley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions. The first highlights that there are over 200 million missing girls in the world due to the practice of sex selection. There are 92% of Canadians who believe that sex selection should be made illegal. They are calling on Parliament to condemn the practice of discriminating against girls through sex selection.

• (1520)

IMPAIRED DRIVING

Mr. Mark Warawa (Langley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the second petition highlights, sadly, that 22-year-old Kassandra Kaulius was tragically killed by a drunk driver who chose to drive while impaired. Kassandra's family is devastated.

The Families For Justice is a group of Canadians who have also lost loved ones through impaired driving. They believe that Canada's vehicular homicide laws are much too weak, and they are calling for mandatory sentencing for impaired driving causing death.

[*Translation*]

CANADA POST

Ms. Hélène LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am tabling a petition concerning the reduction in Canada Post services, and this is not the first time.

This is a growing concern, especially in light of the imminent loss of door-to-door mail delivery, which will be devastating for many Canadians. People are worried. They want to keep door-to-door mail delivery, and they are asking this government to reconsider the

reduction in Canada Post services as well as the job losses, which is of equal concern.

This petition has many signatures and there are more petitions to come.

* * *

[*English*]

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.

The Speaker: If the hon. government House leader is rising on the question of privilege that was raised last week, I will hear him now.

* * *

PRIVILEGE

PHYSICAL OBSTRUCTION

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am rising to respond to the question of privilege raised by the hon. member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley on Thursday, April 30.

As the Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons indicated, for our part, we wanted to look into the matter and ascertain facts. It is important to have facts in cases like this, and we thought we should have them before we came back to the House.

We have done that, now, Mr. Speaker, and I can tell you that the public safety minister's office has advised that the Royal Canadian Mounted Police reviewed the surveillance camera footage and determined that the green bus in question was indeed delayed for some 74 seconds on Thursday morning.

It is my submission that this case, which amounts to a mere momentary delay, does not rise to the threshold required for the Chair to find a prima facie case of privilege.

Before tackling the main issue in the question of privilege, I want to address, briefly, a second issue which the hon. member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley offered up during his remarks, namely, the motion adopted by the House on February 16 breached the House's privilege to regulate its own internal affairs. I cannot see how a motion to regulate our own internal affairs, properly based on notice, debated and adopted offends, the very privilege under which it was made. If anything, it was actually a vindication of the privilege of this House.

The hon. member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley did, however, correctly cite page 110 of *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, second edition, which says:

Privilege

Incidents involving physical obstruction...as well as occurrences of physical assault or molestation have been found to be *prima facie* cases of privilege.

However, the question becomes, what sort of physical obstruction ought to give rise to such a finding?

In my view, a momentary delay such as Thursday's is of such a *de minimis* character that it does not warrant your finding, Mr. Speaker, of a *prima facie* case of privilege. Members opposite might scoff, but the precedents bear out this line of thinking, if you will indulge me, Mr. Speaker.

Ruling on a question of privilege related to the Parliament Hill visit of then Israeli foreign minister, Mr. Speaker Lamoureux said, on May 25, 1970, at page 7255 of the *Debates*, in determining that there was no *prima facie* case to be found:

The report states that no one, that is, no member of the House and no member of our staff, was denied admission during the period. It is recognized, however, that there might have been a momentary delay if a member had to be identified...

In any event, I think I should reiterate the essential point made in the report submitted by the Sergeant-at-Arms, that in fact no member was denied access to the building on the occasion in question.

The precedent decision of your esteemed predecessor, Mr. Speaker, stands for the proposition that there was a distinction to be drawn between a denial of access, which I will admit breaches the privileges of the House, and a momentary delay, which does not. In other words, a brief delay, one of a *de minimis* character like Thursday's, is not a breach of our constitutional rights.

Further distinction was drawn in the case of the 2004 visit of the American president. In its 21st report, presented on December 15, 2004, the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs concluded that:

The denial of access, and significant delays, experienced by Members of the House constitute a contempt of the House.

Therefore, a delay can give rise to a contempt, but only if it is a significant delay.

The report, which was concurred in on May 17, 2005, offers this context, at the 13th paragraph:

According to Mr. Blaikie and others, Members were halted, and refused access across the security barriers, even after showing their House of Commons pins and identity cards. Although, in most cases, Members were eventually able to access the Hill, a number of them experienced substantial delays and some missed votes in the House. The problem was exacerbated by the fact that other persons were allowed to cross the security lines at the relevant times...

Put simply, a significant delay would be much greater than the one which was faced last week, certainly one with some extended amount of time or notable consequence. Unlike the 2004 case, the hon. member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley did not miss the vote, but I will come back to that in a moment.

In his own submissions, the hon. member made reference to a *prima facie* case of privilege arising on March 15, 2012, when the Israeli prime minister visited Parliament Hill. Let me complete the reference to that case by citing the 26th report of the Procedure and House Affairs Committee on this incident, which was presented to the House on May 31, 2012. This conclusion is set out in the 21st paragraph:

The Committee, after a thoughtful consideration of the matter, does not believe that this is an appropriate case for finding a breach of parliamentary privilege.

● (1525)

The September 2014 case of the hon. member for Acadie—Bathurst was also presented on Thursday as an authority on point. The procedure and House affairs committee has recently finished its work on that matter. In its 34th report, presented on March 26, the committee did not state any finding of contempt. Indeed, what the committee did say, at page 8, was:

Having given careful review to the events of September 25, 2014, the Committee considers that the officers managing both vehicular and pedestrian traffic during the visit of the President of Germany, in a time-sensitive context where safety was a paramount consideration, were simply attempting to do their jobs within procedures they had no control over.

The fact that came out during the committee's study of this issue was that the hon. member for Acadie—Bathurst was delayed for no more than 77 seconds, while the member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police ensured the safety of his person, as the high speed motorcade of the German president was approaching the very street that the hon. member was endeavouring to cross. Nonetheless, no finding of contempt or breach of privilege, however technical, was found in this unanimous committee report.

I will concede that the two reports that I just cited from, 2012 and 2015, were not concurred in by the House, but that should be no barrier to the persuasive authority they offer. Joseph Maingot, at page 218 of *Parliamentary Privilege in Canada*, second edition, writes:

The Speaker may refer to and rely upon decisions of the Chair in respect of matters that were found to be *prima facie* case of privilege, and in respect of reports from the privileges committee that were never adopted by the House.

At page 219, he adds:

—it is incorrect to say that these same reports...[not adopted by the House] are not the views of the House itself, notwithstanding that the House normally only formally adopted the motion to refer the *prima facie* case to the committee.

Since the committee declined to report that the 77 second delay was a contempt or a breach of the privileges of the House, largely because it was a mere momentary delay, I cannot see how the 74 second delay complained of by the hon. member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley somehow is.

I appreciate that when such a delay occurs during bells, it can create anxiety. As such, members in their anxiety, uncertain when the delay will end, tend to find the delay as being much longer than it is. Certainly, that is their perception. However, 74 seconds is still within a range of a stop light signal cycle and, as such, it is quite short. The difference is that with a stop light, we know it will change. In a circumstance like that occasioned by the hon. member, there is an anxiety period because he does not know that. That being said, it did remain a *de minimus* 74 seconds short delay.

The bus was, as he described, sitting in a left-turn lane on Wellington Street. Had the bus been stopped at an intersection's traffic lights, would he have wanted the city of Ottawa found in contempt because every light was not turning to green for the NDP finance critic? I hope not. Had the green bus stopped because of one of the stop signs posted on Parliament Hill, should the Department of Public Works and Government Services be held in contempt? I do not think so, even if, as the House will recall from a couple of years ago, the Leader of the Opposition had difficulty with our stop signs.

Privilege

At this time of year, we have large groups of tourists visiting the Hill. There are occasions when a bus or car may be held up for two or three minutes while the pedestrians cross the driveway. Should the bus not follow the rules of the road and yield because the privileges for the member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley might be offended? Should the tourists be found to have violated parliamentary privilege? That would be preposterous.

What if the bus stopped at a regular stop on its route to pick up a Liberal member's staffer. Is that momentary delay, because of the bus driver's usual routine, a contempt because the NDP MP was slowed down? No. That would be absurd, despite whatever goodwill still exists between those two parties.

These examples I just offered might seem silly and trifling, but if we consistently find every interruption in a trip to the Centre Block to be a prima facie breach of privilege, it is not hard to see where this *reductio ad absurdum* could quickly become a standard operating procedure around here. A measured, reasoned perspective is required instead.

In responding to points of order complaining about protests inhibiting access to the Palace of Westminster, Mr. Speaker Thomas, at column 38 of the official report for January 22, 1979, urged members of the United Kingdom's House of Commons to understand that the authorities outside could not be held to an absolute and strict standard. He said:

I think that the House must be reasonable in this matter. Of course, the police have their instructions from this House in the first Sessional Order that we pass, but it is entirely lacking in a sense of fair play and common sense towards those who are dealing with a major problem outside the House to say that under all circumstances they must get that crowd to make way to ensure that hon. Members may come through.

• (1530)

The 2004 report of the procedure and House affairs committee, which I previously cited, also noted in its conclusions that the privilege of access was not an absolutely unqualified right. At the report's 15th paragraph:

We acknowledge that there will be times when access cannot be allowed for anyone for reasons of safety and security or otherwise. The difficulty in this case was that Members were prevented from accessing the Hill, but other persons were allowed through the security cordons.

These sentiments are consistent with what is written in our Australian sister chamber's procedural text, *House of Representatives Practice*. At page 126, of the sixth edition, it is stated:

Security brings into conflict two principles basic to Parliament's traditions and usage. On the one hand, there is the undeniable right of people in a parliamentary democracy to observe their Parliament at work and to have reasonable access to their representatives. On the other hand, Members and Senators must be provided with conditions which will enable them to perform their duties in safety and without interference. This is basic to the operation of Parliament and a balance must be struck between these two important principles.

It is further echoed in a discussion paper published January 2015 by our Senate's subcommittee on parliamentary privilege which reads, at page 56 and 57:

One issue that is in constant evolution is that of maintaining security through the Parliament buildings...and the grounds of Parliament...while not unduly limiting parliamentarians' access to Parliament. While it is within the collective privileges of the Senate and House to administer the security within their zones, the contemporary context may also require collaboration and some compromise.

Later, at page 77, the discussion paper from the other place states:

It is under the authority of the Speaker of each House of Parliament and of the Houses of Parliament themselves to address prima facie questions of privilege arising from attempts at obstruction or molestation.

Some forms of physical obstruction, such as security or construction measures, might be necessary for the greater good of Parliament. Parliamentarians should be understanding in cases of reasonable interference or delay. In cases of abuse, however, members may claim a breach of privilege.

All of these passages are urging a balanced, responsible interpretation about privilege, and this begs the question, what is the purpose of the privilege at hand?

It is well established that the House of Commons has the pre-eminent claim to the attendance and services of its members. From that, it follows that a member has the right of access to the House to be able to give his or her attendance and service.

In Thursday's case, the House was not deprived of the attendance and services of the members who were on the shuttle bus in question. Page 2444 and 2445 of the *Journals* for Thursday confirm that the hon. member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley, along with the three other passengers he named, participated in the vote which took place shortly after 11:45 that morning. As a matter of fact, I spoke with one member who was on that bus and he confirmed to me that not only was he able to make it to Centre Block, but he was able to find time to attend to another matter before he had to be in his seat to vote.

The hon. member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley made reference to his finance committee meeting. According to the minutes of the meeting posted to the parliamentary website, the hon. member was chairing the meeting when the bells to call in the members were rung, at 11:17 a.m., and the committee agreed to continue meeting, pursuant to Standing Order 115(5). That rule reads:

—the Chair of a standing, special, legislative or joint committee shall suspend the meeting when the bells are sounded to call in the Members to a recorded division, unless there is unanimous consent of the members of the committee to continue to sit.

Unanimous consent means that no one present objected, including the hon. member himself. The very reason we have 30-minute bells for virtually every vote is, given how spread out the precinct is now, to allow members a reasonable opportunity to make it to the House, notwithstanding whatever ordinary delays or interruptions might happen during their journey. However, the finance committee, meeting over at the Valour Building, did not adjourn until 11:34 a.m., when there would have been about 13 minutes left to go until the vote.

Now, while I understand that there were very noble and well-intentioned reasons for the finance committee to continue meeting through the bells, and also possibly the vote, in order to take evidence from several witnesses, including two participating by video conference from different European cities, it is not reasonable to hear the hon. member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley complain about a 74-second interruption in his answering the 30-minute bell, after he spent 17 of those 30 minutes keeping a committee meeting going. We have not heard any other member, present at that meeting, rise to seek a contempt finding, I would note.

Privilege

•(1535)

Finally, this leaves me to want to canvass the motivations of the New Democrats in bringing this issue forward. The deputy leader of the NDP, the hon. member for Hamilton Centre, implored the Chair to make an immediate ruling on Thursday afternoon. It was a point he made three times. For his part, the House leader of the official opposition in turn stood to demand an immediate ruling. No further submissions were needed, implied he. In fact, he was so determined to see the ruling that he later rose and misrepresented the remarks of the Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons. The latter, in truth, did not say that there was a breach of privilege, despite the claim of the hon. member for Burnaby—New Westminster.

At its heart, the NDP House leader's agitation was to get a debatable motion placed before the House straightaway, following which "there may be a little further discussion". Of course, it was no coincidence that the New Democrats were trying to delay and disrupt government orders throughout that day. After all, we witnessed some three dilatory motions, with recorded votes, before we even got to the orders of the day.

Nonetheless, the very next day, in open defiance of the deputy leader and her House leader and their shared view that no further submissions were necessary, the NDP deputy whip rose in the House to offer a submission on this question of privilege. As it would turn out, the New Democrats were again working to filibuster the time provided for government orders. The hon. member for Saint-Lambert rose to make her submissions, unnecessary submissions, as her deputy leader and her House leader would have had it, to run out the clock on the time provided for government business on Friday following a dubious point of order offered by the hon. and learned member for Toronto—Danforth having failed.

Ultimately, what we have here is not some serious, legitimate effort to defend the ancient constitutional privileges of the House of Commons but rather a transparently shameless attempt to cloak petty politics with a high-minded veneer.

Mr. Speaker, it is my respectful view that this is an opportunity for you to lay down clear guidelines as to what sorts of instances will give rise to a *prima facie* case of privilege in respect of access to the precinct. The existing procedure for raising questions of privilege dates back to 1958, when the then-prevailing approach at Westminster was transplanted here by virtue of the publication of the fourth edition of *Beauchesne's Parliamentary Rules and Forms*. As O'Brien and Bosc explained at page 1,289,

This description of the British procedure soon became a handy reference seized upon by successive Speakers, beginning with Speaker Michener, as a way to curtail spurious interventions by Members

If we consider the hypothetical examples of green bus delays I offered up a few minutes ago, the effort to curtail spurious interventions might otherwise now be rendered moot. As we can imagine, it is not hard to see how an enterprising member bent on obstruction and delay in this chamber would start making every use of the brakes on a green bus, the Chair's dilemma, and the House's concern. That would just not be appropriate. Momentary delays, such as that witnessed on Thursday, simply do not warrant indulging

the possible use of this House's awesome powers in respect of contempt.

There is one last point I want to raise. It is a precedent I received more recently, but it is an old precedent, and it is from the British House. It relates to a ruling on a question of privilege from July 26, 1951. It was a question of a member of Parliament, Mr. John Lewis, the hon. member for Bolton, who had been advised by the whips to come to a vote. On his way, he was interrupted by a police officer, who held him up for reasons of traffic safety. This was off the parliamentary precinct. He made the contention that his rights and privileges were interfered with. He showed the police officer his pass. The police officer was aware that the pass allowed him privileges to arrive and that he had obligations at the House. However, the House, in fact it was the committee, on that occasion and in that instance determined that there was no obstruction of the hon. member in his progress toward the House of Commons. It states:

There was no attempt to delay him deliberately. Any delay which occurred at Victoria Gate was due to congestion of traffic which the two policemen were doing their best to control in such a way as to facilitate progress. The honourable Member was not delayed by P.C. Cordingley's refusal to let him cross Bayswater Road into the Park through Victoria Gate. The honourable Member was delayed by traffic congestion which the police could not immediately remedy. Moreover, less delay would probably have occurred had the honourable Member taken the advice of P.C. Cordingley, D.421, and proceeded along Bayswater Road towards Marble Arch.

•(1540)

There was no delay or obstruction caused by P.C. Dale, A.411, who told the honourable Member to proceed without taking any particulars of name, address, licence and insurance certificate. So far from obstructing the honourable Member, the two policemen acted reasonably and sensibly and did what they could to facilitate the honourable Member's progress towards the House.

The privilege of freedom from obstruction in the coming to or the going from the House derives from the undoubted right of Parliament to the full service of its Members. It is a privilege of the House of Commons and individual Members derive their right from the privileges of the House of Commons as a whole, and the right and need of the House of Commons to protect itself, and in so doing to protect its Members.

It goes on to summarize that privilege, and then it concludes with this finding:

Your Committee have found that there was no obstruction or delay caused by either of the policemen and that no breach of privilege was committed by them or either of them.

I think we have here a prime example that is parallel to our situation, where there was a police officer attempting to manage traffic for safety. The delay was *de minimis*, as I pointed out.

Therefore, on the motive, the reason for it, the precedents provided there, and of course, its *de minimis* nature, I think, Mr. Speaker, it is appropriate for you to provide some advice to the House on the level of delay and the level of interference with the ability of that member to access the House that would give rise to a *prima facie* finding of privilege. However, I would certainly submit that a 74-second delay that did not deny anybody the opportunity to vote constitutes a *de minimis* delay and is certainly part of what we normally expect in any of our movements around the Hill and the parliamentary precinct in the normal course.

The Speaker: I thank the hon. government House leader for the intervention.

The hon. member for Toronto—Danforth is rising on the same point of order.

Government Orders

Mr. Craig Scott (Toronto—Danforth, NDP): Mr. Speaker, as a member of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs and having been involved in the drafting of the report on the previous incident involving the member for Acadie—Bathurst, I would like to take exception to the House leader's reading of that report. It is a misrepresentation, a very strong one, that any conclusion was drawn by the committee based on the time lapse of 77 seconds being somehow or other *de minimis*. That is nowhere in the report as part of the discussion and conclusion section.

Rather, in the spirit of this place, the report was more of a diplomatic effort, with a future-oriented reasoning. The committee says, at page 8:

It...considers its principle task to be that of mitigation against similar incidents arising in the future. Cases of privilege in which Members have had their right to unimpeded access to the Parliamentary Precinct denied have occurred in the recent past with all too great a frequency.

Mr. Speaker, I think you are capable of reading between the lines. Anything that is oriented toward mitigation against future incidents of the same sort rather suggests that the committee was concerned but chose to focus on the future.

Mr. Peter Julian (Burnaby—New Westminster, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to add that I would like to potentially come back on this issue. That was almost a filibuster done with the government House leader's almost half-hour presentation. I am sure it is because he does not want the House to talk about Bill C-51, which started out with a lot of support from Canadians and has ended up with the contrary. Most Canadians oppose Bill C-51, so the government House leader now is basically trying to take away the few hours of debate that remain. It is pretty transparent.

However, what he has done in his reply on the question of privilege is simply underscore the NDP position, which is that this should go to committee. What he has tried to do is investigate, do the committee's work, and come up with his own conclusions. That is not appropriate. That is not his job. It is the job of the House to seize what is a clear breach of privilege and to refer it to the procedure and house affairs committee. It is up to that committee to do that appropriate follow-up. The government House leader has reinforced the argument that this needs to be a motion submitted to the House.

My final point is that we said, when the government ran roughshod over parliamentary privileges and rights with its motion a few weeks ago, that this would lead to the executive making decisions that more properly belong to you, Mr. Speaker, and to the legislative branch. The government House leader has just confirmed that this is exactly what the government is doing. The Conservatives have undertaken their own investigation. The Minister of Public Safety did what is your job, Mr. Speaker, which is to do the follow-up and determine, based on your knowledge and on consulting with the security officers, whether it constitutes a *prima facie* case of breach of privilege.

Now we have the cabinet, the executive branch, doing that investigation itself, by which authority I have no idea. We will certainly be doing the follow-up on that, because these are the kinds of cases exactly that we were apprehensive about when the government bulldozed the motion through the House of Commons. The government House leader has just very clearly reiterated what the NDP and other opposition members raised as a concern as well.

I reserve the right to come back, but this is quite worrisome that we have the executive branch now doing what is not appropriate for it to do. We may come back later on.

• (1545)

Hon. Peter Van Loan: Mr. Speaker, I want to be completely clear, because I may not have made this clear. The last precedent I referred you to, from the British House of Parliament, from 1951, was actually a committee report that was ultimately adopted by the House of Commons itself on August 1, 1951.

In terms of coming here, I think it is my obligation as a member of the government, with the information I undertook to provide to the House about the facts on delay, to then provide those facts to the House. I think it would be entirely inappropriate if I were to do otherwise than provide those facts. I am quite comfortable with that.

Finally, I will point out that notwithstanding the plea to you about the rules being changed around this place about who is in charge, the RCMP has been responsible for security and the conduct of matters outside of this building in the Parliamentary precinct for quite some time. Nothing has changed in this regard, so the member obviously has misstated when it says that it is somehow the consequence of any change.

The Speaker: I thank all hon. members for their contributions, and of course, we will await anything further on this. The opposition House leader indicated that he would be coming back. We will wait for that, then.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

ANTI-TERRORISM ACT, 2015

The House resumed consideration of Bill C-51, An Act to enact the Security of Canada Information Sharing Act and the Secure Air Travel Act, to amend the Criminal Code, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service Act and the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act and to make related and consequential amendments to other Acts, as reported (with amendment) from the committee, and of the motions in Group No. 1.

Ms. Peggy Nash (Parkdale—High Park, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am happy to have another opportunity to offer my views on Bill C-51 on behalf of the constituency of Parkdale—High Park.

Bill C-51 is a 62-page omnibus, so-called anti-terrorism bill that people are concerned is overly vague and too far-reaching, that beefs up the powers of CSIS, but sadly, does not provide adequate oversight.

Government Orders

There is nothing in the bill to counter radicalism in communities, to engage with communities, as has been recommended by the police and by several community organizations. At the same time the federal government is pushing forward on the bill, supposedly to confront terrorism, it continues to cut the budgets of agencies on the front line of terrorist threats, agencies like the RCMP, CSIS and CBSA. Each and every one has had its budget cut since 2012.

I do have to note that here we are again under time allocation. We are at the report stage. In other words, we are getting a report back from the public safety committee on the bill, on this very important, far-reaching legislation, and we have one day of debate.

Let me say, this is the 95th time that the government has put time limits on debate in this House of Commons, more than three times what any other government has ever attempted in terms of stifling debate and shutting down dissent. Frankly, I have to begin my remarks by saying how offensive it is and how fundamentally undermining to our democracy that we do not have a fuller debate on such an important bill, because it is very far-reaching.

Let me also clarify. Let there be no doubt that New Democrats understand that we are in a rapidly changing world. There are some very serious threats in the world that we should be extremely concerned about. I think social media has brought concerns about terrorism to our doorsteps and has shown us very graphically the kinds of horrible events that have taken place around the world and one very close to home right here in the House of Commons.

We understand that this threat is real. We do not minimize it, but we believe fundamentally, and our leader, I think, has expressed this eloquently and brilliantly that we should not be sacrificing our rights and freedoms in order to protect public safety. That is simply unacceptable, and New Democrats will not accept it.

Of course, we need concrete measures to keep us safe, but they should not erode our freedoms and they should not undermine our way of life. Once again, the Prime Minister has gone too far. Everything is about putting politics before people.

It really rang a note of truth when my colleague from Winnipeg Centre said this morning that perhaps it was the crash of the price of oil that has pushed the government to not wanting to talk about the economy. The Conservatives do not want us to look at that subject on which they have been saying they were so great for the last few years, because now Canada is not doing very well on the economy. The Conservatives put all their eggs in the oil and gas resources basket. Suddenly, we are facing serious economic headwinds and they do not want to talk about that, so now they are putting their eggs in the anti-terrorism and public safety basket.

We are concerned about the far-reaching nature of the bill, how sweeping it is, and we are really disappointed that the Conservatives chose to disregard the testimony at the public safety committee, because most of the witnesses, including the Conservative witnesses, in fact said there needs to be significant changes to the bill.

● (1550)

The leader of the official opposition has been very clear that he will not be intimidated. We will not be intimidated into giving a blank cheque to the current government and the Prime Minister. We will stand up to any Conservative law that erodes our way of life in

Canada, unlike the third party and the leader of the third party. We are not going to be intimidated and will be voting against Bill C-51 and against the very dangerous measures that it would bring in.

I did mention that we are at the report stage of the bill. Therefore, the bill went to the committee and, shockingly, the Conservatives wanted to have just three two-hour meetings on this far-reaching bill. It was a very short period time. However, thanks to New Democrats, we were able to push the number of meetings to nine, but it was still a very limited process.

Again, most of the witnesses were very critical of the bill, and in a highly unusual move, four former prime ministers, including Conservative prime ministers, have come out with serious concerns about the bill. One hundred law professors in Canada, senior legal minds, have been highly critical of the bill and detailed their deep concern about the undermining of our charter rights and our basic legal rights in this country. Privacy commissioners have expressed their concerns about the far-reaching extent of the information sharing of the bill. However, I notice that the federal Privacy Commissioner was not able to appear before the committee because the Conservatives did not allow that.

I have to say that with the bill before us, I have never seen such a reaction as with Bill C-51. It is rare when I talk to someone in the community that they know the number of a bill. They might say, “that budget bill” or “the bill on public safety”, but it is rare that they know the number of the bill and are really informed about it. I have to say that the level of awareness has been extremely high.

Early on in the process when the government was saying that most Canadians still supported the bill, I have to say that in Toronto at City Hall, the public square was absolutely full, chock-a-block, in an anti-Bill C-51 protest. I was very proud that I and my NDP colleagues were able to speak at the protest and stand strong along with the leader of the Green Party in opposition to the bill. We were very well received at that time. I have had dozens of people come to me asking what they could do to stop the bill. People have said that they want to talk to their neighbours, knock on doors and explain to other Canadians exactly what is happening here. We have seen incredible community engagement on the bill.

In the time that remains for me today, I would like to bring some of the voices of my community of Parkdale—High Park to the House. On the government side, they may not think people are paying attention. Conservatives may not think people read and really know what is going on, but they do. People do know what is going on and I would like to share some of their comments.

Here is an email that was written to the Prime Minister and shared with me. It is from a constituent on Wright Avenue, who says:

Dear Mr. Harper,

Government Orders

Please advise all of your ministers to follow the advice of the many Canadians who opposed bill C-51. The broad language contained in it that will give sweeping powers to CSIS are particularly disturbing.

Rather than making Canadians safer, C-51 seems more likely to make Canadians more afraid: afraid to appear to be different, afraid of authority, afraid to speak out, afraid to be free.

It will also undermine one of our great strengths: our multi-culturalism, our acceptance of the many cultures that have made Canada strong and free.

Please advise everyone to vote against C-51, to drastically amend it, or better yet to kill it outright.

I look forward to your reply, assuring that bill C-51, in its present state, will be voted down.

I will read another one—

• (1555)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Order, please. We are out of time. It is the end of the time allocated for the hon. member and we are going to go to questions and comments.

Before we do that, just a reminder to hon. members. Of course, the usual thing is to avoid using proper names of other hon. members and that remains so, even if they happen to appear in a citation that the member is using at the time of their remarks. That is just another reminder along those lines.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Lambton—Kent—Middlesex.

Mr. Bev Shipley (Lambton—Kent—Middlesex, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I find it quite interesting coming from a party across the way that actually has never supported a measure that we have done for the military, for our veterans or for the safety of the country, whether judicial or enforcement.

The constituents in Lambton—Kent—Middlesex wonder if it has actually gone far enough. Let me read something.

This is a message to Canada and all the American tyrants: We are coming and we will destroy you...

Then:

If you can kill a disbelieving American or European—especially the spiteful and filthy French—or an Australian, or a Canadian, or any other disbeliever from the disbelievers waging war, including the citizens of the countries that entered into a coalition against the Islamic State, then rely upon Allah, and kill him in any manner or way however it may be.

This was ISIS spokesman Abu Muhammad al-Adnani. This is the concern that Canadians have and that my residents in Lambton—Kent—Middlesex have. I wonder why they are so concerned about the freedoms and peace that would come if we do not give protection to Canadians. Then, actually, we do not have freedoms. I wonder if the member has a comment.

• (1600)

Ms. Peggy Nash: Mr. Speaker, I regret that I did not notice you giving me a signal earlier that my time was almost up. I apologize.

I appreciate the member opposite is citing one of his constituents. Let me respond with an appropriate response from my community. This is from a constituent.

While I agree that terrorism and radicalization are a real and legitimate concern, I do not believe that passing a bill that could be twisted to potentially encroach on the very freedoms we are trying to protect is the answer. Canada has shown again and again that we are adept at dealing with terrorism with the tools we currently have. This bill is a step in a direction that seems counter to the Canadian values that I hold

dear. A step towards a society that values security over freedom, while in reality providing neither.

I have been extremely disappointed by the CPC and LPC the last several years.

And also:

I have not been a supporter of the NDP in the past, but please know that you have won a voter in the next election.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I look to the member for some clarification with respect to the New Democratic Party's position. I would like to provide a specific quote from her leader during an interview. He was being interviewed by Tom Clark from Global TV who asked the question, "If you become the government, would you scrap this piece of legislation?" The leader responded, "We would change it for sure". He did not say in fact that he would scrap it.

Then a member in the House asked a question regarding scrapping it. The response from the member for Laurier—Sainte-Marie was, "I think we have been very clear. We do not like the legislation. When we form government, we are going to change it".

We get different answers from different members of the caucus as to whether or not they believe there is any merit to the legislation itself. Therefore, let me pose the question to her. Does she believe if the legislation passes and the NDP were to form government—heaven forbid—would it in fact scrap the legislation or, like some members, like the member for Winnipeg Centre has said, like the leader of the New Democratic Party has said, make some changes to it?

Ms. Peggy Nash: Mr. Speaker, we have said very clearly we oppose the bill. We want to scrap the bill. We can do it today if we can win enough support from Liberals and Conservatives, or we would do it when we form government.

However, I plead with the member for Winnipeg North for him, his leader, and his other caucus members to find backbone. They are very critical of the bill. I plead with them to find a backbone, stand up in their place and vote against Bill C-51.

Mr. LaVar Payne (Medicine Hat, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in support of the anti-terrorism act, 2015.

First, I am proud to note that our government's economic action plan 2015 included vital funding for national security measures, such as those found in the legislation. In particular, we have committed to doubling the budget of the Security Intelligence Review Committee, SIRC, which plays a critical role in reviewing the operations of CSIS. Beginning with this fiscal financial year, we will invest \$12.5 million over five years and \$2.5 million thereafter in ongoing funding.

Further, we have announced nearly \$300 million in investments to combat terrorism. This is above and beyond the fact that we have increased national security budgets by one-third since coming to office.

We have done this because the international jihadi movement has declared war on Canada and her allies. Jihadi terrorists hate the fact that Canada is the best place in the world to work, live and raise a family. They would rather return to the seventh century. Contrary to what the Liberals and the NDP would have us do, we will not sit on the sidelines while we fight this terrorist scourge.

Government Orders

Turning to my remarks on the bill itself, I will focus on the provisions relating to the element that would create the security of Canada information sharing act.

Effective and responsible sharing of information between institutions is increasingly essential to the Government of Canada's ability to protect Canada's national security. This includes detecting, preventing and responding to phenomena such as terrorism, espionage, foreign-influenced activity, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and threats to Canada's cybersecurity and critical infrastructure.

In today's interconnected world, national security threats emerge, evolve rapidly and unpredictably, and often go beyond the mandate and capability of any single institution. In addition, information on threats can and often is found in different forms and locations across government. Therefore, in order to take the appropriate action to protect Canada and Canadians, this information must be gathered, analyzed and pieced together in order to form a coherent picture of the scope and nature of the threat. This means government institutions must work together and share information in a seamless and timely manner.

The ineffective sharing of information can lead to significant risks, such as failing to detect and prevent attacks. Of particular concern is the phenomenon of individuals travelling abroad to engage in terrorism-related activities. The threats posed by these individuals has reinforced the need to enhance the government's tools to identify them. While government departments and agencies already share a significant amount of information with each other every day, and more so during urgent circumstances, there are a number of legal requirements and limits that can delay or inhibit optimal information sharing for security of Canada purposes.

For example, some institutions lack clear lawful authority to share. Certain statutes contain explicit limits on how information can be shared and experience has shown that in some cases these limits are too restrictive. The complexity of the legal landscape can make it challenging for operators to determine the circumstances under which information can be shared, and rules are frequently misunderstood and interpreted on a case-by-case basis.

Allow me to provide a couple of real-life examples of how this works.

The Canada Border Services Agency and Citizenship and Immigration Canada rely on a "consistent use" provision under the Privacy Act to share information that is collected pursuant to the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act with other institutions. However, this exception allows sharing only for a narrow purpose. In this case, it only allows information sharing for the administration and enforcement of immigration legislation and does not allow sharing for broader national security purposes.

Another example relates to the Canadian passport order, which does not currently contain an explicit information-sharing authority. As a result, CSIS relies on the investigative body exemption of the Privacy Act to access passport-related information to fulfill its own mandate. Not only can this create delays in accessing relevant information, but this exemption also does not allow for Citizenship and Immigration Canada to proactively disclose information to CSIS

that could be useful in investigating and advising on threats to the security of Canada, for example, Canadians travelling abroad to engage in terrorism.

Information sharing can also be impeded by the ad hoc and complex nature of the legal regimes that govern it. In addition to the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Privacy Act, institutions are also subject to their own specific legal regimes which govern their information-sharing practices. There may be, for example, explicit limits in departmental legislation on how information can be shared.

● (1605)

The overall result is a legislative patchwork that creates a difficult operating environment wherein the rules are difficult to interpret. Over time, this can make information sharing less effective and efficient than is required to prevent and address threats to Canada's national security.

This brings me to how the anti-terrorism act, 2015 will address the issues. First and foremost, it will provide clear authority to all Government of Canada institutions to disclose information in a responsible manner to designated recipient institutions. Only institutions with jurisdiction or responsibilities related to the security of Canada will be designated to receive information relevant to their responsibilities.

It is important to note that this authority will be carefully circumscribed to ensure that the sharing is both effective and responsible and that the new act respects the privacy of individuals.

We are introducing amendments to certain acts to resolve existing barriers. For example, we will amend the Customs Act to allow CBSA to share customs information. We will amend the Chemical Weapons Convention Implementation Act to allow the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development to share information collected under the act using the new authority. We will amend the Income Tax Act and the Excise Act to allow for the disclosure of taxpayer information when it would be relevant to threats to national security, to a terrorism offence, or to a money-laundering offence related to a terrorism offence.

I want to stress, however, that if other acts that are not amended by the bill prohibit the sharing of information, those prohibitions will be respected. In other words, the new security of Canada information sharing act will not override prohibitions in law.

Government Orders

The proposed legislation will go a long way in helping to keep Canada more secure. It will allow information to be shared more easily in some circumstances where there is a gap in the lawful authority to do so. It will help resolve the confusion and risk aversion resulting from current and ad hoc complex policy and legal framework, and it will provide a solid foundation for future information-sharing practices.

I want to be clear here, however, that these changes are being done with the full consideration of Canada's privacy laws. Indeed, this is not about collecting new information; this is simply about improving how information already being collected by organizations is shared.

There will be a number of checks and balances in place. For example, each organization will share information at its own discretion, not as a requirement. Institutions can also be excluded from the application of the act through the Governor in Council process. This is important as we recognize there are instances where sharing between some institutions is not appropriate. Institutions that receive information must continue to respect any caveats attached to the information or originator controls. Independent review bodies as well as the Privacy Commissioner and Auditor General will continue to scrutinize information-sharing activities.

Those are some of the robust controls that are in place to ensure Canadians that we are safeguarding their right to privacy. For greater certainty and clarity, our government moved amendments at committee related to these measures. Among these, we are ensured that the security of Canada information sharing act will explicitly exclude information sharing related to all forms of advocacy, protest and dissent. It will only authorize sharing of information that is relevant to national security.

In this day and age of complex and sophisticated security threats, federal departments and agencies must have the ability to seamlessly share information with each other. This is paramount to keeping Canada safe. With that in mind, we must move forward with this legislation without further delay.

• (1610)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Dany Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I listened carefully to my colleague's speech. He praised the measures in the bill that he liked.

However, I did not find anything about deradicalization in the bill even though, when it comes to terrorism, that is critical in order to prevent rather than to cure. Communities need more help to fight radicalization here in Canada.

Where is the strategy to counter radicalization that will let us work on prevention with Canadian communities?

[*English*]

Mr. LaVar Payne: Mr. Speaker, obviously, legislation is important to combat terrorism, and our security agencies need these tools.

I sit on the public safety committee and we have already heard from the commissioner that the RCMP is working with other organizations throughout the country to ensure that they stop the

radicalization of individuals which creates terrorists throughout the world.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Medicine Hat has focused on part 1 of the proposed act. As he will know from the evidence from experts before the public safety committee, many legal experts were very concerned that the definition of “activity that undermines the security of Canada” was so overbroad as to include absolutely anything. The definition includes “interference with the capability of the Government of Canada in relation to intelligence, defence, border operations, public safety, the administration of justice, diplomatic or consular relations, or the economic or financial stability of Canada”. Its overbroad language has been the target of enormous concern from experts, particularly proposed section 6, which would allow the sharing of further information being disclosed to any person for any purpose.

How can the member possibly justify the overbroad, loose language that has come under scrutiny from privacy and information experts within and outside the Government of Canada?

• (1615)

Mr. LaVar Payne: Mr. Speaker, as I am sure the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands knows, in fact there was an amendment to the bill that specifically changed that particular avenue in terms of providing information to anyone.

It is well known, and certainly it has been said time and time again and it is in the bill, that in fact there is nothing that will stop people from having peaceful demonstrations. These will continue as long as they are not creating terrorist activities on our government and our country.

Mr. Bev Shipley (Lambton—Kent—Middlesex, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to commend my great colleague from Medicine Hat for his intervention on today's topic.

If members go back to the blues, I will not repeat it all, but certainly the threat that comes from ISIS itself to Canada to kill Canadians is not something that we take lightly, nor should we.

The opposition parties across the way have not supported anything for our veterans, for our military, for any of the judicial legislation that we have. Therefore, their speaking today not about the victims, which would be Canadians, is understandable I guess.

How in Canada or any country can one actually have freedom if one does not have security? That is actually what the opposition is saying about this. The opposition members are so concerned about it that they are saying not to worry about security because it would take away some of our freedoms. I would ask my colleague if he thinks as I do, that that is backwards.

Mr. LaVar Payne: Mr. Speaker, my colleague is absolutely correct. One cannot have freedom without security. One has to go along with the other.

We have heard that terrorists want to create havoc and they want to kill people here. In fact, in Alberta, they actually suggested that people go to the West Edmonton Mall in Alberta. I am a resident of Alberta and I go there on occasion, as do a lot of my family members. Terrorists wanted to attack people there, attack that mall, and certainly to injure and kill individuals.

Government Orders

We need to make sure that we have the right rules and the ability for all of our national security agencies, the RCMP, CBSA and CSIS, to protect Canadian citizens.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): 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 Surrey North, Public Safety; the hon. member for Thunder Bay—Superior North, Health; and the hon. member for Quebec, Quebec Bridge.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Mount Royal.

Hon. Irwin Cotler (Mount Royal, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise to address Bill C-51 and will begin by setting forth the credo that has underpinned my approach to anti-terrorism law and policy for many years. In brief, an appropriate and effective strategy must view security and rights not as concepts in conflict, but as values that are inextricably linked. Simply put, terrorism constitutes an assault on the security of democracy like Canada, and on our individual and collective rights to life, liberty, and security of the person.

Accordingly, we must take the threat of terrorism seriously and address it with effective legislation. As well, there are other measures, such as anti-radicalization efforts and the allocation of adequate resources to law enforcement and security services. A culture of prevention is crucial here. At the same time, we must ensure that legislative initiatives that are taken are consistent with the rule of law, comport with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and that they are always subject to robust oversight and review.

With these principles in mind, I will turn to the bill before us, which is not simply one bill, but omnibus legislation, a series of major enactments. I will discuss several specific aspects of the bill, particularly those that are cause for concern.

I must begin with a general critique and preface my remarks with respect to the process, or what I would call the abuse of process, by which this legislation has been considered. At the same time, I will make reference to some of the rhetoric surrounding this legislation under the government's approach. It has frankly inhibited the necessary, thorough, and constructive legislative process, while at the same time and in so doing has undermined our responsibility as parliamentarians, whether we are on the government side of the House or in opposition, for the oversight of such major legislation.

With regard to rhetoric, let us be clear that every parliamentarian, every witness who appeared before committee, and Canadians themselves, both proponents and opponents of this bill, share the desire to keep Canadians safe from terrorism. Yet there have been accusations made to the contrary, particularly directed by some government members at critics of Bill C-51 at committees. References have been made to it in the House.

Such accusations are frankly not worthy of the serious role and responsibilities that our constituents have entrusted to us with respect to this and other pieces of legislation. In particular, the threat posed by terrorism to the safety of Canadians must be taken seriously, but so must concerns about the impact of anti-terror legislation on our civil liberties. Those who raise such concerns should be appreciated for their contributions, not denigrated and diminished.

With regard to process, we may note that time allocation was invoked during second reading on Bill C-51. It was invoked during committee, and now that the bill has returned from committee, time allocation has been imposed by the government once again at report stage. Indeed, at committee, the Conservatives limited the time allotted to study the bill such that important witnesses were prevented from testifying. I note as but one example the extraordinary, I would even say incomprehensible, fact that the Privacy Commissioner himself was not given the opportunity to testify about a bill that would impact directly and significantly on the privacy of Canadians.

As University of Ottawa law professor professor Craig Forcese has written, "this process is night and day compared to the more important role Parliament played in both the enactment of the original CSIS Act in 1983/84 and that of the first Anti-terrorism Act in 2001". I might add that during the discussion of that anti-terrorism bill in 2001 and following, there was robust and public debate within the government caucus at the time, as well as from the opposition, and an acceptance of recommendations made by the opposition in the course of such debate to the bill.

The problem with overheated government rhetoric and a rushed and inadequate process is that problems with the bill cannot be fully and constructively aired and addressed in an environment that proceeds at such a pace, let alone, as I said, the diminution of the responsibility for parliamentary oversight.

● (1620)

Nevertheless, I will do my best to highlight some of these problems in the limited time available to me, and to explain how some of these problems with the bill can and should be resolved.

To begin with, many of my concerns, and those that have been expressed by the experts who have been referenced in this debate, about provisions that broaden the powers of Canadian Security and Intelligence Service and the legislative language that provides or authorizes those powers, could be addressed and alleviated if they were accompanied by effective oversight, parliamentary and otherwise.

It is astonishing that the government has rejected all proposals, despite the overriding consensus by experts within the opposition in this House, and I suspect among members of the government caucus themselves, for the overriding need for robust oversight.

First, with respect to information sharing, the bill allows for the sharing of information about Canadians in order to protect Canada against activities that "undermine the security of Canada", to quote the legislative language. Valid concerns have been raised about the overbreadth of that language and about how such powers to share information may be used or misused, and, again, the lack of corresponding oversight.

Government Orders

I recognize that the government effectively accepted two Liberal amendments, in accordance with recommendations also from the Canadian Bar Association and many others. First was to remove the qualifier “lawful” from the previously proposed exception for “lawful advocacy, protest, dissent and artistic expression”; and second was to narrow the provision that originally allowed for the disclosure of information “to any person for any purpose”. Yet there remains significant room for improvement to ensure that such information is reliable, that it is used and shared appropriately, and that it does not abuse privacy or liberty.

We know from the experience of Maher Arar, for instance—and I was particularly involved in that case, serving at that time as pro bono counsel—that a lack of safeguards with respect to information sharing can have and did have tragic consequences. These information sharing provisions should therefore be accompanied by effective parliamentary oversight of CSIS, in addition to mandated parliamentary review of the security of Canada information sharing act.

With respect to the Criminal Code, Bill C-51 would make several significant amendments, notably expanding and lowering the threshold for preventive arrest and peace bonds. I note that the Canadian Bar Association has expressed its support for the reduced standard for peace bonds, from the reasonable fear that a person “will” commit a terrorism offence, to the reasonable fear that they “may” commit a terrorism offence, and that police were reportedly unable to meet the existing evidentiary standard to secure a peace bond for Martin Couture-Rouleau before he murdered Warrant Officer Patrice Vincent.

Therefore, a case can be made that the refinement of powers in this area for prevention purposes is worthwhile. Again, however, such powers should be met with effective parliamentary oversight and mandatory review. Indeed, in the past, provisions allowing for preventive arrest were understood to be exceptional measures, accompanied by sunset clauses that are absent in this legislation.

Bill C-51 also contains several measures that raise questions of constitutionality. Again, we have no reports regarding any consistency with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms as required. However, leaving that aside, the legislation effectively provides for measures that “contravene a right of freedom guaranteed by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms”, if a judge issues a warrant to that effect in *ex parte* or in camera proceedings.

As we know, this turns on its head the role of judges as protectors of our rights. Despite the government's protestations to the contrary, the need to obtain a warrant is by no means equivalent to a suitable replacement for robust parliamentary oversight. That remains the crux of the problem with the government's approach.

• (1625)

Mr. Craig Scott (Toronto—Danforth, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate what might turn out to be one of the last speeches of our hon. colleague in the House because he will not be standing again for his riding. I thank him for the kind of speech we have come to know him for: thoughtful, scholarly, fair, and ultimately non-partisan.

I want to ask him, with respect to the last 30 seconds or so of his remarks, about this question of basically enlisting judges to pre-

authorize charter infringements that can be saved through some kind of analogous reasoning to a section 1 process that judges go through when they are adjudicating, which is a different context. He has expressed extreme concern that this gets what judges do with respect to charter rights backwards.

I am wondering if he could comment a bit further about whether he does not see this as such a fundamental flaw of the bill that standing with the bill in the hope that it can be fixed in the future is not justified and we should be voting against it.

• (1630)

Hon. Irwin Cotler: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question that was put by my hon. colleague.

As I stated in my speech, and would even reiterate, if I have not stated it sufficiently and as expressly as it must be stated, judges should not be put in the position where they become enablers of violations of the charter. It is the responsibility of judges to protect the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and to protect Canadians through the interpretation and application of the charter.

Therefore, I expressed my concern with regard to this particular aspect, and, as we have said as a party, we have proposed a series of amendments on this and other issues. They will be part of our platform, and we will leave it to the Canadian people.

Let me be clear: this is not legislation that we would have enacted in this form. We have sought to reconcile the responsibility that a government has and that we as parliamentarians have on behalf of our constituents, to protect the security and safety of Canadians. That is mandated also, I might add, by UN Security Council resolutions, in a spate of resolutions that we should undertake and enact to enhance anti-terrorism legislation, given the nature of the terrorist threat.

Having said that, we need to ensure that they do comport, as I said, with the charter, with the rule of law, with the protection of the rights of Canadians, including privacy. That is why we have put forth the amendments that we have.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, the member for Mount Royal will know that I believe this bill to be dangerous in nearly every aspect of all five parts and that it should never have been brought to the House in this form.

If it were not for the over-politicization of the justice department in its advice, the contamination through partisanship of the operations of justice department lawyers so that they no longer block legislation, which is unconstitutional, this would never have arrived at first reading.

Government Orders

I will ask my hon. colleague if he agrees that this bill does not contain anything that could be described as oversight, that there is a difference between review, which we have weakly, through SIRC, and oversight, which we used to have. There was a CSIS director general. That position was eliminated through Bill C-38, in 2012. We have no oversight in Canada, no judicial oversight and no parliamentary oversight. From what I have learned, that means we are the only one of the Five Eyes partners, which are the U.S., U.K., Canada, New Zealand, and Australia, with such weak and non-existent oversight of the operations of intelligence and police.

Hon. Irwin Cotler: Mr. Speaker, I share the concern that this bill does not have the necessary and robust oversight that it needs, not on a parliamentary level, a judicial level, and not for the purposes of having public engagement.

Therefore, I was proud to be one of many Canadians, including four former prime ministers, as well as the member for Malpeque, to issue an open letter underscoring the need for anti-terrorism law and policy to protect both security and civil liberties, and the need for express and parallel robust oversight, mandated review, sunset clauses and the like. We need that.

We will continue to work for that. Even after the passage of this bill, I will continue to work with Canadians of all political perspectives to ensure that the objectives of both security and the rights of Canadians are secure.

Mr. Bernard Trotter (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and for La Francophonie, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today in the House to speak in favour of the anti-terrorism act, 2015. There has been a lot of discussion in the House and in the media about this bill, and it is long overdue.

It must be noted that the international jihadist movement has declared war on Canada. Canadians are being targeted by jihadi terrorists simply because these terrorists hate our society and the values that it represents. Contrary to what some groups and even opposition members of Parliament have suggested, jihadi terrorism is not a human right; it is an act of war. That is why our Conservative government has put forward the measures contained in this bill, which would protect Canadians against jihadi terrorists who seek to destroy the very principles that make Canada the best country in the world in which to live. That is also why Canada is not sitting on the sidelines, as some members would have it do, and is instead joining its allies in supporting the international coalition in the fight against ISIS.

I would like to begin by touching on the issue of financial resources in the fight against terror. Our Conservative government has already increased the resources available to our police forces by one third. The Liberals and NDP voted against those increases each step of the way. Now, budget 2015 would further increase resources to CSIS, the RCMP and CBSA by almost \$300 million to bolster our front-line efforts to counter terrorism. Our government will continue to ensure that our police forces have the resources that they need to keep Canadians safe.

There is broad support for this legislation from people from all walks of life in Canada. I would like to quote Danny Eisen, the co-founder of the Canadian Coalition Against Terror:

Put plainly by Osama Bin Laden, "The enemy can be defeated by attacking its economic centre." This tenet was evidenced just recently by threats from Somali terrorists — not against synagogues, churches or MPs — but against malls in England, the U.S. and Canada.

The consequences of terrorism therefore are not restricted to rubble and funerals. Terrorism and its related enterprises cost Canada tens of billions of dollars yearly while the global economy has expended and lost trillions...

The tools in C-51 therefore deserve more tempered consideration by critics given the risk and perhaps the probability that Canada will not escape the attacks seen in other countries. For while legislation can always be revisited at a later date, no act of parliament can reconstitute lives shattered by a terrorist attack. Too many Canadians are already living examples of just how true that is.

These are powerful words from a man who lost family in the horrific attacks of September 11, 2001.

We must remember what this debate is about. We have to stop jihadi terrorists from attacking us. We must remember that it was not long ago that this very building was besieged by a jihadi terrorist bent on destruction.

While the Liberals and the NDP have refused to call the terrorist attack what it is, and have sought to make excuses for the horrific attacks, our Conservative government has taken firm actions, and we have strong support for these actions. Ray Boisvert, former assistant director of CSIS, said:

[C-51] will be a very effective tool to get [jihadist propaganda] material off the Internet.

David Cape, of the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, said:

[The seizure of terrorist propaganda] would empower the courts to order the removal or seizure of vicious material often encouraging the murder of Jews. Removing this heinous propaganda, particularly from the Internet, would limit its capacity to radicalize Canadians and inspire attacks.

Tahir Gora, of the Canadian Thinkers' Forum, said:

The government's proposed Bill C-51, when passed by Parliament, shall help Canadian Muslims to curb extremist elements...

Over and over again, credible Canadians have come forward to say that this legislation would help to combat the jihadi terrorist threat. Contrast these civil society groups, academics and former intelligence operatives with the so-called experts who have maligned the bill. They have demonstrated a lack of knowledge, which leads me to believe that they are terribly misinformed or that there is some other type of agenda at play to try to mislead Canadians.

It is certainly unfortunate that debate in this place has often stooped quite low over this issue, so I would like to raise the tone of debate by reminding the House of Commons of some of the comments of eminent security thinkers.

Professor Elliot Tepper, of Carleton University, said:

Bill C-51 is the most important national security legislation since the 9/11 era...

Bill C-51 is designed for the post-9/11 era. It's a new legislation for a new era in terms of security threats. While it's understandable that various provisions of the legislation attract attention, we need to keep our focus on the fundamental purpose and the fundamental challenge of combatting emerging types of terrorism.

Government Orders

●(1635)

Professor Salim Mansur of the University of Western Ontario said:

Bill C-51 is directed against Islamist jihadists and to prevent or pre-empt them from their stated goal to carry out terrorist threats against the West, including Canada...the measures proposed in Bill C-51 to deal with the nature of threats Canada faces are quite rightly and urgently needed to protect and keep secure the freedom of her citizens.

Scott Tod, the Deputy Commissioner for Organized Crime Investigations with the Ontario Provincial Police said:

Bill C-51 offers improvements for the federal police to share information among our justice sector partners, security partners, but more importantly and hopefully, with the community partners and government situational tables designed to reduce the terrorist threat and improve community safety and well-being.

Dr. Zuhdi Jasser, President of American Islamic Forum for Democracy said:

Disrupting doesn't mean arresting these individuals or violating their personal property rights or taking them out of commission. You're actually just disrupting a plot.

It's amazing to me that disrupting is currently prohibited, I could go on all day about the support for this important bill. However, I see that I have limited time and so I will close my remarks by saying that I would like to remind members of exactly what the bill would do.

The bill would allow Passport Canada, for example, to share information on potential terrorist travellers with the RCMP. It would stop known radicalized individuals from boarding a plane bound for a terrorist conflict zone. It would criminalize the promotion of terrorism in general. For example, statements like "kill all the infidels wherever they are" would become illegal. It would allow CSIS agents to speak with the parents of radicalized youth in order to disrupt terrorist travel plans. It would also will give the government an appeal mechanism to stop information from being released in security certificate proceedings if it could harm a source. The bill would not turn CSIS into a secret police force, or somehow systemically violate the rights of peaceful protesters.

When this bill comes to a vote shortly, I hope that all members will be able to base their vote on facts and not fear, and will support this legislation.

●(1640)

[Translation]

Mr. Romeo Saganash (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the speech that we just heard.

I listened carefully to the testimony given before the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security, particularly that of the Assembly of First Nations, the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs and Pamela Palmater. They expressed the same views as those held by most aboriginal peoples across the country.

Everyone here knows that aboriginal peoples have constitutional rights in this country. The Supreme Court has recognized those rights time and time again, against the will of the members opposite, incidentally.

This bill deals with public infrastructure and the threat to economic stability. I know what I am talking about in that regard because I have been very involved in the area of aboriginal rights

over the past 30 years. Whether it was here or elsewhere in the world, I have always been seen as a threat to my country's economic stability. I was even accused of being anti-Quebec in the context of a hydroelectric project in the province. Therefore, I know what I am talking about when it comes to this issue.

Many experts have said that this bill threatens to lump together legitimate dissent and terrorism. The Conservatives are telling us that we do not need to worry, but can they give us even one example of an aboriginal protest in Canada that the federal government considered to be legitimate?

Mr. Bernard Trotter: Mr. Speaker, this bill explicitly states that peaceful protests that are of no threat to anyone are legitimate and that they are not covered by this bill. It is also clear that Canadians' right to participate in public protests will be respected. That has nothing to do with this bill.

The purpose of this bill is to target people who represent a threat to Canada's security and economy and who want to kill Canadians. That is the purpose of this bill. It in no way affects peaceful protests.

[English]

Mr. Adam Vaughan (Trinity—Spadina, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I met with a number of police organizations over the last week, including some from the City of Toronto, where we both represent constituents. Their complaint was that there is no new money for de-radicalization, there is no new money to do a lot of the work which is side-loaded onto local police forces as CSIS does not have the personnel, in terms of capacity, to fulfill some of these new responsibilities. They wonder how they can do this work and carry out these duties if the current federal government, which talks tough on crime but never supports police departments in the local level when it side-loads these responsibilities, is not going to support them.

●(1645)

Mr. Bernard Trotter: Mr. Speaker, in our most recent budget there is increased monies for police forces and certain initiatives.

However, I think the important thing to remember is that this initiative of de-radicalization is not really the entire responsibility of our police forces. It really has to be the community and society as a whole. There needs to be a complete societal effort for de-radicalization. There are imams I have met with in Toronto who have talked about their need to get involved in this initiative. They know they need to root out extremist elements within some of their congregations, and there could be other organizations that get involved in terrorist activities.

The point is that the police forces will work in conjunction with communities. A lot of these people are actually volunteers. People get involved; they identify; they come forward.

The bill is about giving police certain tools. We think about the ability now, that we do not have, to take down terrorist recruitment websites that call for people to commit acts of terror against Canadian society. Finally, with the legislation we would have that ability. Currently, it is not illegal in this country to do that, to actually advertise and recruit terrorists.

Government Orders

Mr. Craig Scott (Toronto—Danforth, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to concentrate my remarks on the theme that has emerged today from the government side, which is that somehow or other the NDP is being misleading and there is a bunch of inexpert critics across Canada commenting on Bill C-51. I will not go the next step and say that there has been misleading coming from the ranks of the government, but that will be apparent as well in my remarks.

I would like to start with three groups of actors who were excluded from testifying before the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security on Bill C-51. The Conservatives did not want these people revealing their knowledge and the information that comes with it.

The special advocates who are in charge of providing representation in national security certificate proceedings wanted to appear. They were not allowed to appear, so they instead sent a written submission where they pointed out two problems with Bill C-51. One was that in the existing national security certificate proceedings, a whole set of new restrictions were being put on the access of special advocates to government information relating to the person whose interests they were supposed to be protecting in the name of fair process within the legal system.

Under the amendments to the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act proposed and that are now going forward in Bill C-51, the government will now be allowed to decide what information is relevant for the case made by the minister and then give only that to the special advocates. They are demanding rightly that this be amended, no although there is no chance it will be now, so that special advocates can receive all information and other evidence in order for them to decide what is relevant and what is not. Quite obviously, the second possibility would be for the judge to determine, but not for the government on its own to be able to do that.

The second thing they wanted heard was about this new disruption power that was being placed in the hands of CSIS, with a role being given in certain circumstances, far fewer circumstances than the government would lead people to suggest, for judges to preauthorize the issuing of warrants for disruption, some of which could preauthorize charter infringements, infringements meaning a violation of a right, that they would determine somehow was still not a violation of the charter, if we were to understand how the justice lawyers represented it finally, with more clarity than the minister was capable of, at committee.

Basically, they have made the excellent case that this needs a system of special advocates. These are going to be secret proceedings, *ex parte* proceedings. Judges will have no power to follow-up and see whether or not the warrant they issued had any bearing on or relationship to what was actually carried out. There are all kinds of problems with the procedural aspects of the process to suggest that people's interests, those who are going to be subject to these broad-ranging warrants that have nothing to do with the two normal things that judges are involved with, which is issuing warrants for arrest and for reasonable search and seizure, that those people would have their interests adequately protected.

This is a group of special advocates, all of whom are eminent lawyers, in the Canadian legal community, including Paul

Cavalluzzo, Paul Copeland, John Norris and Lorne Waldman. Those are just four of the signatories of their submission.

The second person who was excluded from testifying before the committee was an officer of Parliament, the Privacy Commissioner, who I would like to remind everybody, is also not just there to protect privacy interests in the realm of being the Privacy Commissioner, but who comes from a background of national security law when he was with the government before being appointed. I have to be honest. I was worried about that when he was appointed, but he has turned out to be the good lawyer that everybody said he was and he has interpreted his role as being to actually comment on legislation when it is going to create serious impact on privacy rights.

Let me talk about the information sharing act. We have been on about this in the House a couple of times today. We discuss it in his written submission, because of course he again was not allowed to testify before the Bill C-51 House of Commons committee. I do not know what kind of democracy people think we are operating here, but it is not a full-fledged parliamentary democracy in any way, shape or form when an officer of Parliament cannot appear before a committee on a bill that strikes at the heart of privacy concerns.

● (1650)

He says:

In sum, the 17 federal departments in question would be in a position to receive information about any or all Canadians' interactions with government... We are moving very quickly into the world of Big Data... As a result of [the new act, Bill C-51], 17 government institutions involved in national security would have virtually limitless powers to monitor and, with the assistance of Big Data analytics, to profile ordinary Canadians, with a view to identifying security threats among them.

He is saying that is obviously a huge incursion into privacy. What we do about it is what so much of the rest of his brief is about. Of the five or six recommendations he had that would have been helpful to have testimony on in the full light of day, with media and others paying attention as well, here is one. He said:

Another obstacle to effective review is that existing review bodies are currently unable to share information amongst themselves. As we and others have stated previously, there is at present no explicit legislative authority to conduct joint reviews of national security operations, nor is there a mechanism whereby information of relevance that may be discovered by one review body could be passed to another.

He goes on to say, "A system which proposes removal of silos between government departments", these are the 17 government departments that would be able to share information more freely under this new system, for information-sharing purposes must provide for the same removal of silos for the bodies which ensure their activities are compliant with the law".

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Finally, he is echoed by the third actor I want to mention, Commissioner Plouffe, who is the Communications Security Establishment Canada. He also did not want to appear before the committee. That included special advocates, the Privacy Commissioner and the CSEC commissioner. One of the only three review bodies that exist in our entire system was not even allowed to testify. Basically, he had the same concern as Privacy Commissioner Therrien. Despite the fact that all this information-sharing power is given to all the government departments, no parallel power is even given to the 3 agencies that oversee 3 of those 17. He said:

However, an explicit authority to co-operate and share information would strengthen review capacity and effectiveness. This authority becomes that much more important in the evolving context of ever greater co-operation between the intelligence and security agencies

Sharing of information among the existing review bodies would allow one to alert another as to what information was being shared, to follow the trail of that information and to ensure that the sharing of information complied with the law and that the privacy of Canadians was protected

No testimony at all appeared along these lines because, again, he did not appear.

He ended by saying, in what has to be a masterpiece of diplomatic speak:

I regret that an opportunity has not been seized to introduce amendments to the National Defence Act to eliminate ambiguities that were long ago identified by my predecessors.

None of this is new. We all know of these concerns and that is why four prime ministers, with a number of former justices of the Supreme Court of Canada, also wrote specifically on this point. They reminded us all that proper oversight and review is there, especially with radically expanded powers to security agencies, not just CSIS, as the information-sharing powers would go well beyond CSIS in this act, not just to protect human rights, constitutional rights, civil liberties, whatever one wants to refer to them as, but also to protect public safety. Oversight and review go to the effectiveness of the agencies. They catch problems. They ensure that agencies are not actually doing either ineffective or counterproductive or, frankly, stupid things.

I would like to draw attention as well to a document produced by Professor Forcese, who did yeoman's service, along with Professor Roach, drawing the country's attention to the multiple problems in this bill. I will simply cite an article online, published on April 16, called "Bill C-51: Catching Up On The 'Catching Up With Our Allies' Justification For New CSIS Powers".

He basically goes through all of the countries that the government is claiming already have the disruption powers that it says it is putting into Bill C-51 in order that we can catch up, and he takes apart every one of the references. There is not a single country that can be used in support of the power that is going into Bill C-51. It is a longish document and has to be read to be understood, but it shows that the government is actively engaging in either sloppiness of the most serious sort or an active deception on this point. This document is another one that needs to be taken into account.

• (1655)

I would finally like to point out that one thing that came out of the hearings was that the government confirmed it was interested in including the within the disruption power the power to detain and to

render people from Canadian hands to other hands. When amendments were put forward to ensure that was expressly excluded from disruption powers, the Conservatives voted it down and said that they wanted to leave it open. This is something we all have to know, that there is an agenda here on some fronts about which we should be very concerned.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to get the member's insights. Does he feel there is anything within the current legislation that he would see as a positive or a step forward, something he believes would ease the minds of some Canadians? I can appreciate the party's overall position on the legislation, but are there some aspects of the legislation where the member believes there might be some value?

Mr. Craig Scott: Mr. Speaker, the best and possibly only example would be the principle in the bill with respect to the new information sharing act. Better sharing of information among relevant agencies for the limited use that would enhance Canadian security is a good idea.

Therefore, say there is a principle, and who could have problems with that, being called upon by the Justice Major commission on Air India, by the Arar commission, et cetera. The point is how it is done, in a way that is extreme in how far it goes without safeguards, multiple safeguards, having to do with privacy rights, and how it has no corresponding inclusion of the right of oversight agencies to share information so they can step outside their silos to properly ensure that at least three of those seventeen departments are properly overseen.

If I were fair, anybody would want to build up the right kind of information-sharing regime, but this is certainly not the one.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Hélène LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech, for his presentation, and especially for reminding Canadians that our study of this bill is fundamentally flawed because we were not able to hear from the key players in committee and because we were not able to properly debate the bill.

I recently heard a media report that said that a bill like Bill C-51, in which the government collects data on all Canadians, is not an effective way to enhance security. In fact, we end up getting lost in useless data and the whole process puts incredible demands on our time and resources. This means that we cannot allocate that time and resources to finding a more effective way to enhance security. Could the member speak to this issue?

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• (1700)

Mr. Craig Scott: Mr. Speaker, in fact, that is a criticism directed at the effectiveness or lack of effectiveness of having a ton of information and data. I have also heard that criticism, but I am not really an expert, and I cannot say whether or not we have the ability to collect the data and discern what is pertinent, important and urgent. However, according to some people, it is a problem to think that just having more information and data is itself a solution.

[*English*]

Mr. Blake Richards (Wild Rose, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I noted that in the member's speech he referred to some witnesses whom he asserted were somehow blocked by the government. Putting it nicely, I do not think the facts would bear that out.

Having been a member of the public safety committee previously, I know that generally the committee chooses its witnesses by having the parties prioritize their potential witnesses. Obviously, the fact that these witnesses would not have appeared would indicate to me that the opposition members would not have chosen to prioritize them on their lists. I would like to give the member the chance to correct the record. I certainly hope he will choose to do so.

Mr. Craig Scott: Mr. Speaker, there is nothing like leading with one's jaw.

We all know that the opposition NDP asked for 25 hearings and got eight. The government started with three. Lists and the priority on lists are completely irrelevant when these witnesses should have been there, especially when one is an officer of Parliament and especially when one is one of the only three bodies overseeing one of our national security agencies.

The fact is that they were not heard. The government did not want them heard. That is the fact.

Mr. Blake Richards (Wild Rose, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise today in the House and underline how important it is that the anti-terrorism act, 2015 be adopted and that it be adopted as quickly as possible.

Ensuring the safety of a country's citizens is, in fact, the first and foremost responsibility of any country and of any government. Certainly this bill is both the sword and the shield that will ensure that Canada has the tools to face the international jihadist movement, whose members plot, scheme, and work tirelessly to organize attacks against Canadians to further their agenda of hatred.

Let us remember that for jihadists, there is no room for infidels. There is no tolerance for those who disagree with their barbaric practices. Their answer is to simply behead those who oppose them.

Canadian values of freedom and liberty are a threat to their totalitarian ideology. There can be no appeasement of jihadists. They do not respect the rule of law. They do not recognize human rights. They deny and are hostile to anything that could be construed as an obstacle to their goal of imposing a caliphate over all.

Who do we mean when we speak of the international jihadist movement? We speak of the so-called Islamic State, Boko Haram, and al Qaeda, all groups that have in common a thirst for violence and the perversion of their religion that serves as the basis of their ideology. They are groups that have no qualms about trading girls

like livestock to serve as concubines and rewards for jihadist fighters.

This is the enemy. These are the people who have declared war on Canada and our allies. Some of their sympathizers are quite content to remain in the shadows as armchair propagandists. They never actually detonate a bomb or commit an act of terrorism but instead take an active role in its glorification and broadcast. They lurk on social media, propping up support and radicalizing our youth by relaying propaganda, luring them away to be conscripted to serve as foot soldiers in the international jihadists' crusade against western democracies.

Radicalized Canadians are leaving our country for Syria and Iraq, having adopted the radical ideology that fuels the Islamic State. They long for martyrdom.

The anti-terrorism act, 2015 will go a long way in giving our law enforcement tools to take down hateful propaganda from the Internet and to help contain this recruiting drive by our enemies. As the Canadian Coalition Against Terror put it:

Terrorists, aware of some of the shortcomings and limitations of our legal systems, often exploit these gaps to their advantage.

We have to remain flexible and adapt to the fact that jihadi terrorists are knowledgeable of the inner workings of our legal system and are behaving accordingly to further their agenda on Canadian soil, while limiting our options against them. The opposition has tried, unsuccessfully, to claim that the provisions in the anti-terrorism act go too far.

Canada is alone amongst Western countries in not allowing its spy agencies any powers whatsoever to prevent terror. It is alone in having a spy agency still operating 30 years in the past. It's time to fix that.

Who said that? That was Sharon McCartan, criminal prosecutor for the Ontario Ministry of the Attorney General.

This is not a wish on our part. It is a necessity, on par with what is done elsewhere among western democracies. I believe that most Canadians would expect that should an intelligence agency be aware of a terrorist plot, it would seek to prevent it. We simply disagree with the opposition's claim that they should be forbidden from doing so.

We can also listen to Christian Leuprecht, a professor at Queen's University, who said, "Just to visualize why it's important, many of our allies have these types of powers. In Europe, they're used to effect. We know they have not destroyed the free and democratic state. And the checks that are in place in Europe seem to work reasonably well. For example, I think we owe it to Canadian parents who grieve because their children have gone abroad and gotten killed or gotten injured to do something that can prevent them from doing harm to themselves".

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●(1705)

Baseless claims have been made that the anti-terrorism act, 2015 somehow sacrifices our liberty to ensure our security. That is completely false. Canadians understand that liberty and security go hand in hand. We, as parliamentarians, understand this fundamental fact also. Without security, we cannot enjoy the liberty of partaking in the democratic process. When we cannot ensure the security of our families, there is no freedom. The fact is, those who threaten our liberty are not the police officers who patrol our neighbourhoods. They are not our intelligence officers. Those are the people who have the mandate to protect our country and who are on the front lines and every day do what is necessary to keep those who seek to profit from harming Canadians at bay.

When we talk about the international jihadist movement, either the self-radicalized lone wolf from a Canadian suburb plotting ominous terrorist attacks on Canadian soil or the Islamic State fighter lured abroad in Syria, these are all jihadists ready to commit any and all atrocities. They are determined, they are resourceful, and they are driven by hatred.

Some in this chamber deny to this day that the attacks that took place in Canada were terrorism. They claim that mental illness is the only possible explanation. They would rather dabble in semantics and pedal spin than discuss how to protect Canadian families from the threat of jihadists. They deny that the threat is real.

In 2012, the member for Brome—Missisquoi had this to say:

I am confused about what motivated the government to introduce Bill S-7... because, since 2007, nothing has happened in Canada. The country has not even been subject to terrorist attacks.

I would certainly hope that the NDP today understands the necessity of giving our country the tools needed to protect Canadians. I hope that party realizes and acknowledges that this comment was certainly made out of ignorance.

It is interesting to note that the member for Pontiac used to be affiliated with the Communist Party of Canada, which had in its 2011 platform a plan to, and I quote, “Repeal state security legislation like the no-fly list”. That the member has sympathized with the idea that we should be repealing the no-fly list and give jihadi terrorists open access to board planes is a worrying thought but one that is unfortunately reflective of the NDP's position on security it seems.

The NDP would rather try to shut down the House of Commons in an attempt to derail parliamentary democracy than contribute to making Canadians safe from the threat of jihadi terrorists. They are not interested in finding solutions. That much is clear. They do not want to get on board with fighting terrorism, and they would rather adopt the way of appeasement. I guess that is their right, but to try to derail the legislative process is another matter.

This legislation is certainly needed. Its provisions would no doubt make Canadians safer. We will continue to work to get it through, despite the NDP's attempts to impose their appeasement ideology on this House. Canada will prevail, and history will show that we did the right thing.

I urge all members of this House to support this important bill.

●(1710)

Mr. François Lapointe (Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, NDP): Mr. Speaker, there are 60 leading Canadian business people, entrepreneurs and investors, including Flickr co-founder Mr. Butterfield, who have signed an open letter to the Prime Minister. This is just one example of what we can read in that letter:

We believe [the entrepreneurs] that this legislation threatens to undermine Canada's reputation and change our business climate for the worse.

...we fear that this proposed legislation will undermine international trust in Canada's technology sector...

These people are very busy. They are in the type of business that is changing all the time with new technologies. They have more to do than wonder if a bill would actually threaten their business. Some of the best are saying that it would threaten Canada's technology sector.

What can my colleague tell those people? Are they doing this because they are all NDP members and suddenly they want to stand against the government for no good reason? No. We should be worried, as they are.

Mr. Blake Richards: Mr. Speaker, I have, and I am sure many members in the House would have had much the same experience, had many conversations with constituents in my riding over the last number of weeks. Particularly over the last couple of weekends, I had the opportunity to speak to probably thousands of people in my riding at some of the major community events I attended. They are very concerned about the threats that are posed to Canadians by the international jihadist movement and they expect our government to do everything we can to ensure we protect Canadians and provide the tools that are necessary for our security agencies to do so.

As I mentioned in my remarks, one of the things that is a very important principle is that they would expect that if our security agencies were aware of a potential terrorist plot, they would do everything they possibly could to try to prevent such a plot.

I have a quote I would like to share as well, along the same lines from Professor Elliot Tepper at Carleton University. He says:

Bill C-51 is the most important national security legislation since the 9/11 era... Bill C-51 is designed for the post-9/11 era. It's a new legislation for a new era in terms of security threats...we need to keep our focus on the fundamental purpose and the fundamental challenge of combatting emerging types of terrorism.

There are certainly many people out there speaking for this, including our constituents and experts as well.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Marc Garneau (Westmount—Ville-Marie, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I listened with interest to what the member for Wild Rose had to say. It seems to me that his main argument with respect to Bill C-51 is that we are doing the same thing that all our allies, our partners, and all those who want to protect against the risk of terrorism are doing.

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Therefore, I would like to ask him the following question. We are the very close ally of four other countries—the United States, Great Britain, New Zealand and Australia. This group of five countries is called the Five Eyes. It is remarkable that the four other countries in this group have put in place an extremely robust oversight process to ensure that there is no risk, due to an excess of enthusiasm, that their security services go too far and that people's rights, privileges and privacy are violated.

Why does Canada not adopt this group's approach by having a robust oversight process? This does not currently exist in Canada. We have been asking for this for 10 years. What does the member have to say about that?

• (1715)

[*English*]

Mr. Blake Richards: Mr. Speaker, I have a quick two-part response.

He mentioned that one of the arguments I had made was that we were taking measures that were similar to what our allies did. I was attempting to refute some of the criticisms of the bill.

However, the most important thing to note is that we are trying to do what Canadians expect of us. Canadians expect that we will do everything we can to protect them from the threats out there, the threats that are very real threats to Canadians and to our allies. We are undertaking to do that with this legislation.

I will also point out to him that we have a very robust oversight process. What I hear from Canadians, and I think what our government hears from Canadians as well, is that they do not want to see the process of oversight politicized by having politicians involved. I think they want to see it as it currently stands, so there can be proper oversight, but not something that will be politicized.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Sadia Groguhé (Saint-Lambert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the great patriot Benjamin Franklin, father of American independence, taught us the following:

Any society that would give up a little liberty to gain a little security will deserve neither and lose both.

This is the slippery slope that the Conservatives would have us descend. This is the terrible abyss into which they would cast Canadians with their questionable laws and divisive rhetoric.

Today I rise to express my opposition in principle to Bill C-51. I do so solemnly. The terrorist attacks of recent months scarred us all. The October attacks in Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu and Ottawa reminded us that terrorism is a very real threat. In October, a deranged man broke in here, endangering us all. We all banded together to confirm our steadfast commitment to our values of freedom. It is therefore absurd to insinuate that anyone in this place is complacent about this issue.

Those tragic incidents also helped reunite Canadians around our values of love, tolerance and openness. However, the Conservative government once again took advantage of an issue we all agree on to put forward its ideological view through a pro-war discourse that has no place in Canada. Under the pretext of an internal threat, the Conservatives wanted us to stop thinking critically. We were

supposed to hand our civil liberties over to a government that tramples them on a daily basis.

Despite their rhetoric, the Conservatives' approach to this legislation is not serious. The Leader of the Opposition has repeatedly challenged the Prime Minister to give us a single example of a case that would fall under the scope of Bill C-51 that is not already a crime here in Canada. The Prime Minister has never been able to give an example. This bill's only purpose is to serve as an opportunity for the Conservatives to exploit the fears of Canadians, and that is shameful.

Many bills have already been introduced in the House in recent years. Just as we did with Bill C-51, we always carry out a thoughtful analysis based on our principles: defending Canadians' safety and freedoms. The anti-terrorism legislation that has been on the books since 2001 is working just fine. In just the past few weeks, police have laid charges against six individuals here in Ottawa for activities related to a terrorist group.

The current laws are working, and police officers and intelligence officers have the legislative arsenal to take action, but are lacking the financial and material resources that the Conservatives keep refusing to give them. The government has a fundamental duty to protect Canadians' safety, but as usual, it is all a sham with the Conservatives: tough talk, no action. At every turn, they claim to be toughening the law, again and again, reducing spending, again and again, reducing the role of government, again and again.

I want Canadians to know what a sham this government is. It claims to be protecting us with laws that take away our freedoms and then at the same time it cuts the means for catching terrorists. First, it cuts the human means. Fighting terrorism requires extraordinary skills at infiltrating networks, tracking financial support, and so on. These are irreplaceable skills. The government's solution for developing them: 2,271 full-time jobs cut at the RCMP in two years.

Next are the financial means. Conducting anti-terrorist activities is extremely expensive. What does this government do? It cuts \$44 million from CSIS's budget and \$420 million from the RCMP. These are staggering figures that prove that the Conservatives have a security policy vacuum.

I therefore have a question for this government. Are our lives, our rights, our homes and our freedoms worth less than the only balanced budget in its history?

This government is leading us into disaster. It is cutting the resources needed to guarantee our safety while at the same time reducing oversight of CSIS's activities. In its most recent report, the Security Intelligence Review Committee, which is underfunded, indicated that it had been seriously misled by CSIS in many investigations.

• (1720)

The report mentioned, and I quote, "difficulties" and "significant delays" in getting information about the spy agency's activities.

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CSIS can therefore withhold information from the body responsible for oversight of its activities because that body is underfunded and understaffed. Despite the flaws in the existing structure, the Conservatives are still proposing that new responsibilities be given to CSIS. That is very worrisome.

Bill C-51 is so vague that it would allow CSIS to investigate anyone who opposes the government's economic, social or environmental policies. Under Bill C-51, the government could lump legal dissent together with terrorism and lump strikers together with violent anarchists, even though they have nothing in common. Bill C-51 proposes making it a criminal offence to advocate or promote the commission of terrorism offences "in general". Can the minister explain what the words "in general" are doing in a legal text?

The wording of the new provision is so vague and leaves so much room for interpretation that it considerably broadens the scope of the circumstances under which a Canadian can be arrested.

It goes without saying that anyone who actually incites another person to commit violence should be arrested. However, we need measures that protect Canadians but do not undermine any of our freedoms. The rule of law is the fundamental principle of the Constitution Act, 1867. Where is that in this bill?

We have called on the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness to explain the scope of his bill, but he is unable to do so. Instead, his leader would rather fan the flames of divisiveness by attacking Canada's Muslim community. That is shameful.

Instead of succumbing to the temptation to divide people, the NDP stands by its principles and believes that it is possible to adopt measures that protect Canadians without undermining our freedoms.

First, if we want to enhance the powers of CSIS, we must enhance the powers and means of oversight. That is simple and essential. Then, we must ensure that the RCMP and CSIS have the material, human and financial resources they need to do their job properly. As a result of the Conservatives' budget cuts, these agencies must now choose between monitoring suspected terrorists and funding other law enforcement activities. They should not have to choose. The government should give them the resources to do both.

Canada must adopt a strategy to counter radicalization. We are asking for a plan to support Canadian communities that are combatting radicalization on the ground. That approach works. It has been adopted by most of our allies.

The United States has taken a proactive approach to combatting radicalization. It supports communities and faith leaders by connecting them with counter-radicalization experts. It strives to provide communities with information on how to recognize the warning signs of radicalization and the means to prevent it. Canada has no such approach. The Conservatives reject that, and that is absurd.

We must have a real debate on how to tackle the threats of radicalization, terrorism and attacks committed by disturbed lone wolves. A free society is a safe society. These four measures are the way to balance freedom and public safety. As always, Canadians can count on the NDP to stand up for the values of Canadian society.

Our critics proposed 28 amendments to protect our families and our rights. With its usual arrogance, this inept government simply dismissed them. That is why I invite all true patriots in this chamber to follow my example, support the NDP amendments and reject the main motion.

In closing, I would like to personally address every Conservative and Liberal member who is preparing to vote for Bill C-51. They must not forget that Canada is a land of hope for the entire world because our society is based on the values of love, tolerance and openness, which we cherish. They must not forget that giving in to the shift in security policy being proposed by this government means giving in to fear. They must not forget that voting for this bill means renouncing everything that makes us a people of love, tolerance and openness, everything that makes us Canadian.

● (1725)

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague because Bill C-51 is really dangerous. It does nothing to make our society safer and also violates the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and federal legislation.

[*English*]

I would like to ask her if they are also troubled in the official opposition by the numerous security experts who have testified that not only will the bill trample on our rights, but it fails to put in place measures that would actually make us safer. In fact, many security experts have testified that the bill would make us less safe in confronting a terrorist threat.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Sadia Groguhé: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her question.

Of course we are extremely worried because this bill is silent on the subject of protecting our rights. The current government has introduced a bill that will not only make it harder to protect our rights but will completely fail to achieve its objective, which is to fight terrorism in meaningful ways.

Let us not forget that, once again, we are debating Bill C-51 under time allocation. That means our rights as MPs and parliamentarians are being set aside.

Once again, this bill is indefensible. The experts have told us that over and over. It is time to listen to them.

Mr. François Lapointe (Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, NDP): Mr. Speaker, given her background, I am sure that my colleague knows people living in places where governments have taken a hard line against radicalization. I was touched by some of her comments, such as when she said that we must absolutely not let security measures get out of control.

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I would like to hear more from my colleague about that aspect of the problem. I think that allowing security measures to get out of control, agreeing to go that way, is kind of like letting the radicals win the fight in the medium and long terms. I think that my colleague is in a good position to talk to us about this element, which is extremely important in this case.

● (1730)

Mrs. Sadia Groguhé: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question. I truly believe that fearmongering does not make us stronger and certainly does not make us come out on top. There is no question that when we live in a democratic society like ours, we must preserve our rights and freedoms and make them our hallmark. As my colleague pointed out, letting security measures get out of control is dangerous, and that is what Bill C-51 does. The Conservatives do not care. They do not listen. They do not accept any amendments, not from the opposition or any other party.

This is the Conservative government's trademark. Like so many of my colleagues, I have risen to debate Bill C-51 to reiterate that rights and freedoms can truly go hand in hand with security.

I will close by saying that the fight against radicalization is critically important. It begins with work on the ground. It begins in the communities and with the communities. Bringing civil society together around this issue is the best defence against radicalization.

[*English*]

Hon. Diane Ablonczy (Calgary—Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be able to add some words to this debate on the anti-terrorism bill.

We know that the world is becoming an increasingly dangerous place, and that is unfortunate. We now see in other liberal democracies such as France, Australia, Denmark, and of course, here in Canada and right here in Parliament that nowhere can we be sure that there will not be attacks on our citizens by those who have a different philosophy and ideology of life, and who are committed to the destruction of the privacy rights, human rights, democratic rights, security and safety of our country.

I read a very interesting article by Graeme Wood in the March issue of *The Atlantic*. It is called "What ISIS Really Wants". Graeme Wood points out that ISIS already rules an area larger than the United Kingdom. He points out that the Islamic State, which rules this fairly large area, is committed to purifying the world by killing vast numbers of people and that those who support the Islamic State believe that they have an obligation to conduct what is called offensive jihad, which is to expand their territory as an essential duty. This is not only done through active warfare and acts of terrorism, but by subversive acts, as well.

There is another very good article from the March 3 issue of *The New York Times*, called "The Education of 'Jihadi John'". The writer knew Jihadi John, who graduated in computer science from the University of Westminster. He said, "academic institutions in Britain have been infiltrated for years by dangerous theocratic fantasists. I should know: I was one of them." He said that his recruiter came straight out of a London medical college, and that while such institutions must guard free speech, as we cherish here in Canada, "they should also be vigilant to ensure that speakers are not given

unchallenged platforms to promote their toxic message to a vulnerable audience."

The government realizes that these dangers and threats to Canadians and Canadian security are real, and that they are growing. We count ourselves fortunate that we have not had worse incidents than those we experienced last fall, but we also know that they are very possible.

Governments have a positive duty to protect the lives and property of citizens. That is why we organize ourselves in society. That is why we have authorities in society. Our Conservative government takes this duty very seriously. We passed over 30 measures to further protect society against dangerous criminals who are committed to fighting as part of jihadi terrorism.

Jihadi terrorists have declared war specifically on Canada. They are absolutely opposed to our way of life. They are opposed to our freedoms. They are opposed to our tolerance. They are opposed to our diversity. They are opposed to the privacy and human rights that the opposition and others are concerned about. We have to protect those rights and freedoms, but we cannot do that unless we push back, and unless we find ways to halt and to interfere with the spread of this kind of terrorist activity.

It troubles me very much to see a group, such as the jihadists, actually targeting our country. We know that the Islamic State's whole philosophy is absolutely opposed and toxic to our way of life, especially to women.

● (1735)

As we fight to degrade and destroy ISIS, we also have to put into place a few new measures to modernize and to give appropriate tools to our security forces to better be able to identify, interfere with and stop the activities of jihadi terrorists.

There are a number of myths that have risen against this legislation. People have been told certain things about it, certain things that are not true, but nevertheless it causes them to be concerned, and in some cases to come out and march in the streets. I can assure Canadians that in no way does any member of the House, whether on the government side or on the opposition benches, want to do anything but strengthen, protect and preserve the rights and freedoms that we enjoy in this wonderful country.

The bill is not in any way intended to, nor I believe does it, in any way take away the civil rights of law-abiding citizens, regular citizens of this country. I will give some tangible examples of what the bill would do. They are common sense measures, in spite of the overheated rhetoric from some on the opposite side.

For example, if Passport Canada, in dealing with an applicant for a passport, has reason to believe or hears from a sponsor of the passport applicant that the person is intending to travel to join Islamist jihadists, Passport Canada would be allowed to share that information with the RCMP. The legislation would allow known radicalized individuals to be prevented from boarding a plane bound for a terrorist conflict zone. It would criminalize the promotion of terrorism in general.

Government Orders

Right now we have to be very specific about what we tell other people to do. If we just say to someone “kill all the infidels wherever you can in Canada”, that is not illegal. That needs to be illegal. That kind of promotion of terrorism should be illegal. I think most Canadians would be surprised to know that right now it is not.

It would allow CSIS agents to speak with the parents of radicalized youth to disrupt their travel plans to go to terrorist places in the world. Many parents have been heartbroken because authorities have known that their children were involved in being radicalized and planned to join ISIL, but no one told them because of privacy laws. That is not right.

It would provide government with an appeal mechanism to stop information from being released in security certificate proceedings if it could harm a source. If we do not have sources, if we do not have intelligence coming in, then we are not going to be able to stop some of these plots.

I have heard the other side say that other liberal democracies do not allow their national security agents to disrupt threats, but that is not true. The U.S. can engage a disruption with an executive order. The U.K. can conduct any activity to protect national security. The Norwegian police security service can prevent and investigate. The Finnish security intelligence service is mandated to prevent crime.

Bill C-51 does not give any law enforcement power to CSIS. It cannot arrest anybody or charge anybody, but it can attempt to stop terrorist attacks while they are still in the planning stages. This is far more in-depth than our allies' provisions. At all times, all rights under the Constitution are protected.

I urge my colleagues to vote for this good legislation.

● (1740)

Mr. Marc Garneau (Westmount—Ville-Marie, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague said that we do not really have to be worried about protecting the rights and freedoms of our citizens, that it is all under control, despite the fact that our very strong security alliance with the Five Eyes are just as concerned about civil liberties and rights, yet they have put in robust oversight to ensure that through excessive zeal, these kinds of abuses of civil liberties are not caused.

Her colleague from Wild Rose said that the reason they do not want more oversight, according to him, is they do not want it to be politicized. The other partners in the Five Eyes have robust oversight, and yes, politicians were involved. In those countries they are just as concerned as we are with civil liberties.

I am curious about why the government does not feel it would be necessary. There is a big tradition of libertarianism in the Conservative government. People do care about their freedoms and rights. Why is it that my hon. colleague sees a problem with having robust oversight to ensure that we do not abuse the rights of citizens?

Hon. Diane Ablonczy: First, Mr. Speaker, I did not say we should not worry about protection of our rights. In fact, that is the very thing that motivates the bill, because we do want to protect our rights from those who would destroy the framework we have built in our own country. We take that duty seriously.

As far as oversight is concerned, the bill strengthens the oversight. If security forces want to take action that would in any way interfere with the rights and the privacy of a Canadian citizen, they must go to court and they must convince a judge that they have very good reason to do this. If they cannot convince an objective member of the court that they should go ahead, then they will not be allowed to do that. We have also put more resources in review of everything that CSIS does.

I hope that the member will vote for these measures, because they are important to our country.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alain Giguère (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we have talked a lot about the fact that Bill C-51 restricts our rights, and we are told that this bill is meant to combat terrorism. However, Bill C-51 is pointless if there are not enough resources to enforce it.

That is the problem: our police forces are no longer able to combat organized crime and terrorist organizations at the same time. Furthermore, the Conservatives are promising to increase law enforcement budgets in the future, not now. It is as though they are telling ISIL to just wait a year or two, because the RCMP is not quite ready to take them on, since their budget increases are being postponed.

What is the point of such a restrictive bill, when the resources needed to enforce it will not be available until several years from now?

● (1745)

[*English*]

Hon. Diane Ablonczy: Mr. Speaker, I am happy to tell my hon. colleague that since coming to office, our government has increased funding for police and national security agencies by over one-third. We brought forward new funding for these agencies on seven separate occasions, and what happened on those seven occasions? New Democrats, who claim we need more resources, voted against them every single time.

In budget 2015 we invested nearly 300 million new dollars in the fight against terrorism. I hope my hon. colleague will support that investment, but I am willing to bet he will not put his money where his mouth is.

Hon. K. Kellie Leitch (Minister of Labour and Minister of Status of Women, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join this important debate. We are blessed to live in a great country. In fact, it is the greatest country in the world. Canada is free, prosperous, open and tolerant. Canadians can succeed or fail based on their own merit, believe what they wish, travel as they wish and worship as they wish. However, some wish to take all that away from us.

Government Orders

The international jihadist movement has declared war on our country, on Canada and on our allies. Its members hate us for our freedom, for our prosperity and for our tolerance. They hate us for the values that we all hold dear here at home.

The so-called Islamic State commits unspeakable atrocities and commits them to video in an effort to recruit deviant individuals to join its Islamic extremist cause. These are atrocities that I must say particularly impact women and children and are appalling, quite frankly. It is important to note that these beheadings and incidents where military members are buried alive, these absolutely horrific acts of terrorism are not only a problem in a far-away land. They impact us right here at home.

On two fateful days in October of 2014, Canada was struck by these terrorists. I would hope everyone in this House remembers those days and, in particular, Warrant Officer Patrice Vincent and Corporal Nathan Cirillo, who were killed in cold blood during these terrorist attacks. They were targeted simply because they wore the uniform of the Canadian Armed Forces.

As heartbreaking as it is, Canada has also been a source of jihadist terrorists. Many individuals, and some reports are as high as 150 individuals, have left Canada to go overseas to engage in these actions. This is absolutely unacceptable and we must not allow it to continue. That is why I am pleased and proud to be here in support of the anti-terrorism act.

Let me quote from the words of Louise Vincent, who is probably the most powerful individual who has spoken with respect to this, the sister of Warrant Officer Vincent, who said, “Had Bill C-51 been in force on October 19...Martin Couture-Rouleau...would have been in prison, and my brother would not be dead.”

Those are her words. That is her passion with respect to her sibling. This is an extremely compelling statement. I do not think any Canadian can deny what she said. It is as it has been stated. Rather than heeding the concerns of victims of terrorism, many have sought to try to portray this bill as something that scales back the rights of Canadians. I have to say that nothing could be further from the truth. Some individuals are fundamentally opposed to any measures that may be taken to combat terrorism, measures that would actually protect Canadian children, moms and dads, and Canadians on Canadian soil. Why they may feel this way is quite simply beyond me. Perhaps they have other motives. Perhaps they have other ideas. However, I can tell members that what we should do is listen to the experts, so I will quote a few here.

Steven Bucci of the Heritage Foundation said:

My review of Bill C-51 leads me to conclude that this is...a balance between greater physical protection without loss of civil liberties. In the various sections, there's a judicious expansion of info-sharing and law enforcement authorities but in each there are also provisions for recourse and appeals. There is transparency and openness.... In short, this bill seems to balance security and liberty.

Salim Mansur, a professor at the University of Western Ontario, said, “Bill C-51 in my reading is not designed to turn Canada into some version of Hobbes’ Leviathan or Orwell’s 1984, despite at times the fevered imagination of its critics.”

Dr. Jasser, the President of the American Islamic Forum for Democracy, said, “By beginning to focus on those who “may”

commit you will begin to hold accountable not just the jihadists on the field of armed jihad but the jihadists in the stands who are cheering on the field warriors about to plant an explosive. You will begin to finally hold accountable the neo-jihadists at the pulpits and in the social media who glorify militant Islamism and demonize Canada, Canadians, your protection forces and your government.”

• (1750)

It is clear that there is a consensus among credible experts that action must be taken and that the measures contained in this bill before us today strike the right balance. There is no liberty without security; there is no prosperity without security; there are no Canadian values without this security.

While the Liberals and the NDP dither on how to best deal with the terrorist threat, our Conservative government is taking action. While the NDP leader refuses to call what happened here on October 22 a terrorist attack, our Conservative government is investing in fighting terrorism. While the Liberal leader believes that terrorists like the Boston bombers are caused by “feelings of exclusion”, our government is creating new tools for our police and national security agencies to protect Canadians. The contrast could not be more clear.

In closing, I would like to read a simple quote:

If you can kill a disbelieving American or European – especially the spiteful and filthy French – or an Australian, or a Canadian, or any other disbeliever from the disbelievers waging war, including the citizens of the countries that entered into a coalition against the Islamic State, then rely upon Allah, and kill him in any manner or way however it may be.

That was said by ISIS spokesman Abu Muhammad al-Adnani. Comments like these, disgusting propaganda and videos, and events that make appearances on the news more frequently than all of us would like, strengthen my resolve to focus further on legislation like this that is absolutely necessary to protect Canadians, and to protect Canadians here at home.

This bill gives our security agencies the tools that they need, tools to keep us safe at home, tools to keep the individuals in my riding, the people we all represent in this place safe here on Canadian soil. It ensures that our rights are protected at the same time.

For that reason, I am proud to support this bill, and I hope that the Liberals and NDP will put aside their past soft focus stances on terrorism and join us in supporting this bill. It is extremely important to make sure that Canadians are protected here at home and that they know that this place, in addition to the Government of Canada, is making sure that they and their families are protected.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Dany Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have been here since this morning and since we began talking about this bill. I have listened to the Conservatives' rhetoric, and the demagoguery has reached new highs. As for myself and all my colleagues in the House of Commons, all 308 members, we all agree that the attacks of last October are unacceptable. Using the memory of the victims to score political points is very low.

Government Orders

I will get right to my question for the minister. In practical terms, is there anything at all in this bill that could have helped prevent, and I insist on the word “prevent”, the two tragic attacks that took place last October? I want concrete examples of how this bill could have prevented at least one of those two attacks.

[English]

Hon. K. Kellie Leitch: Mr. Speaker, I think Ms. Vincent said it very clearly, because she feels very passionately about what is in the bill.

Let me outline some of the key details that are in the bill, all of which would have helped to make sure that these Canadian Forces members were still with us.

It makes a crime to advocate and promote terrorist attacks on Canadian soil illegal. It allows, with the approval of a judge, our police officers to detain terrorist suspects more quickly and for longer periods of time. That is a key item. It authorizes our security agencies to intervene against those plotting terrorist attacks, and to share security information, something they currently are not able to do.

It strengthens the passenger protection act, which is another component part of it, and it also allows our authorities to remove terrorist propaganda.

I would encourage the member opposite to read the bill. These are component parts that are extremely valuable to make sure Canadians are safe. That is why we are moving forward with this legislation.

• (1755)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I listened very carefully as the minister was attempting to explain why the government is all good. At the end of the day, I suspect that Canadians are not going to be fooled. The government has lost a wonderful opportunity to bring in sound, robust legislation to deal with the issue of terrorism in Canada and, at the same time, ensure the rights and freedoms of individual Canadians are being protected.

The biggest shortcoming, I believe, in this legislation is the issue of parliamentary oversight. The question I have for the member is related to that. It was not that long ago when the Conservatives were in opposition and the member for Mount Royal was the minister of justice. At that time, the member's colleague, the current Minister of Justice, supported parliamentary oversight. The Conservatives argued in favour of parliamentary oversight.

Canada is in an alliance known as the Five Eyes with the United States, England, Australia and New Zealand, all of which have parliamentary oversight. Can the member clearly indicate why the Prime Minister does not support parliamentary oversight when everyone else but the Conservatives seem to?

Hon. K. Kellie Leitch: Mr. Speaker, let me be very clear for the member opposite. Independent, expert, non-partisan oversight is the very best oversight for any of these organizations. That is actually what the parents in my riding talk about. They want independent, non-partisan oversight because they believe that is the fairest thing to do for Canadians and that is what they expect the Canadian government to move forward on.

Ms. Roxanne James (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC): Mr.

Speaker, after listening to the questions being asked by New Democrats, it is pretty clear that the only way they would support legislation is if we handcuffed our police and blindfolded CSIS. It is truly unfortunate that such misinformation has been pushed out from the opposition party on this particular bill. We are dealing with the very heart of our national security and the protection of Canadians.

The committee heard from credible witnesses on our side, some with more than three decades of experience in law enforcement intelligence gathering. The NDP side brought in people who basically said the sky was going to fall. In fact, some of the groups had appeared way back in the 1980s with regard to the first CSIS Act and, in 2001, on the first Anti-terrorism Act, all saying the same thing.

I am going to ask the minister if she could comment on whether she thinks the sky will fall, as it did not fall in the 1980s and certainly did not fall in 2001.

Hon. K. Kellie Leitch: As I said in my speech, Mr. Speaker, there is no liberty without security. Therefore, no, the sky is not falling over this. We are making sure that Canadians are safe and secure at home. That is what we are focused on. We are hopeful the opposition will actually step up and make sure that Canadians are safe here on Canadian soil, because that is exactly what this legislation would do.

Mr. Ted Falk (Provencher, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour for me to speak in the House today on Bill C-51. It is very important legislation that this House and the committee have been working on.

Canadians are worried about the threat the international jihadist movement poses to their communities and to Canada as a whole. The horrors committed by jihadi terrorists are well documented. We have all seen the pictures. We have heard the stories. We have read the articles. We know of the savage beheadings, of people being burned alive and being buried alive. We know that women are being raped, tortured, and enslaved. The list could go on.

These jihadi terrorists recognize no border, and if frustrated in their attempts to travel overseas to join the caliphate, they will seek to commit acts of terrorism right here in Canada. We do not believe in exporting terrorism, and that is why we need Bill C-51.

As Barry Cooper, from the Canadian Defence and Foreign Affairs Institute, put it:

So let us state the obvious: Bill C-51 is aimed at violent Islamic jihadi terrorists, and those are the persons against whom its provisions are to be enforced. The reasons are clear enough provided one makes reference to facts and events of the real world today.

Unlike their critics, the authors of Bill C-51 are sensible enough to have recognized the danger. However, the opposition members are insisting that politicians be handed control of oversight of our national security agencies.

As a sitting member of the committee for public safety and national security, I sat through the vigorous study of this act. Witnesses testified that we needed to enhance oversight of our CSIS review body. I am pleased that our government listened and heard those concerns and has responded.

Government Orders

Economic action plan 2015 proposes to provide up to \$12.5 million over five years, starting in the 2015-16 fiscal year, and then \$2.5 million ongoing thereafter in additional funding to the Security Intelligence Review Committee to enhance its review of CSIS.

While we would ensure that our national security agencies have the tools they need to protect Canadians from the threat of terrorism, we would also ensure that these practices are governed by an effective and transparent framework that protects the rights of individual Canadians. The fact is, budget 2015 will almost double the resources of the Security Intelligence Review Committee. Unlike the opposition, we believe that third-party, non-partisan, independent expert oversight of our national security agencies is a better model than political intervention in the process.

Justice John Major had this to say about the plan to inject politics into national security oversight: “I don't think Parliament is equipped as a body to act as an oversight...which is what is being proposed” by the opposition.

Clare Lopez, of the Center for Security Policy, said, “the use of an intermediary review committee rather than direct parliamentary oversight, has advantages”.

The truth is that the opposition members have been trying to force their way into politicizing national security oversight. The opposition is on record as saying that it is concerned that its social policies might attract the attention of our security intelligence establishment. As Ray Boisvert, former assistant director of CSIS, put it, “anybody who had an issue they'd like to protest [who thinks they] will now become a target of the security establishment.... I think you should not...flatter yourself to that degree”.

Justice John Major also confirmed this reasoning, saying, “citizens who are not validly under suspicion will not have some manufactured reason for their private lives to be interfered with”.

Professor Salim Mansur of Western University also added, “Bill C-51 in my reading is not designed to turn Canada into some version of Hobbes' *Leviathan* or Orwell's *1984*, despite at times the fevered imagination of its critics”.

Canadians understand that freedom and security go hand in hand. They understand that our police and our national security agencies are working to protect our rights and freedoms, and that it is the jihadi terrorists who endanger our security. I could go on, but I believe I have made my point clear.

● (1800)

I would like to read a very descriptive quote from Tom Stamatakis, president of the Canadian Police Association, because I believe it is a good reminder in this debate that those who threaten our freedom and our liberties are not the police officers and the intelligence community tasked with protecting Canadians. Those who threaten our freedoms are the jihadi terrorists.

Mr. Stamatakis stated:

I would take issue with calls for oversight bodies to take a more active role in the operational nature of the jobs we entrust to highly trained and very accountable professional law enforcement, whether a police officer employed by a federal, provincial, or municipal agency or an intelligence officer employed by the federal government. Those who have criticized the Security Intelligence Review Committee for only providing “after the fact” oversight often underestimate how difficult real-

time operational oversight can be to achieve, particularly in the context of a fast-moving investigation with very real public safety consequences.

He went on to further say:

Those criticisms also undervalue the often positive effect that *ex post facto* oversight can have on our industry. Identifying where inappropriate actions may have been taken or where different and more positive decisions could have been made is the very foundation of our services and the training and education that comes from those service reviews.

Mr. Stamatakis clearly makes the point that we have strong oversight that allows them to draw lessons from their experience and continually improve themselves.

As to why we need Bill C-51, I would like to quote Ms. Raheel Raza, president of Muslims Facing Tomorrow. She said that legislation is important to combat radicalization and that we need better tools to track jihadists who travel overseas. She went on to say that “unfortunately we are living in a post-9/11 world and times are such that personal information needs to be shared. That's the reality and I don't have a problem with it.” She said that the “larger picture is that of the security and safety of Canada.”

I believe this quote is very interesting because it mentions the larger picture here and why the anti-terrorism act is needed.

When we talk about the security and safety of Canada as parliamentarians, we should understand that this means ensuring the safety and security of our families.

We intend to continue to work to keep Canadians safe by ensuring our law enforcement agencies have the tools to do the job they need to do to combat the threat of the international jihadi terrorist movement.

As Tahir Gora of the Canadian Thinkers' Forum said:

The government's proposed Bill C-51, when passed by Parliament, shall help Canadian Muslims to curb extremist elements....

The world is a dangerous place, as was most brutally demonstrated by last October's attacks in Ottawa and Quebec, and Canada is not immune to the threat of terrorism. The proposed legislation would provide Canadian law enforcement and national security agencies with additional tools and flexibility to keep pace with evolving threats and to better protect Canadians here at home.

We are ensuring our law enforcement and national security agencies can counter those who advocate terrorism, prevent terrorist travel, and the efforts of those who seek to use Canada as a recruiting ground. We are also making sure that our law enforcement agencies can prevent and disrupt planned attacks on Canadian soil.

We will continue to support this legislation because we believe the anti-terrorist act as being the appropriate response to the growing threat of jihadi terrorists that seek to further their radical ideology and their idea of totalitarian caliphate by murdering those who oppose them.

Government Orders

•(1805)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Hélène LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I listened carefully to the Conservative member's speech.

Trust is an issue when matters as important as security and rights protection are in the hands of a government. There must be a relationship of trust. However, in this Parliament and in this House, that trust has unfortunately been broken because the rights of parliamentarians have been violated time and time again by time allocation motions and by a lack of respect for the laws that govern this country and parliamentary traditions. Canadians are having a hard time trusting this government right now. That is why many Canadians have stood up to protest Bill C-51.

Why does this member think that Canadians should trust this government to protect our rights and freedoms?

•(1810)

[*English*]

Mr. Ted Falk: Mr. Speaker, trust, like respect, is something that is earned. I think Canadians can see from the track record of our Prime Minister and our government that we have delivered time and time again, whether it is on balancing the budget or providing victims of crime with rights. Our government has delivered on many initiatives.

I think that the NDP is proposing questions here: Can we trust CSIS with the powers that the bill would give them to fight the jihadi terrorists? Can we trust our law enforcement agencies with the powers in the bill to enable them to share information so they can properly fight the jihadi terrorists?

The question is not so much on whether we can trust the government, but can we trust the law enforcement agencies that work so diligently in keeping us safe? I find that question offensive.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what we have witnessed over the last number of years, as the world grows more concerned about terrorism, is that there is a need to make changes to laws.

Jean Chrétien first brought in Canada's anti-terrorism act in 2001. If we compare the efforts put into that legislation, we find there was a great deal of consultation, a lot more building of bridges and trying to ensure that Canadians were being protected, while at the same time being able to fight terrorism. As things have evolved, other countries around the world, in particular the Five Eyes countries, have recognized the importance of parliamentary oversight. This is very different than judicial oversight, which is what the proposed legislation would bring forward.

My question to the member is: Why does the government, from his perspective, not recognize the importance of parliamentary oversight when our peers are putting in parliamentary oversight? Would he not agree that is a shortcoming of the legislation?

Mr. Ted Falk: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for Winnipeg North. It gives me the opportunity to speak to that exact question.

At committee when we reviewed this bill, we heard from many of the witnesses that they would like additional oversight. Our

government has responded in economic action plan 2015 by almost doubling the funds for oversight.

As members have said previously, this bill would also continue to provide for judicial oversight. This means that before CSIS agents can carry out their activities, they need to present their case and get a judge to agree that what they want to do is proper and good. Then we have the oversight to confirm that the permissions that were granted by the courts to CSIS were carried through with, and that is done by SIRC.

Ms. Roxanne James (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my hon. colleague for his speech as well as for his work on the public safety and security committee.

Throughout the testimony, and the member was there along with me, we heard from very credible witnesses, some with extensive experience in law enforcement and security intelligence gathering, as well as those who have actually studied terrorism for more than 10 years.

I wonder if the member could speak directly to the credible witness testimony that we heard and why those witnesses thought this legislation was important.

Mr. Ted Falk: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety for her leadership on this bill, and also for her leadership at committee. She does amazing work. Her constituents should be very proud of her.

We listened to over 48 expert witnesses, who brought years and years of experience and credibility to the discussions and deliberations at committee. They provided expert testimony to confirm that the bill would provide our law enforcement agencies with the tools they need to identify and also reduce and minimize the risk of jihadi terrorists in Canada. They spoke favourably of being able to accomplish the work we have asked them to do if they had the tools provided in Bill C-51.

•(1815)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): It being 6:15 p.m., pursuant to an order made on Thursday, April 30 it is my duty to interrupt and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the report stage of the bill now before the House.

The question is on Motion No. 1. A vote on this motion also applies to Motions Nos. 2, 3, 5 to 44 and 46 to 66. A negative vote on Motion No. 1 requires the questions being put on Motions Nos. 4 and 45. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): All those in favour of the motion 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.

● (1840)

(The House divided on Motion No. 1 which was negated on the following division:)

(Division No. 391)

YEAS

Members

Allen (Welland)	Angus
Aubin	Blanchette-Lamothe
Boivin	Borg
Boutin-Sweet	Brahmi
Brosseau	Caron
Cash	Charlton
Chicoine	Choquette
Christopherson	Côté
Crowder	Cullen
Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)	Day
Dewar	Dionne Labelle
Donnelly	Doré Lefebvre
Dubé	Dusseault
Fortin	Freeman
Garrison	Genest
Giguère	Godin
Gravelle	Groghé
Harris (Scarborough Southwest)	Harris (St. John's East)
Hyer	Julian
Kellway	Lapointe
Latendresse	Laverdière
LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard)	Leslie
Liu	Mai
Marston	Martin
Masse	Mathyssen
May	Michaud
Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)	Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)
Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)	Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)
Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)	Nantel
Nash	Nicholls
Nunez-Melo	Papillon
Péclét	Plamondon
Quach	Rafferty
Rankin	Ravignat
Raynault	Rousseau
Saganash	Sandhu
Scott	Sellah
Sims (Newton—North Delta)	Stewart
Sullivan	Toone
Tremblay— 79	

NAYS

Members

Ablonczy	Adler
Albas	Albrecht
Alexander	Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Allison	Ambler
Anders	Anderson
Andrews	Armstrong
Aspin	Barlow
Bateman	Bélangier
Bennett	Benoit
Bergen	Bernier
Bezan	Blaney
Block	Boughen
Braid	Breitkreuz
Brisson	Brown (Leeds—Grenville)
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)	Bruinooge
Butt	Calandra
Calkins	Cannan
Carmichael	Carrie
Chisu	Chong
Clarke	Clement

Government Orders

Cotler	Crockatt
Cuzner	Daniel
Davidson	Dechert
Devolin	Dion
Dreeshen	Dubourg
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Eglinski	Falk
Fantino	Fast
Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)	Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Fletcher	Foote
Freeland	Galipeau
Gallant	Garneau
Gill	Glover
Goguen	Goldring
Goodale	Goodyear
Gosal	Gourde
Grewal	Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)
Hawn	Hayes
Hillyer	Hoback
Holder	Hsu
James	Jones
Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)	Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)
Kent	Kerr
Komarnicki	Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)
Lake	Lamoureux
Lauzon	Lebel
LeBlanc (Beauséjour)	Leitch
Lemieux	Leung
Lizon	Lobb
Lukivski	Lunney
MacKay (Central Nova)	MacKenzie
Maguire	Mayes
McCallum	McGuinty
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)	Menegakis
Miller	Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)
Moore (Fundy Royal)	Murray
Nicholson	Norlock
Obhrai	O'Connor
O'Neill Gordon	Opitz
Paradis	Payne
Perkins	Poillievre
Preston	Raitt
Rajotte	Regan
Reid	Rempel
Richards	Rickford
Ritz	Saxton
Scarpaleggia	Schellenberger
Seeback	Sgro
Shipley	Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Wind-
Smith	Sopuck
Sorenson	Stanton
Storseth	Strahl
Sweet	Tilson
Toet	Trost
Trottier	Trudeau
Truppe	Uppal
Van Loan	Vaughan
Wallace	Warawa
Warkentin	Watson
Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country)	Williamson
Weston (Saint John)	Woodworth
Wilks	Young (Oakville)
Wong	Yurdiga
Yelich	
Young (Vancouver South)	
Zimmer— 169	

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the Motion No. 1 defeated. I therefore declare Motions Nos. 2, 3, 5 to 44 and 46 to 66 defeated.

The next question is on Motion No. 4. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

Government Orders

The Speaker: All those in favour of the motion 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.

I declare Motion No. 4 defeated.

(Motion No. 4 negatived)

The Speaker: The next question is on Motion No. 45. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Speaker: All those in favour of the motion 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.

I declare Motion No. 45 defeated.

(Motion No. 45 negatived)

Hon. Steven Blaney (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC) moved that the bill be concurred in.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Speaker: All those in favour of the motion 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 yeas have it.

And five or more members having risen:

• (1850)

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

(Division No. 392)

YEAS

Members

Ablonczy
Albas
Alexander
Allison
Anders

Adler
Albrecht
Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Ambler
Anderson

Andrews
Aspin
Bateman
Bennett
Bergen
Bezan
Block
Braid
Brisson
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)
Butt
Calkins
Carmichael
Chisu
Clarke
Cotler
Cuzner
Davidson
Devolin
Dreeshen
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)
Eglinski
Fantino
Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)
Fletcher
Freeland
Gallant
Gill
Goguen
Goodale
Gosal
Grewal
Hawn
Hillyer
Holder
James
Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Kent
Komarnicki
Lake
Lauzon
LeBlanc (Beauséjour)
Lemieux
Lizon
Lukiwski
MacKay (Central Nova)
Maguire
McCallum
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)
Miller
Moore (Fundy Royal)
Nicholson
Obhrai
O'Neill Gordon
Paradis
Perkins
Preston
Rajotte
Reid
Richards
Ritz
Scarpaleggia
Seeback
Shipley
sor)
Smith
Sorenson
Storseth
Sweet
Toet
Trottier
Truppe
Van Loan
Wallace
Warkentin
Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country)
Weston (Saint John)
Wilks
Wong
Yelich
Young (Vancouver South)
Zimmer — 169

Armstrong
Barlow
Bélangier
Benoit
Bernier
Blaney
Boughen
Breitkreuz
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)
Bruinooge
Calandra
Cannan
Carrie
Chong
Clement
Crockatt
Daniel
Dechert
Dion
Dubourg
Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Falk
Fast
Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Foote
Galipeau
Garneau
Glover
Goldring
Goodyear
Gourde
Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)
Hayes
Hoback
Hsu
Jones
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)
Kerr
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)
Lamoureux
Lebel
Leitch
Leung
Lobb
Lunney
MacKenzie
Mayes
McGuinty
Menegakis
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)
Murray
Norlock
O'Connor
Opitz
Payne
Poilievre
Raitt
Regan
Rempel
Rickford
Saxton
Schellenberger
Sgro
Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Wind-
Sopuck
Stanton
Strahl
Tilson
Trost
Trudeau
Uppal
Vaughan
Warawa
Watson
Williamson
Woodworth
Young (Oakville)
Yurdira

Government Orders

NAYS

Members

Allen (Welland)	Angus
Aubin	Blanchette-Lamothe
Boivin	Borg
Boutin-Sweet	Brahmi
Brousseau	Caron
Cash	Charlton
Chicoine	Choquette
Christopherson	Côté
Crowder	Cullen
Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)	Day
Dewar	Dionne Labelle
Donnelly	Doré Lefebvre
Dubé	Dusseault
Fortin	Freeman
Garrison	Genest
Giguère	Godin
Gravelle	Grogue
Harris (Scarborough Southwest)	Harris (St. John's East)
Hyer	Julian
Kellway	Lapointe
Latendresse	Laverdière
LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard)	Leslie
Liu	Mai
Marston	Martin
Masse	Mathysen
May	Michaud
Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)	Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)
Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)	Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)
Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)	Nantel
Nash	Nicholls
Nunez-Melo	Papillon
Péclet	Plamondon
Quach	Rafferty
Rankin	Ravignat
Raynault	Rousseau
Saganash	Sandhu
Scott	Sellah
Sims (Newton—North Delta)	Stewart
Sullivan	Toone
Tremblay— 79	

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

* * *

CITIZEN VOTING ACT

The House resumed from May 1 consideration of the motion that Bill C-50, An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act, 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 the second reading stage of Bill C-50.

● (1855)

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

(Division No. 393)

YEAS

Members

Ablonczy	Adler
Albas	Albrecht
Alexander	Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Allison	Ambler
Anders	Anderson
Armstrong	Aspin
Barlow	Bateman
Benoit	Bergen
Bernier	Bezan

Blaney	Block
Boughen	Braid
Breitkreuz	Brown (Leeds—Grenville)
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)	Bruinooge
Butt	Calandra
Calkins	Cannan
Carmichael	Carrie
Chisu	Chong
Clarke	Clement
Crockatt	Daniel
Davidson	Dechert
Devolin	Dreeshen
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)	Eglinski
Falk	Fantino
Fast	Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)
Finlay (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Fletcher
Galpeau	Gallant
Gill	Glover
Goguen	Goldring
Goodyear	Gosal
Gourde	Grewal
Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)	Hawn
Hayes	Hillyer
Hoback	Holder
James	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)	Kent
Kerr	Komarnicki
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)	Lake
Lauzon	Lebel
Leitch	Lemieux
Leung	Lizon
Lobb	Lukiwski
Lunney	MacKay (Central Nova)
MacKenzie	Maguire
Mayer	Menegakis
Miller	Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)
Moore (Fundy Royal)	Nicholson
Norlock	Obhrai
O'Connor	O'Neill Gordon
Opitz	Paradis
Payne	Perkins
Poillievre	Preston
Raiitt	Rajotte
Reid	Rempel
Richards	Rickford
Ritz	Saxton
Schellenberger	Seeback
Shiple	Smith
Sopuck	Sorenson
Stanton	Storseth
Strahl	Sweet
Tilson	Toet
Trost	Trottier
Truppe	Uppal
Van Loan	Wallace
Warawa	Warkentin
Watson	Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to
Sky Country)	
Weston (Saint John)	Wilks
Williamson	Wong
Woodworth	Yelich
Young (Oakville)	Young (Vancouver South)
Yurdiga	Zimmer— 142

NAYS

Members

Andrews
Aubin
Bennett
Boivin
Boutin-Sweet
Brisson
Caron
Charlton
Choquette
Côté
Crowder
Cuzner
Day
Dion
Donnelly
Dubé

Adjournment Proceedings

Dubourg	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Dusseauult	Foote
Fortin	Freeland
Freeman	Garneau
Garrison	Genest
Giguère	Godin
Goodale	Gravelle
Groguhé	Harris (Scarborough Southwest)
Harris (St. John's East)	Hsu
Hyer	Jones
Julian	Kellway
Lamoureux	Lapointe
Latendresse	Laverdière
LeBlanc (Beauséjour)	LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard)
Leslie	Liu
Mai	Marston
Martin	Masse
Mathysen	May
McCallum	McGuinty
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)	Michaud
Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)	Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)
Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)	Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)
Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)	Murray
Nantel	Nash
Nicholls	Nunez-Melo
Papillon	Péclet
Piamondon	Quach
Rafferty	Rankin
Ravignat	Raynault
Regan	Rousseau
Saganash	Sandhu
Scarpaleggia	Scott
Sellah	Sgro
Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor)	Sullivan
Sims (Newton—North Delta)	Tremblay
Stewart	Vaughan— 106
Toone	
Trudeau	

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried. Accordingly the bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs.

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

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

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

● (1900)

[*English*]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Jasbir Sandhu (Surrey North, NDP): Mr. Speaker, as you know, I have risen in this House in the last couple of weeks in regard to the violence taking place in my city of Surrey. We have had 25 shootings in the last eight weeks, and people are very concerned. The parents are concerned, the neighbours are concerned, and the entire community is concerned about the type of violence that is taking place. We have had 25 shootings, and one young person has been killed.

The number one responsibility of the government is to ensure public safety. I have repeatedly asked questions in this House, yet the Conservatives have failed to provide very simple answers as to what the government is going to do to ensure that we have some sort of public safety in the city of Surrey. The government needs to take steps to ensure that people are safe in their homes, at their

workplaces, and in their communities, and that does not seem to be happening.

On the one hand, the current government pretends to be tough on crime, yet when it comes to public safety, it is very soft in regard to providing the resources our community needs. Our community needs resources. We need more boots on the ground, and we need additional programs that help prevent our kids from getting into these activities.

I have a bill in this House, a private member's motion, that asks that sustainable and long-term funding be available for gang-prevention programs. Last week I asked the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness a question, and the parliamentary secretary responded to that question. She pointed out that apparently the Conservatives have allocated \$2.8 million since 2006.

I would like to know from the minister or the parliamentary secretary the itemized annual amounts for the spending. What departments are involved, and for what amounts? What components are grants or contributions? What is the government's definition of "crime prevention"?

These are the types of questions my community is asking. This is all the stuff that is going backwards, and I want to know what the Conservatives are doing right now to ensure that we have public safety as a top priority. The Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness has said it is \$3 million. We have heard \$2.8 million. Which is it, \$2.8 million or \$3 million? Can it be itemized over the years?

We are not getting any response from the Conservatives, and they have provided no new initiatives so that my community can look forward to some safety. I am asking very plain and simple questions on behalf of my community. The people in my community are concerned. I am concerned. Can the minister please provide some answers?

Ms. Roxanne James (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC): Mr. Speaker, of course, our Conservative government has taken strong action to keep British Columbians and all Canadians safe. We have passed tough new laws to clean up our streets and put gang members behind bars where they belong. In fact, we have passed over 30 new tough on crime measures, including new prison sentences for drive-by shootings. Shockingly but not surprisingly that very same member, the NDP and the Liberals voted against these common sense measures.

We have also made significant investments in the RCMP to ensure that there are enough front-line police officers in our communities. Contrast this with the previous Liberal government which actually closed down the RCMP training depot because it did not want to pay for new recruits.

Canadians know they can trust our Conservative government to keep them safe, to provide the resources, funding and the measures necessary through legislation. They can also count on us, because we are pleased to approve the request for additional support to the community of Surrey to combat crime. Why? Because Canadians will not tolerate being held hostage in their own communities by thugs and criminals who are members of street gangs.

Adjournment Proceedings

HEALTH

I do appreciate the member for Surrey North wanting to improve his community. However, I would like to ask that same member why he has not supported a single tough on crime measure that our government has introduced. Here he is standing in the House asking for support, but he has not supported a single measure that we have brought forward. He actually has voted against every single measure that we have brought forward to combat criminals, crime and keep gangsters behind bars. He even voted against making the youth gang prevention fund a permanent program.

The member mentioned funding for crime prevention. We have actually invested \$2.8 million in his riding for crime prevention alone. Here we go again; he is standing in this House asking for resources, but he voted against absolutely everything this government has done to help his constituents.

I also agree with the member for Surrey North that crime is a big problem. It is why I am a Conservative member of Parliament, because we are the only party that can be trusted to keep Canadians safe. I would encourage the member to become part of the solution as well.

• (1905)

Mr. Jasbir Sandhu: Mr. Speaker, I did not hear any answer in that. Instead, the member went on to blame the Liberals nine years ago. This issue has been occurring in the last five or six years.

I asked very simple questions of the member to give me the itemized numbers for the \$2.8 million that she talked about. I do have another late show next week, so if the member does not have the numbers today, she can bring the numbers next Wednesday. I will be coming back here and asking for additional resources for my community.

My community needs help now. The Conservative government is failing to deliver. The Conservatives talk about what happened in the last 10 years, but there are shootings going on in my community now. The Conservative government is failing to deliver for the citizens of Surrey.

Ms. Roxanne James: Mr. Speaker, as usual, the NDP is simply not listening to what the government has said. I stood up just a moment ago and told the member that we were pleased to approve the request for additional support to the community of Surrey to combat crime. Those constituents in his riding know that we are the only political party in this House that will provide the necessary funding, the legislative tools, as well as invest in crime prevention.

Again, we have passed 30 tough new laws to clean up our streets and put gang members behind bars where they belong. Those are pieces of legislation that the NDP has voted against. There are significant investments in the RCMP to ensure there are enough front-line police office in communities. In fact, we increased the investments to our national security and the RCMP seven times. That member voted against every single one of them.

Let us get back to what Canadians can expect. They know that with this Conservative government they can expect three things: legislative tools to keep Canadians safe, funding for law enforcement agencies, and funding for crime prevention as well.

Mr. Bruce Hyer (Thunder Bay—Superior North, GP): Mr. Speaker, in 1958, Lester Pearson and Tommy Douglas collaborated to develop our world-class universal health care system in which every Canadian, regardless of their status, would receive medical care. At that time, funding for this system was split evenly at fifty-fifty between the federal and provincial governments.

Close to 50 years have passed, and much has changed. The federal government's share of the cost is now less than half of what it was at that time. Over the past decade alone, the cost of Canadian health care has risen by about 50%. This is quite worrying, since the cost of providing health care is growing faster than our economy and our population.

This increase in cost does not seem to be tied to improvements in the quality of treatments that Canadians are receiving. Wait times are as long as ever, and acute care hospitals like the one in Thunder Bay—Superior North have been in gridlock for years

On January 26, the Thunder Bay hospital had nearly 100 more patients than beds. Patients, most of them seniors, were piled almost on top of each other, like cordwood on cots in hallways. What is most worrying is that as Canada's population ages, there seems to be no relief in sight for our health care system.

Canada needs some real leadership that is willing to take responsibility, invest in health care and address the needs of our aging population. The Conservatives have instead decided to offload those responsibilities and their growing costs onto already overburdened provinces.

The Canadian health care system is in need of some serious attention. The last thing it needs now is for the Conservatives to cut and run as they are doing.

It is the most vulnerable members of Canadian society who suffer the most from the government's irresponsibility. Canadians living in rural, northern or aboriginal communities are facing a doctor shortage much worse than the rest of Canada. Our hats go off to rural physicians who struggle to take up the slack, like our own doctor, John Jackson-Hughes, did for 39 years in Nipigon, Ontario, in my riding of Thunder Bay—Superior North, before retiring this week. Even in urban Thunder Bay, one third of our families have no family doctor.

Historically, the federal government's role in health care has been to ensure that these kinds of discrepancies in care do not occur. However, in March, 2014, the Canada health accord was allowed to expire without any sort of plan to renew it or even replace it. Canada is the only country in the G20 without any national health care strategy, and it is starting to show. Canada's global ranking in health care performance is dramatically decreasing, and the government's reckless cuts are only going to further increase that problem.

Adjournment Proceedings

Canadians can, however, take comfort in the knowledge that Canada is a world leader when it comes to handouts to oil companies. The IMF has pegged the Conservative government's subsidies to fossil fuel companies at \$34 billion per year. If that money were directed toward improving the health of Canadians, rather than lining the pockets of some of the wealthiest corporations on earth, we would be well on our way to solving this issue.

Poll after poll shows that Canadians consistently put health care among the issues most important to us. Why does the government place its priorities so far from those of Canadians? It is time for the Conservatives to start listening to Canadians. It is time for a national health care strategy.

Do the Conservatives have any plan to restore the Canadian health care system? If so, we would love to see it.

• (1910)

Mr. Peter Braid (Parliamentary Secretary for Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to address the comments from the hon. member, with respect to health care funding.

Our government is committed to a strong, publicly funded, universally accessible health care system that is there for all Canadians, both today and into the future. That is why we have continued to increase health funding to record levels while, at the time, ensuring that our government's long-term fiscal position is sustainable, in order to continue to support the provision of high-quality health care services that Canadians have come to expect.

In 2015-16, our government will provide \$34 billion to provinces and territories in cash support through the Canada health transfer. This ongoing federal investment will continue to increase, surpassing \$40 billion by the end of the decade. Even through the economic downturn, we have increased health transfers to the provinces and the territories to unprecedented levels. Combine this with the fact that health spending growth in Canada has actually slowed in recent years, and federal support for health care is even more significant.

In fact, health spending has not exceeded economic growth since 2011. In 2014, provincial and territorial government health spending growth was forecasted to be at 1.9%, which is the lowest rate observed since the mid-1990s. All indications are that this trend of reduced health spending growth will continue into the future.

Notwithstanding, our government has committed to extend the 6% Canada health transfer escalator through 2016-17, providing provinces and territories with additional fiscal room to meet their health care needs as they continue to address their respective priorities. The renewed Canada health transfer will provide provinces and territories with the certainty, stability and additional fiscal flexibility to undertake needed reforms to make the system more effective and sustainable.

Of course, improving health care is about more than just funding levels. It will require innovation to make the most efficient use of available resources. The federal government already plays a key role in supporting health care innovation and improvement, with investments of close \$1 billion per year through the Canadian Institutes of Health Research. On any given day, we are supporting

close to 13,000 researchers across Canada who are working to discover new ways of treating illnesses and delivering health care.

In addition, our government supports pan-Canadian organizations, such as the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer and the Canadian Foundation for Healthcare Improvement, which serve as catalysts for building capacity and sharing innovations across the country. I am pleased to note that economic action plan 2015 would commit \$14 million, over two years, for the Canadian Foundation for Healthcare Improvement.

Provinces, territories and stakeholders all agree that health care innovation can play a critical role in addressing health care challenges. Given the importance of innovation in health care, in June 2014, we launched the advisory panel on health care innovation to explore how our government can foster innovation, and improve patient care and the sustainability of Canada's health care system. The panel has been asked to identify promising areas of innovation in Canada, and internationally, that have the potential to improve the efficiency and the effectiveness of our health care system. The panel will report back in June 2015, offering its recommendations on how our government can best support needed change.

• (1915)

[Translation]

We are also creating partnerships in order to help the provinces and territories carry out innovative health reforms and deliver tangible results for Canadians.

[English]

Clearly, we will continue to ensure that our health care system will endure as a source of national pride.

Mr. Bruce Hyer: Mr. Speaker, the numbers speak for themselves. Conservatives have only \$40 billion for health care per year versus \$34 billion in subsidies to fossil fuel companies.

How can the current government consider subsidizing fossil fuel companies, some of the richest companies in the world, to be even remotely as valuable as our universal health care system?

Canadian families and, especially, seniors are feeling the pinch right now. With our aging population, things will only get worse if the current government continues to ignore the need for a national health care strategy.

When will the current government finally start prioritizing health care, and are the rumours true that if the Conservatives get another false majority, we will be seeing more cuts to health care and more privatization of that health care?

Mr. Peter Braid: Mr. Speaker, our government remains fully committed to a publicly funded, universally accessible health care system that provides health care for all Canadians.

Adjournment Proceedings

That is why we have continued to increase health funding to record levels. Since our government took office, federal support through the Canada health transfer has increased by nearly 70%. The transfer will continue to increase, reaching over \$40 billion by the end of the decade.

[Translation]

Our government also remains the largest investor in Canadian health research. In partnership with the provinces, territories and stakeholders, we will continue to strive to strengthen health care through investments in research and innovation.

[English]

To summarize, our government is clearly demonstrating our commitment to the future of Canada's health care system through fair and sustainable health care funding, support for research, and fostering partnerships in the pursuit of an innovation agenda that will further the equality, accessibility, and sustainability of our great health care system.

[Translation]

QUEBEC BRIDGE

Ms. Annick Papillon (Québec, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is always a pleasure to rise in the House on behalf of Québec, the most beautiful riding, which I am fortunate enough to represent.

As members know, I have brought up a number of topics in the House. Everyone will certainly recall the Quebec City marine rescue sub-centre, which I saved after two and a half years of hard work. I pressed the Conservatives and forced them to take action because it did not make any sense to hang the sword of Damocles over the only officially bilingual centre in the country. That is what we must remember. This was obviously a success for me, and getting the Conservatives to reconsider their decision was a success for the NDP. We can now trust that the Quebec City marine rescue sub-centre will be there to save lives. That is a big deal.

Of course, I have worked on other files. For example, there is the Quebec City armoury, which I am pleased to know will finally be getting off the ground. This is no easy task, since it burned down in April 2008. It is now May 2015 and we are waiting for the backhoe loader to show up. We know it is coming. The tendering process has started. Little by little the Conservatives are starting to budge, but they keep turning this into a campaign issue, saying that they will take care of it. It has been a long time. We really need to push this.

I would also like to comment on the Quebec Bridge. In the Conservatives' latest budget, there is nothing at all about the Quebec Bridge. About 60% of the bridge is covered with rust. Its integrity is compromised. It is Quebec City's trademark. It is an incredible architectural feat and an icon of our heritage, a symbol of our beautiful city. Unfortunately, the government is slow and is hiding behind CN and the courts. It is doing nothing to protect this infrastructure. People in Quebec City are very worried, of course. They hope the government will respond. People were very sad to see that, unfortunately, there is nothing about it in the budget and nothing for the Port of Québec either. As everyone knows, the Port of Québec has some issues related to health concerns. These concerns have not been addressed. There have been several dust

incidents. Nobody knows if the port will be able to upgrade its infrastructure given the needs.

Quebec City is a sort of peninsula jutting out into the St. Lawrence River. Windy weather hits Quebec City hard. We have unbelievable winds. We also have very high tides. As a result of all of these factors, the episodes of dust can cause pollution in my colleague's riding of Limoilou, but also in Old Quebec and even Lévis, on the south shore, which is our Conservative opponents' territory. We must do something about this. Unfortunately, once again, there was nothing in this budget regarding the Port of Québec.

The only thing there was in the most recent budget—and I am going to take credit for it—has to do with the Quebec City tall ships. I hounded the Conservatives non-stop and we finally managed to get something in the budget, an investment. Unfortunately, we are still waiting for the details and so I am asking the Conservatives to give us some more information.

● (1920)

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, for Official Languages and for the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my colleague must not have been at school the day they were learning about humility.

It is unbelievable to hear the misinformation that is being spread by the NDP. They are an invisible team of phantom MPs. They appear in the House every once in awhile because they have a whip who forces them to be here and then they disappear again to who knows where.

Since many of my colleague's statements were wrong, I will begin with the Quebec Bridge. Our government has committed funding to repaint the Quebec Bridge. We put money on the table to move forward on this issue. We worked closely with the Province of Quebec, the City of Quebec and the City of Lévis on this. On this side of the House, we work with others. We do not impose our vision on others like the NDP and the Liberal Party do.

While we have delivered the money for the project and we are working with the community, we are calling on CN to come to the table and commit to providing the rest of the funds needed to complete it. I would remind the member that it is CN that owns the bridge, and therefore, it must do its part when it comes to repainting the bridge. It is the simplest thing, but even that seems to go over the heads of the NDP.

I would also like to point out that the only thing the NDP has done in this file is organize a photo contest to pay tribute to the bridge. Yes, that is the only thing that party has done for the bridge. I hope they at least took a nice picture of themselves, to put in an album, to frame and hang on a wall or to put on a milk carton, because people are wondering what happened to the NDP since the last election.

In her question, my colleague said that we are doing nothing for the tall ships. It seems that she has not read the budget. Here is a quote:

We are pretty happy. Ours is the only project in Canada that was mentioned [in the budget]....We are very happy....

Adjournment Proceedings

I just quoted the mayor of Quebec City, Régis Labeaume. Here is what the president of Rendez-vous naval de Québec had to say:

To have this event specifically named in the budget reassures us that it is important to the Government of Canada.

He also talked about the pressure caused by the deadline and said that he still had until the end of May to sign the agreements for organizing this event.

I will leave the NDP to make its criticisms in its corner.

• (1925)

Ms. Annick Papillon: Mr. Speaker, that is nonsense. This government, and that member in particular, have no credible arguments.

They have no credible arguments regarding the bridge. Even though they announced that they were allocating money, they are hiding behind CN. They are not taking action. That is money that we will never see in Quebec City.

They are hiding behind CN, saying that their hands are tied because CN is the owner. Get real. Has the government become so bad that it cannot take action when someone else is the owner? I guess it cannot create legislation to protect infrastructure. After all, it is just the Canadian government. It could not possibly get involved in the affairs of multinationals.

I deplore what was said and I am very disappointed in my Canada.

Mr. Jacques Gourde: Mr. Speaker, since my colleague does not seem to have understood, I will say it once more. The bridge is owned by CN, and we believe that CN should contribute financially to the project.

We will work with the province, Quebec City and the City of Lévis. We are working with our partners on this file. We are not holding a photo contest to find the absentee members who have dropped off the map since May 2, 2011.

The recent budget also confirms that we will be supporting the Rendez-vous naval de Québec. Tenders were put out at the beginning of the year for the rebuilding of the Quebec City Armoury. We are funding several projects in Quebec City, such as the expansion of the Musée national des beaux-arts, the PEPS project, the construction of the Augustinian Monastery Museum, and the construction of the ice oval.

Being present and being absent are two entirely different things.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 7:28 p.m.)

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