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Friday, May 8, 2015

—

Speaker: The Honourable Andrew Scheer

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, May 8, 2015

The House met at 10 a.m.

At this point I will turn from speaking about victories to speaking about the challenges.

Prayers

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

•(1000)

[*English*]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

OPPOSITION MOTION—FEMININE HYGIENE PRODUCTS

Ms. Irene Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP) moved:

That, in the opinion of the House, the government should remove the GST from feminine hygiene products.

She said: Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel.

I am honoured to rise in the House today to introduce our New Democrat opposition day motion, which states:

That, in the opinion of the House, the government should remove the GST from feminine hygiene products.

While we have come a long way with regard to gender equity in Canada, we still have far to go. Let me first speak of the victories.

Women in Canada are considered persons under the law, with equal access to all the rights and privileges of men in Canadian society. Since the election of Sister Agnes Macphail to the House in 1921, we have seen the proportion of female members of Parliament steadily rise. On Tuesday this week, the province of Alberta made history, not just for electing its first NDP majority government with Premier-elect Rachel Notley at the helm, but for electing the most women in any government in Canadian history.

The Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada, the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, of which Canada was a proud signatory, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, along with the Constitution and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action are all components of the road map to sexual equality in Canada that stipulated that all of the costs of physical and social reproduction, most of which constitutes the unpaid work of women raising a family, caring for frail and elderly family members and housework, should be shared among all members of society.

Canada has not fared so well in the area of gender equity. Placing a discriminatory tax on products that are used exclusively by women, girls and transgendered people is unfair. Allowing the tax to continue for 25 years is inexplicable. This country, which, in the 1990s, could boast about being on the top of the international heap with regard to gender equity using United Nations gender equality indicators, has now slipped to number 19 on the world stage.

Federal tax policies are structured such that the ratio of profit between women and men is 60:40 or less. In other words, federal tax policy favours those with a higher income and since men, by and large, earn higher incomes than women, men are advantaged and women are disadvantaged under current taxation regimes. Women, on average, make only 78% of the wages enjoyed by men for doing work of equal value. The same reality of inequities touches on almost every part of women's experience in this country.

Even though reproductive rights have been enshrined in Canadian law, women must continue to fight to have access to the safe and timely abortions that should be guaranteed in every hospital in every province. Consequently, the reproductive health of women is compromised. We need to be very concerned about that reality, just as we as a country bear the shameful record of thousands of missing and murdered aboriginal women. Violence against aboriginal women, indeed, all women and all people, should never be tolerated or dismissed.

While first nations communities and their supporters continue to call repeatedly and loudly for an inquiry into the systemic causes of this tragedy, the government refuses to acknowledge the problem. Regressive policies such as those that increase the age of eligibility for OAS and GIS from 65 to 67, no seniors strategy at all, and the lack of an affordable, accessible and universal child care program affect women most acutely.

Business of Supply

A New Democrat federal government in 2015 would restore the age of eligibility for OAS and GIS to 65, implement a federal minimum wage of \$15 per hour, implement a universal child care program accessible to all Canadians at \$15 a day, implement a seniors strategy, and call an inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women. While I have no doubt that there are many hurdles yet to face on the road to complete gender equity in Canada, I have hope for that future.

There is one way that we in the House can correct gender injustice right here, right now. Today we have the opportunity to make a minor adjustment to the Excise Tax Act that would remove the GST from feminine hygiene products.

Allow me to speak about something the government has deemed a luxury: menstruation. If anyone can believe it, feminine hygiene products actually fall under the category of luxury items in the Excise Tax Act and are, therefore, subject to the federal goods and services tax. This is just the reality.

●(1005)

As a woman, I think I can call myself an expert on this topic, and while I have heard menstruation described in many ways, the curse, the crimson tide, a visit from auntie flow, monthlies, feeling delicate or the big red monster, I have never heard it described as a luxury.

Why then are feminine hygiene products, pads and tampons, treated as luxury items under the Excise Tax Act? Why are women discriminated against while this tax leaves such things as wedding cakes, chocolate chips, cocktail cherries and Viagra exempt?

Taxing female hygiene products amounts to gender discrimination. It is clear and simple. With this motion, we have the opportunity today to rectify that. This motion calls on the government to remove the GST from feminine hygiene products, to simply remove the tax. As often happens when legislation is drafted quickly or thoughtlessly without consultation or debate, or announced outside this chamber in places such as Davos, it is the people who can least afford to bear the brunt of the inequity who suffer the most because of it.

Taxing feminine hygiene products is symbolic of the systemic inequality Canadian women face in all areas of life, especially women in poverty.

I would like to thank Jill Piebiak, Kathleen Fraser and the organizers of the Canadian Menstruators group for initiating the awareness campaign on change.org that has resulted in over 10,000 signatures on a paper petition to this House and over 72,000 online signatures in support of this initiative.

I am so encouraged by the organizing and mobilizing efforts of these young feminist activists. As a result of their efforts, my office has received countless emails and calls of support. I have heard from women who cannot afford feminine hygiene products and feel compelled to stay home during their periods. I have heard from students who need to count and parcel out their pads and tampons to make sure they last the month.

I have heard from women's shelters and food banks that keep a steady supply of feminine hygiene products on hand for women who cannot afford them once they have paid the rent and fed the kids. The

mobilizing effort of the Canadian Menstruators group has also resulted in the organization of pad parties where donations for women's shelters are collected along with petition signatures.

The fact of the matter is that these items are essential. Women do not and cannot choose to have a period. Taxing feminine hygiene products is blatant gender discrimination. It is an injustice that can be quite simply rectified. This House has the power to amend the Excise Tax Act and deem feminine hygiene products as essential, thereby removing the tax.

Even with the recent reduction in the GST, people with periods are still paying unfairly into the system. According to Statistics Canada it is estimated that in 2014 approximately 18,000 Canadian women between the ages of 12 and 49 spent about \$520 million on menstrual hygiene products.

This amounts to approximately \$37 million dollars in government sales taxes collected from women. It just makes me see red. It may seem small but a tax on tampons, pads, panty liners, menstrual cups and alternatives can add up quickly when combined with the systemic challenges faced by many women, trans people, gender-queer people and other menstruators in terms of income, housing and economic stability.

My predecessor in this initiative, the former member of Parliament for Winnipeg Centre, Judy Wasylycia-Leis said:

The GST on tampons and sanitary napkins amounts to gender based taxation. The taxing of essential and necessary products used exclusively by women is unfair and discriminatory. It unfairly disadvantages women financially, solely because of our reproductive role. The bill...would be of particular value to lower income women.

This motion allows us to correct the injustice, here and now, today. Remove the tax and make life more equitable and affordable for Canadian women. We can do this, and after we do, feminists young and old, male and female and otherwise identifying, can move on to the next challenge in achieving a Canada that is equitable, accessible and fair, and where not one of us is left behind.

●(1010)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, as deputy finance critic, I am proud to support this motion.

I certainly remember the debate around the introduction of the GST in Canada and the debates over what were considered luxury goods and what goods would one day be GST-exempt.

The member for London—Fanshawe gave an excellent speech and an excellent rationale for why the GST on feminine hygiene products should be eliminated.

Business of Supply

Would she like to give us a little background and draw a comparison between certain luxury products and others that are no longer designated as such—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Harold Albrecht): Order. The hon. member for London—Fanshawe.

[*English*]

Ms. Irene Mathysen: Mr. Speaker, folks have to understand that when the GST was brought in in 1990, there was a decision made that necessities of life would not be taxed and therefore made more accessible to people. Among those things were diapers, incontinence products, testing kits and ironically, as I mentioned in my speech, cocktail cherries, wedding cakes and chocolate chips.

What people were thinking at the time is sometimes a mystery, but after 25 years there is an opportunity and there has been previously, to correct the injustice. Feminine hygiene products are a part of women's reproductive health. They are an absolute necessity. Young women and girls cannot go to school, to work or cannot operate in society without proper products like this. So the tax must be removed.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have the GST, provincial sales taxes and we have harmonized taxes. Provincial legislatures have also had the exemption. Across Canada there has already been a significant movement to do exactly what is being proposed today in the opposition day motion. Maybe the member would provide some comment on that issue.

• (1015)

Ms. Irene Mathysen: Mr. Speaker, my colleague is absolutely correct. Some provinces such as Ontario, Manitoba, Alberta, British Columbia and the Territories, have indeed removed sales tax from feminine hygiene products. I would say very clearly to the government that if provinces can do that and the sky does not fall, then this federal Parliament can indeed remove what is essentially an unfair tax.

I would also note that by virtue of the fact that in a very short time, I received 10,000 signatures and 72,000, some online, it would suggest that women are fed up. They are angry and they want to be taken seriously. They do not want to be dismissed. They want equity and this is a good first step.

Mr. Dennis Bevington (Northwest Territories, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for bringing this issue up. This debate could play out in the north in a different way because I am not too sure that our nutrition north program which subsidizes freight for some items would actually subsidize the freight for this medically required item.

When we look at northern people and the costs of freighting for these types of goods, it probably doubles the cost for these types of products for northern women and it is something we need to look into with the whole subsidy program for northerners.

I want to thank my colleague for bringing this up at this time.

Ms. Irene Mathysen: Mr. Speaker, we know that essential products that are shipped to the north are incredibly expensive.

In response to some of the Pad Parties that have been held across Ontario, I purchased some feminine hygiene products and took them to my local shelter and they were horrendously expensive. If they are

horrendously expensive in southern Ontario, I cannot imagine how inaccessible they would be in the north.

We come back to the dignity of women. Women deserve to have equity and these products.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Mylène Freeman (Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the motion moved by my colleague from London—Fanshawe and to ask the Conservatives to eliminate an unfair tax.

It is unfair for women to pay tax on goods as essential as feminine hygiene products. Menstruation products are not a luxury for women and girls. This discrimination costs women more than \$36 million per year. It makes no sense to ask women to pay tax on tampons when there are exemptions for non-essential goods, such as wedding cakes and cocktail cherries.

I am proud to be part of a caucus that fights for gender equality and stands up for women by asking the government to eliminate the federal sales tax on feminine hygiene products and make taxes fair for both genders.

Every year, under the Excise Tax Act, the federal government collects millions of dollars in taxes on these products. Products considered essential to daily life are exempt from the tax, but luxury products are not.

According to activists with Canadian Menstruators, an organization that has gathered over 72,000 signatures on an online petition on the matter, Canadians agree that taxing these products places an added burden on Canadian households and discriminates against women who menstruate, a group of people who face a disproportionate financial burden.

In 2011, the member for London—Fanshawe introduced Bill C-282 to remove the excise tax on feminine hygiene products. A similar bill had already been introduced by the NDP in a previous Parliament.

Last fall, when talking about how unfair this tax is, a group of young women learned about the bill's existence. They organized the Canadian Menstruators campaign and started an online petition, which over 72,000 Canadians have signed. Furthermore, the paper version of the petition that we presented in the House has gathered over 10,000 signatures so far.

Managing taxation is one of the most important aspects of governance.

• (1020)

[*English*]

Basic grocery products are exempt from the GST. According to the CRA website:

...the CRA considers a product to be a food or beverage if an average consumer would recognize and purchase the product as such in the ordinary course of buying basic groceries.

We are talking about basic necessities.

Business of Supply

As anyone who uses them or buys consumer products for or with someone who uses them will say, the products that menstruators need are basic. Tampons and pads are not luxury items that are taxable through GST. No one comes home after a rough day of work and says, "I'm going to go buy myself a box of tampons and relax". It is not ice cream. It is not cake. It is not wine or chocolate or perfume or nail polish or Viagra. It is a necessity. Necessities identified by the CRA as zero-exempt are foods, such as fresh, frozen, and canned foods, and products like medical oxygen, dispensing services fees, artificial limbs, eyes, and teeth, catheters, glasses, contacts, hearing aids, canes, crutches, stockings, and apparently, human sperm, which is on my list.

We are talking about reproductive health, right? Reproductive health is part of a menstruator's normal healthy course of life, and this measure should be seen as part of a holistic conversation about our reproductive health and lives. It should be seen as something that is basic in a menstruator's course of life and therefore should be exempt.

[Translation]

Gender inequality is reaching new heights in Canada; it is increasing rather than diminishing. That is unacceptable. We need a government that can combat inequality, not one that perpetuates and increases it. Inequality is growing between Canadian men and women.

Instead of tackling the problem, the government is adopting disgraceful measures that ultimately increase inequality. That is why we need to take fundamental action to address inequality. Gender inequality means that women do not have the economic security they deserve, and that fits right into the current agenda.

Women make up 59% of minimum-wage workers. Even working full time, women in these jobs do not have enough money to meet all their family's needs. Women who work full time earn an average of 23% less than men; 20 years ago they earned 28% less.

At that rate, it will take 95 years before we achieve parity. The government should endeavour to reduce discrimination and inequality. If we eliminated the wage gap, growth in our gross domestic product would increase by up to 10%.

In the meantime, Canada is far from achieving pay equity. The wage gap in Canada is the eighth largest among the OECD countries. More than ever in Canada, women are becoming educated and pursuing careers, but they still are not earning the same as men for the same work. For every dollar earned by a man with a post-secondary education, his female colleague with the same education will receive only 82¢ in the public sector and 77¢ in the private sector. This gap is even wider when it comes to aboriginal women and women from visible minorities.

The progress made over the generations by women who fought for pay equity cannot be attributed to the generosity of employers. In fact, employers often do not know that there is a problem. Even 44 years after the Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada, which recommended a national child care program that would help women enter the workforce, there is still a shortage of child care spaces in Canada.

That is why we are proposing very broad measures to address this problem, including the one we are debating today. The NDP has proposed a national child care program that would charge a maximum of \$15 a day. Experts agree that this type of measure will truly result in pay equity. A discussion of any major issue such as pay equity, the creation of day care spaces or the fight against poverty must include gender-based analysis. We also suggest that the federal tax be removed from very basic products such as feminine hygiene products. We are asking the House to consider anything related to women's reproductive lives as a basic commodity and not a luxury. We must eliminate the federal tax on feminine hygiene products.

I would like to take these last few seconds to congratulate my colleague from London—Fanshawe for all her work on this issue. I congratulate her for introducing this bill and this opposition motion today so that we can talk about women's normal sexual and reproductive life in the House of Commons. I also want to thank all the women who campaigned to put this issue back on the table and who have proven that by mobilizing people we can get results in the House. We are talking about this issue thanks to those women. I congratulate them for all their work.

• (1025)

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague from Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel for her excellent speech. The question I am going to ask her is similar to the one I asked the member for London—Fanshawe but from another angle. I remember quite well that when we debated introducing the GST in Canada, one of the discussions that got the most media attention was about how many donuts you had to buy before they were not taxable. If you bought one, two or three donuts, they would be taxable, but if you bought six or 12 donuts, you would not be charged any GST because they could be considered a meal.

This type of debate took up a lot of time in our discussion about the GST, but it seems to me that we overlooked a far more important debate, such as this one, on products that cannot be considered a luxury, such as feminine hygiene products. I would like to hear what the member has to say about the direction the debate on the GST took and the reasons why this important issue was overlooked.

Ms. Mylène Freeman: Mr. Speaker, I mentioned some products that are considered medical products, which are GST-exempt. However, there are other zero-rated products that perhaps should not be or for which the reason for the exemption is not clear. For example, fondue chocolate is exempt from federal tax, as are liquid chocolate icing, cake decorations, cocktail cherries and wedding cakes.

I would be very surprised if tampons were less important than wedding cakes. Perhaps I do not have my priorities straight, but I think that in everyday life, if women had to choose between these two things, they would say that tampons are a bigger part of daily life and that it is much more important to have these feminine hygiene products. It just makes sense to remove the tax from these products.

Business of Supply

[English]

Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my colleague, a young woman herself, is someone who has come to know incredible feminist activists across our country who are making change every single day.

Our debate here today is a true reflection of the fierce feminist activists who are pushing this issue and so many issues that matter to young women here and now. I wonder if the member can speak to that incredible activism we are witnessing and acting on here today.

Ms. Mylène Freeman: Mr. Speaker, this is a perfect example of being able to change things through advocacy and social media.

It is amazing. This is a bill that had been introduced before, but it was not publicized, and these girls did not hear about it. However, because of outreach by the member for London—Fanshawe, they looked at this issue and realized that this is something that is unfair and they decided to do something about it. The petition went viral online. It had 72,000 signatures, which is quite amazing.

When we talk to young women and menstruators, we all think it that it is not fair and does not make any sense. It is a basic sort of thing we can be doing to remove a disproportionate financial burden for women. It is a tax, essentially, on menstruating women. We are the only ones who have to pay it. It does not make any sense, because these are normal products that we need to use throughout the course of our lives. These products are not at all a luxury but are very much a basic necessity.

• (1030)

Mrs. Patricia Davidson (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today and speak to this opposition day motion. I commend my colleague across the way for bringing this motion forward.

I do want to be very clear. Make no mistake that our government has had a long-term commitment to keeping taxes low and making life more affordable for all Canadians. By reducing taxes year after year and enhancing direct benefits to Canadians, the government has given families and individuals greater flexibility to make the choices that are right for them.

The reality is that Canadian families and individuals will receive \$37 billion in tax relief and increased benefits in 2015-16 as a result of the actions our government has taken since 2006.

Unlike the high-tax, high-spend plans of the opposition, our Conservative government believes in low taxes, tax fairness, and leaving more money where it belongs, which is in the pockets of hard-working Canadians.

The opposition would have people believe that our government is not interested in cutting taxes. That is hardly the case, which is why I will use my time today to show what our government is doing to help all Canadians, including women.

Our government is delivering broad-based tax relief to all Canadians, including those whose income is too low to pay income tax on nearly everything they buy. We also believe in the importance of balancing the budget. That is why we are balancing the budget while taking prudent action to lower taxes, create jobs and economic growth, and provide security to Canadians.

Indeed, since 2006, we have cut taxes over 180 times, reducing the overall tax burden to its lowest level in 50 years. Due to measures our government has introduced, small business taxes will be almost 50% lower, which will allow businesses to create jobs and economic growth. Our new family measures, alongside others introduced by the government since 2006, will provide tax relief and benefits of up to about \$6,600 for an average Canadian family of four. We have cut taxes over and over again.

It was our Conservative government that lowered the GST twice, from 7% to 6% and then to 5%, providing tax relief to all Canadian families. We did not just lower it on one product; we lowered it for its entire base, so that it benefits all Canadians, even those who do not earn enough to pay personal income tax. However, the New Democrats voted against both of those GST reductions. In fact, they were proud of it. The current NDP finance critic said that cuts to the GST “take us in the wrong direction. I am very proud that our caucus stood opposed to that direction.”

If the members opposite were serious about lower taxes and tax relief for all Canadians, they would have supported our government when it lowered the GST rate. We did not just lower it on one product; we lowered it for its entire base so that it benefits all Canadians, even those who do not earn enough to pay personal income tax. While doing so, we maintained the GST credit level, which translates into about \$1.2 billion in GST credit benefits annually for low-income and modest-income Canadians.

Again, for all individuals, we have implemented increases to the basic personal amount, the amount of income that an individual can earn without paying federal personal income tax. As a result of these increases and adjustments for inflation, the basic personal amount one can earn before paying taxes is now \$11,327.

We have also reduced the lowest personal income tax rate to 15% from 16%, and increased the amount of income that individuals can earn before facing higher tax rates by increasing the upper limit of the two lowest personal income tax brackets.

• (1035)

We have introduced an enhanced working income tax benefit, allowing lower income Canadians to keep more of their hard-earned incomes and helping them build toward a more prosperous life. We have increased the amount of income that families can earn before the national child benefit supplement is fully phased out and before the Canada child tax base benefit begins to be phased out. This means that more families will be eligible to receive the Canada child tax benefit.

It does not stop there. We also introduced the tax-free savings account, TFSA, a flexible, registered, general purpose savings vehicle, which allows Canadians to earn tax-free investment income to more easily meet their lifetime savings needs. As of the end of 2013, nearly 11 million Canadians had opened a TFSA.

Business of Supply

Mr. Guy Caron: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I am sorry to interrupt the debate of my colleague from Sarnia—Lambton.

I know that we are usually flexible in the content of debates on various motions and bills that are presented, but what we are currently discussing is actually very tight. We are supposed to be debating the issue of the removal of the GST from feminine hygiene products. I understand that the member wants to talk about all those tax initiatives the government has undertaken, but I do believe the motion has been tightened in a way that we could actually have a specific debate on the importance of the burden the GST represents on that specific item, which is not supposed to be a luxury item, on the contrary.

I would like to know if the member could speak specifically to the opposition day motion.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Harold Albrecht): I would take your point under advisement. However, I do think the member is speaking about the GST. I would urge her to come to the point of the debate as quickly as possible.

Mrs. Patricia Davidson: Mr. Speaker, as far as the intervention goes, we will continue. Part of the motion does refer to the GST and certainly a specific product, but I am pointing out many of the things our government is doing.

The TFSA is a popular means of saving for Canadians at all income levels. Individuals with annual incomes of less than \$80,000 accounted for more than 80% of all TFSA holders and about 75% of TFSA assets as of the end of 2013. About half of TFSA holders had annual incomes of less than \$42,000. Those who had less than—

[*Translation*]

Mr. Guy Caron: Mr. Speaker, I completely understand your decision, but I would like to point out that we are halfway through the debate. We talked only about the GST at the beginning and now we are hearing about the TFSA limit, which has nothing to do with feminine hygiene products.

I would like the member to focus on the essence of the motion for the rest of her speaking time. The motion is very specific, and I do not think that the member will have any trouble sticking to this particular topic instead of talking about measures that have nothing to do with the debate. I understand that we have some flexibility, but flexibility does not involve talking about a completely different topic for more than half of the debate.

[*English*]

Mr. Tom Lukiwski: Mr. Speaker, on the same point, I would point out to my hon. colleague that some of the previous speakers on the NDP benches have been talking of issues not specifically about the removal of GST from feminine hygiene products. I heard comments about income inequality, for example.

If the member wants to suggest that only our side is straying from the topic, he should listen to some of the comments by members of his party. I think the comments by our member are perfectly acceptable. They are framing this debate in context. I would suggest to my hon. friend that if he wants to make a complaint about veering off topic, he talk to some of his own members.

● (1040)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Harold Albrecht): I will take a further point and then we will get on with debate.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Guy Caron: Mr. Speaker, I heard my colleague's comments, but I listened to the two speeches on our side of the House. These speeches had a very specific connection to income inequality and gender inequality in this very specific debate. There was a very clear connection to the content of the motion. However, when a member starts talking about TFSAs or other measures that have nothing to do with this specific debate, it detracts from the topic and I think it detracts from the seriousness of the motion we are debating.

[*English*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Harold Albrecht): I would point out, as I did earlier, to all members that there is some latitude allowed for debate within the various issues that we deal with here in Parliament. I think the hon. member had started on that, is progressing to that and is pointing out the different ways in which taxes have been reduced. I would urge her to come to the point of the GST specifically to this motion that is currently before the House as early as she can.

The hon. member for Sarnia—Lambton.

Mrs. Patricia Davidson: Mr. Speaker, many of the people who use feminine hygiene products are those who have young families. I would also like to talk about some of the means that we have introduced to help young families who, again, need to avail themselves of the feminine hygiene products.

We also introduced the children's fitness tax credit and the children's art tax credit to help families with children. We put more money in the pockets of families with children by introducing the universal child care benefit, UCCB. All of these things are making it easier and more palatable for women to be able to afford the feminine hygiene products.

We have also introduced the registered disability savings plan, a tax assisted savings plan that helps individuals with severe disabilities. This helps them and their families save for long-term financial security. Again, this is a group that is affected and uses feminine hygiene products.

We enhanced support for caregivers of infirm dependent family members by introducing the family caregiver tax credit and by removing the \$10,000 limit on eligible expenses that caregivers can claim under the medical expense tax credit in respect of a dependent relative. Again, this puts more money back into the pockets of those who need to purchase feminine hygiene products.

We have provided additional support to adoptive parents by enhancing and increasing the adoption expense tax credit to better recognize the costs of adopting a child.

Business of Supply

We have enhanced support for workers by introducing the Canada employment credit, which recognizes employees' work expenses for things such as safety gear, uniforms and supplies. Again, this is a group that uses feminine hygiene products.

We further provided support to students and their families, which we heard about from the opposition side, by exempting scholarship income from taxation, introducing the textbook tax credit, making registered education savings plans more responsive to changing needs, and lowering the program duration requirements for the tuition, education and textbook tax credits applying to foreign university programs.

We have assisted first-time homebuyers, who are often in the younger age groups of our residents, by introducing the first-time homebuyers tax credit, and increasing the registered retirement savings plan withdrawal limit under the homebuyers plan.

For Canadian seniors and pensioners who helped build this country, we have provided about \$3 billion in additional annual targeted tax relief by increasing the age credit amount by \$2,000. We have doubled the pension income credit amount to \$2,000, and have raised the age limit for maturing savings in registered pension plans and registered retirement savings plans from 69 to 71. We have also introduced pension income splitting. This benefits over 2.2 million Canadians. The opposition may ask what this has to do with feminine hygiene products, and I would like to state that regardless of age, there are feminine hygiene products that are used by women in every age group in this country.

Building on this tremendous record of tax relief, the Prime Minister announced in October 2014 further tax relief and benefit increases for all families with children. This includes enhancing the UCCB, increasing the maximum dollar amounts claimable under the child care expense deduction, and introducing the family tax cut. The enhanced UCCB will provide an increased benefit of \$160 per month for children under the age of six, and a new benefit of \$60 per month for children ages six through seventeen, effective January 1, 2015.

The family tax cut allows a higher income spouse or common-law partner to effectively transfer up to \$50,000 of taxable income to a spouse or common-law partner up to a maximum benefit of \$2,000. Again, this is putting more money back into the hands of those who need it. We have also doubled the amount of expenses that may be claimed under the children's fitness tax credit to \$1,000 starting in 2014, and have made the credit refundable starting in 2015.

• (1045)

Most recently, economic action plan 2015 took our government's record of tax relief one step further. It announced an increase in the TFSA annual contribution limit to \$10,000, effective for the 2015 and subsequent taxation years. This represents tax savings of about \$1.1 billion over the 2015-16 to 2019-20 period. I could spend my entire time today listing off all the ways that we are helping to lower taxes, create tax fairness, and letting Canadians keep more of their own money.

The opposition likes to talk about tax fairness in today's motion, as though this is something they have any experience in achieving.

They also like to forget that they voted against every single tax cut that this government has brought forward.

Our government, on the contrary, actually understands that tax fairness means lower taxes for all Canadians in all income levels, and not only do we understand it, we are making it a reality. These tax reductions have helped build a solid foundation for future economic growth, more jobs, and higher living standards for Canadians. This is good for the overall economy and the right thing to do, which is why tax relief has been a commitment by this government since 2006. This commitment starts right at the most fundamental level, the family.

Canadians at all income levels are benefiting from our government's low-tax plan. In fact, more than one million low-income Canadians have been removed from the tax rolls altogether. Measures introduced by our government since 2006 will provide tax relief and benefits of up to about \$6,600 for a typical two-earner Canadian family of four in 2015. That is a lot more money left in the pockets of Canadians as a result of our actions to spend as they see fit; all of that, may I add, is while balancing the budget.

One of the most significant ways to ensure the prosperity of Canadians is to keep Canada's books in order and bring the budget to balance. We promised Canadians that we would balance the budget, and we delivered on that promise. However, we did not do it by raising taxes or cutting transfers for education and health care. We focused on controlling operating expenses for federal departments and identifying efficiencies that focused on making government operations leaner. A balanced budget will preserve Canada's low-tax plan and allow for further tax reduction, fostering growth and the creation of jobs for the benefit of all Canadians.

Canadians across the country, including in my riding of Sarnia—Lambton, understand the importance of living within their means and expect government to do the same. This new balanced budget legislation will prevent future governments from running deficits, except in extraordinary circumstances.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Guy Caron: Mr. Speaker, I listened to my colleague's speech, and I would like to raise this point again.

The motion we are discussing today is very specific. It is about removing the GST from feminine hygiene products. The member did not talk about that except for maybe in the first two minutes of her speech. Now she is talking about the law on balanced budgets, which has nothing at all to do with the specific motion we are discussing today.

She has been talking for at least six or seven minutes but has not addressed the matter before us. I would like to ask my colleague to speak specifically to the content of the motion we are discussing today.

Business of Supply

•(1050)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): I appreciate the hon. member for Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques's comments.

As the Speaker said 15 minutes ago, the subject before the House today is related to the GST. As the hon. member for Sarnia—Lambton said, when the subject is related to taxes, quite a few reasons and arguments can be relevant to the subject before the House. I find that the hon. member for Sarnia—Lambton has connected the two issues. It is difficult to speak specifically to the subject before the House, particularly when that subject is the GST.

I therefore give the hon. member for Sarnia—Lambton two more minutes.

[*English*]

Mrs. Patricia Davidson: Mr. Speaker, let me be very clear for this House. Our government is always looking to examine further tax decreases and exemptions. That includes looking at things such as has been brought forward here today. On top of presenting Canadians with a balanced budget, this government can always be counted on to further reduce Canadians' tax burden. All consumers benefit if the general sales tax rate is kept as low as possible, by maintaining the comprehensive base for the tax and targeting tax relief more broadly than through specific product exemptions.

The GST applies to a very broad base, with only a limited and narrow set of exemptions. This includes prescription drugs, certain medical devices, basic groceries, residential rents, and health care services. Specific tax relief from the GST is provided for low and modest-income Canadians through the GST credit rather than excluding more items from the tax base. The GST credit provides up-front support to low and modest-income families and individuals to offset their sales tax burden, thereby ensuring that sales tax burdens are sensitive to differences in income and family type. In spite of the reduction in the rate of the GST to 5%, the GST credit has been maintained at existing levels. By putting more money in the pockets of Canadians, we are helping them to make ends meet and spend more on what matters to them.

I do find it a bit rich to think that the NDP is even advocating for any tax relief. It is the very same NDP that has voted against every tax decrease that we have introduced. Our government will continue with our low-tax plan for jobs, growth, and security. I hope that the opposition members will finally support our low-tax plan. They did not support the reduction to the GST, but now is their chance to support our low-tax plan for all Canadians. With their new-found zeal for tax relief for Canadians, I would hope that the New Democrats will take every opportunity to support the real tax relief we have been putting forward since we took government.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, that was a very long 20-minute speech.

I have a very simple question for the member for Sarnia—Lambton.

How can she justify the fact that there is no GST on Viagra or Cialis, while GST does apply to feminine hygiene products? My question is very specific, so I would like a very specific answer.

[*English*]

Mrs. Patricia Davidson: Mr. Speaker, certainly I do not think I said anywhere in my speech that the designation of feminine hygiene products was something that did not need to be looked at. I am quite sure that the member was listening, but I am not sure what he was hearing.

Members need to know that we have spent nine years reducing taxes for Canadian families. As a result, the tax burden for families is at the lowest level that it has been in 50 years. A typical family is saving up to \$6,600 a year in taxes. These things all go toward helping those people afford what they need to afford, and families certainly have reaped the benefit, of up to \$6,600 a year, as I said.

We have been opposed every step of the way on these reductions, but we will continue with them. We do know that this government will put more money back in the pockets of Canadians.

•(1055)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member spoke a lot about the federal budget, but I am inclined to believe Jim Flaherty over the current government. In fact, the tax breaks that the Conservatives are talking about are in essence tax breaks for Canada's wealthiest people. It is not a fair budget.

They can contrast that to what the Liberal Party is talking about, such as the middle-class tax break of 7%, and so forth. We are proposing a fair tax system. I found the spin in the member's speech a little interesting, no doubt right from the Prime Minister's Office.

My question is very specific. Other provincial jurisdictions, through PST, have recognized the value of exempting feminine hygiene products. Why would Ottawa not recognize what the provinces are doing and allow for the exemption?

Mrs. Patricia Davidson: Mr. Speaker, I did have some comments in the original text of my speech that were going to refer to some of the Liberal proposals, but thanks to the member opposite, with all of his points of order, I ran out of time to do that. It may be at a future time that we can discuss some of the issues the member would like to discuss.

I do want to remind people that we have been working for nine years, reducing taxes for Canadian families. I have said that before; the tax burden is at the lowest level it has been in 50 years.

Canadians know that this is the government that is putting money back in their pockets. I do not believe I said anywhere in my speech that we were opposed to this motion. I cannot recall that I did, although everyone is implying that I did. As far as I am concerned, we are not opposed to it.

The government is certainly going to consider this proposal in future budgets, and we will go from there.

Statements by Members

Mr. Dan Albas (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that this particular proposal will benefit people, particularly those of lower income. This goes back to the greater aim of what the government has tried to do, which is to provide tax relief for everyone.

Would the member not agree that cutting the GST from 7% to 6% to 5% would probably benefit people of low income better than any other measure? As appropriate as this motion may be, would not broader-based tax relief for people of lower income go further for Canadian families?

Mrs. Patricia Davidson: Mr. Speaker, the answer is yes, of course. We have lowered the GST from 7% to 6% to 5%, and that put money back in the pockets of every Canadian.

The other thing I think we need to keep in mind is the fact that the GST credit, which was set when the GST was 7%, has not been decreased, although the GST has. The money going back to those low and middle-income Canadians has remained at the level that it was. It has not been decreased.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): The hon. member for Sarnia—Lambton will have five minutes remaining in the period for questions and comments when the House next returns to debate on the question after another part of the day's business.

Before we get on with statements by members, I would also like to thank the hon. member for Kitchener—Conestoga for helping out with the chairing duties this morning, which he did quite well, I understand. Other duties took me out of the House.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

RBC CUP

Mr. Dan Albas (Okanagan—Coquihalla, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this weekend the finest junior hockey teams in Canada will meet in Portage la Prairie, Manitoba to play some hockey, but not just any hockey. This is the RBC Cup. Across Canada, 129 teams from 10 leagues competed to be the one of just five teams in Manitoba trying to take home the cup.

It is my great honour to congratulate the players, coaches and management from the Penticton Vees, which are one of these five teams.

What is truly exciting about the Penticton Vees this season is that the team is not led by a gifted few, but rather it is led by hearts, hard work and, most important, team work. This is perhaps one of the most balanced total team efforts in recent history, and that is a great example of the leadership in the organization.

As the fans in Penticton like to say, "Go Vees Go".

• (1100)

[Translation]

ENVIRONMENTAL TECHNOLOGY INNOVATION CENTRE

Mr. Réjean Genest (Shefford, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am proud to inform the House that, in partnership with the City of Granby, the Université de Sherbrooke plans to create a centre of excellence, the Carrefour d'innovation en technologie écologique, or CITE, this fall in the new phase of Granby's industrial park. Needless to say, I am delighted that the Université de Sherbrooke is coming to Granby, because it will help us meet the needs of the region's manufacturing sector in terms of innovation and training, through its partnership with the public, private and academic sectors.

There is no doubt that the activities developed at the CITE by the university's researchers and its corporate partners will clearly define the economic identity of the region, and this niche identity will become a benchmark in the bio-upgrading and eco-design of products made from biomaterials. That is why I am confident that the financial spinoffs of this project will be shared locally, as well as across Quebec and Canada.

* * *

[English]

PROFESSIONAL CYCLING

Mr. Jim Eglinski (Yellowhead, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canada's biggest professional cycling event will be held in Alberta this year, from September 2 to 7, with riders from across the globe participating, and an anticipated 45 million TV viewers.

The cycling event will start in Grande Prairie on September 2, through to Grande Cache, the Municipal District of Greenview, on September 3, and on to Miette Hot Springs in Jasper National Park. There will be a sprint up Marmot Basin on September 4. On September 5, the world-class cyclists will continue on to Edson, then to Spruce Grove on September 6, ending in Edmonton on September 7.

I encourage all Canadians to cheer on the participants by attending this world-class cycling event in beautiful Alberta. Come visit us and enjoy the great ride.

If people want to see more about this, they can watch it on www.tourofalberta.ca.

* * *

ARTS AND CULTURE

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, for so many reasons, it is great to see President Aquino from the Philippines in Canada, building what will be no doubt a very positive relationship in the years ahead.

Last night I had the pleasure of attending the state dinner for President Aquino and what a privilege it was to be sitting with a YouTube sensation Maria Aragon. She is a talented young lady with an amazing voice. Maria was famously discovered by Lady Gaga. Her video has views in excess of 55 million people. She sang in front of Princess Kate and Prince William. In 2011, she was the most searched term in Canada.

Statements by Members

Maria will be releasing a single and an album in the next few months. Hailing from Winnipeg, I would like to extend a warm welcome to Maria who is in Ottawa today.

* * *

LIGHTHOUSE PRESERVATION

Mr. Gerald Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Barry MacDonald, past president of the Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society.

Barry's tireless work in lighthouse preservation has been instrumental in protecting historic lighthouses across Nova Scotia and across the country, safeguarding them for future generations.

He also provided his expertise during the drafting of the 2008 Heritage Lighthouse Protection Act, important legislation that created a process for designating and preserving historically significant lighthouses across Canada.

Most recently, Barry and society members have been champions of the Sambro Island lighthouse, the oldest lighthouse in the Americas. Since 1759, the Sambro Island light has guided countless people to safety, away from the dangerous rocks and shoals that surround the island, and onward to Chebucto Head and into Halifax Harbour.

Because of Barry and the support of the Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society, I am certain that the light will continue to be part of our history.

I thank Barry for all of his service and dedication to lighthouse preservation across Canada.

* * *

WORLD RED CROSS RED CRESCENT DAY

Ms. Hélène Laverdière (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, today we celebrate World Red Cross Red Crescent Day and recognize the critical work of the international Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. The movement, the largest humanitarian network in the world, is dedicated to preventing and alleviating human suffering in warfare and in emergencies, such as epidemics, floods and earthquakes.

● (1105)

[*Translation*]

This World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day marks the 50th anniversary of their seven fundamental principles of action. These principles—humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity and universality—are the basis of the movement's decisions and actions around the world.

[*English*]

Today we recognize the dedication of the international Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and its national societies, including the Canadian Red Cross, of course.

[*Translation*]

I commend them on their work to protect the life and dignity of those in need.

[*English*]

PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES

Mr. Mark Adler (York Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, Philippine President Benigno Aquino III arrived in Canada. I, along with some of my parliamentary colleagues, as well as scores of members of the Filipino community, were on hand to give him a warm Canadian welcome.

Canada is home to one of the largest Philippine diaspora communities in the world. In fact, some 800,000 Filipinos currently call Canada home. Many arrive here under the caregiver program. Once here, in addition to working long hours, many take courses to upgrade their skills. They come to Canada to be part of our Canadian family, and what a contribution they are making to make Canada a better country for all.

I am proud to say that York Centre is home to one of the largest Filipino communities in the country. Each year we celebrate Philippine Independence Day in Earl Bales Park, where tens of thousands attend. In late August, the entire Bathurst-Wilson area is closed to traffic, where over 100,000 people attend the festival Taste of Manilla.

It is my great pleasure to welcome President Aquino to Canada. I know he will feel right at home in our great Canadian family.

Mabuhay.

* * *

KITCHENER—WATERLOO 2014 CITIZEN OF THE YEAR

Mr. Peter Braid (Kitchener—Waterloo, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Hon. Walter McLean, the 2014 Citizen of the Year for Kitchener—Waterloo. This prestigious award presented by the Lions Club acknowledges the contributions of outstanding leaders in our community.

Walter was the member of Parliament for Waterloo for 14 years and was at the forefront of Canada's stand against apartheid. Since leaving office, Walter has continued to advance civil society and international development issues, and continues to make a deep and lasting impact, both at home and abroad.

For our community, he is a wonderful example of the value and the honour of public service, which is why the Citizen of the Year award is so well deserved. We thank Walter for making a difference.

* * *

[*Translation*]

SECOND WORLD WAR

Mr. Tarik Brahma (Saint-Jean, NDP): Mr. Speaker, 70 years ago today, Nazi Germany surrendered, sealing the fate of the wild saga of Nazi ideology forever.

For my grandmother, Antoinette, widowed during the German occupation with a one-year old and a three-year old, this marked the end of a lengthy ordeal.

Statements by Members

May 8 is also an opportunity for the Algerian community to remember that on May 8, 1945, the French Army massacred thousands in the town of Sétif who hungered for freedom and independence.

May 8 is a time to remember that we have a responsibility to combat all the ideologies that consider one category of people superior to another, or members of one religion superior to those of another.

On May 8, 2015, let us remember. Let us remain vigilant.

* * *

[*English*]

TAXATION

Mrs. Kelly Block (Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal leader has introduced a plan that would raise taxes on the middle class. The Liberal leader admits there is a \$2 billion hole in that plan. He also admitted that he would have to raise taxes on people earning less than \$60,000 a year by cancelling their expanded tax-free savings accounts.

Economists have noted that his proposed tax increases will not raise the money necessary to fund his expensive schemes. His numbers just do not add up. The only way to make the numbers work will be higher taxes on the middle class by taking away tax-free savings accounts and income splitting for seniors.

Canadians know that while the Liberals will raise taxes on the middle class, on this side of the House, we will protect middle-class incomes.

* * *

[*Translation*]

SECOND WORLD WAR

Mr. Marc-André Morin (Laurentides—Labelle, NDP): Mr. Speaker, today, as we celebrate the 70th anniversary of the end of the Second World War and the defeat of Nazism, we should think of the generation of people who sacrificed themselves to save humanity from the worst scourge in history.

The Laurentian region provided a large contingent of volunteers, sometimes all the sons in the same family, such as the five Bélair brothers from Nomingue and the three Chapeleau brothers from Prévost. Some of them were too young, but they still left for the front at 17 years of age. They accomplished amazing feats.

They were men like Jacques Viger, from Nomingue, of the Royal 22nd Regiment and André Rousseau, from La Minerve, of the Royal Canadian Navy.

With the same courage they showed in combat, they rebuilt their lives and became model citizens in their communities. No one gave as much and asked for so little in return. We are very fortunate: these two young men are still with us. They are visiting the site where in 1939 a decision was made that changed their lives.

● (1110)

[*English*]

TAXATION

Ms. Roxanne James (Scarborough Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government created our family tax cut and universal child care benefit to ensure that every Canadian family with children would have more money in its pockets. Canadian families have been benefiting from our universal child care benefit since 2006. Now the Liberals want to take it away.

Instead of a family tax cut, the leader of the Liberal Party wants to introduce a family tax hike. He wants high taxes and huge deficits. This does not help the middle class or people with low incomes.

Our plan benefits 100% of families with children. I call on the opposition to abandon their high-tax schemes and support our plan for families.

* * *

VICTORY IN EUROPE DAY

Hon. Irwin Cotler (Mount Royal, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today is the 70th anniversary of VE Day, a special and poignant moment of remembrance and reminder, of celebration and tribute, which we marked in a ceremony of remembrance at the cenotaph in my riding in Côte Saint-Luc. We remembered those who made the ultimate sacrifice so that we may live in freedom and peace.

We were reminded of the values that they sought to protect and preserve, and that underpin our freedom and democracy today. I recalled the words of my father on my fifth birthday that VE Day. As he put it, the VE Day marked the end of two wars: the Nazi war against the allies and the Nazi war against the Jews.

We celebrated Canada's role in the liberation of the Netherlands in the presence of the Dutch Consul General, and we paid tribute to the veterans among us.

My riding is privileged to have one of the largest percentage of veterans in the country, and when they returned from the horrors of the war, they rebuilt their lives as they rebuilt our communities. Indeed, my riding, like so many across Canada, is full of facilities and institutions built by veterans.

Thanks to them, we can look to the future with hope. May the values that inspired them inspire us all.

* * *

[*Translation*]

VE DAY

Mr. Pierre Lemieux (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today is the 70th anniversary of VE day, marking the official end of the Second World War in Europe.

More than one million brave soldiers left their homes, their families and their friends to serve Canada during the Second World War. Tragically, more than 45,000 were never to return and another 55,000 were injured.

Oral Questions

[English]

Despite its small population of some 11 million people at that time, Canada punched well above its weight and became a significant military power by the end of the Second World War, and we emerged as a key player on the world stage. The important sacrifices made to defeat evil will have a permanent place in history.

VE Day reminds us that freedom comes at great cost. It has never been free. As we mark Victory in Europe Day today, and everyday hereafter, we will remember those who gave so much.

* * *

EMPLOYMENT

Mr. John Rafferty (Thunder Bay—Rainy River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives' economic record is nothing short of shameful: 20,000 jobs lost just this month, at a time when a quarter-million more Canadians are unemployed than before the recession in 2008; and another 1,000 job cuts in the auto sector just announced, on top of the 400,000 good manufacturing jobs that have already been lost under this government. Youth unemployment is double the national average, while the Conservatives leave \$30 million sitting on the table, unspent, instead of helping young people find jobs. Job quality is at a record low, while far too many Canadian families rely on precarious, insecure jobs to make ends meet.

Instead of a budget plan to help the millions of families struggling under the government, the Conservatives offer nothing but tax breaks and loopholes for the wealthy few.

The New Democrats have proposed practical steps that will help fix the damage done by the Prime Minister and create good jobs and opportunity for Canadian families. Together, we will build an economy that works for Canadians when Canadians elect a New Democrat government this October.

* * *

TAXATION

Mr. LaVar Payne (Medicine Hat, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government is cutting taxes for hard-working middle-class Canadians with our family tax cut and the universal child care benefit. Our low-tax plan for families is working and we are ensuring 100% of families with kids will benefit with almost \$2,000 back in their pockets.

The Liberal leader confirmed that he will take this all away and introduce a high-tax plan for middle-class families. We know this because there is a \$2 billion hole in his plan and the only way he can find that money is to raise taxes on Canadians.

Canadians know that, unlike the Liberals, we keep our promises and are the only party Canadians can trust to lower their taxes.

ORAL QUESTIONS

•(1115)

[Translation]

ETHICS

Mr. Peter Julian (Burnaby—New Westminster, NDP): Mr. Speaker, *The Globe and Mail* reported that the Prime Minister's Office was directly involved in tampering with the audit report on the expenses of Conservative Senator Mike Duffy.

According to the RCMP, some members of the Prime Minister's inner circle did everything they could to prevent problems for Mike Duffy and his colleagues in the Senate.

Can the Prime Minister tell us who in his office intervened to alter the report on Mike Duffy's fraudulent expenses?

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have already answered that question many times. This matter is before the court, so it would be inappropriate for me to comment.

However, as I said yesterday, a number of New Democrats used House resources to violate the rules of the House.

[English]

In fact, the member for Louis-Saint-Laurent used \$31,888 to support an illegal office in Montreal and is refusing to repay the taxpayers of her riding. I hope she will do the right thing and repay taxpayers that \$31,000.

Mr. Peter Julian (Burnaby—New Westminster, NDP): More evasions and more refusals to answer, Mr. Speaker. The RCMP have found some answers, though.

The RCMP is saying that the Prime Minister's Office engaged in a deliberate strategy to suppress and alter information. RCMP Corporal Jolette said this about the confidential audit change cover-up:

The report, we've learned through the investigation, had made its way to the PMO, to their office, and...revisions, what they wanted to have written in the report, was done.

When will the government finally come clean about attempts from within the PMO to alter this confidential audit report to protect Mike Duffy?

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have answered that. Again, I will repeat that this is obviously before the court, and the member knows that it would be inappropriate for me to comment.

However, it is a sad day, because still there are 68 members of the NDP who owe taxpayers some \$2.7 million. I understand that they have admitted their guilt and are trying to seek a settlement on this. They have actually taken it away from the court, they have admitted their guilt, and they are trying to seek a settlement. I think Canadian taxpayers will settle for the full \$2.7 million they owe them.

Oral Questions

Mr. Peter Julian (Burnaby—New Westminster, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister's Office is implicated in a cover-up of serious criminal behaviour, and we get buffoonery instead of answers. That did not work for President Nixon; it will not work well for the Prime Minister, either.

The RCMP also said:

Throughout our investigation...we've learned that PMO has had a lot of communication with the diverse senators who were involved in these committees...

Will the spokesperson for the Prime Minister now tell Canadians which Conservative senators the Prime Minister's Office was in touch with about altering the confidential Deloitte report?

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is the members opposite who are engaged in buffoonery when they think that Canadian taxpayers do not care about the \$2.7 million they used illegally. It is no wonder that the new premier of Alberta is trying to distance herself from this crew over here. It is a shame, because they came to Ottawa and said they would be different. They said they would be different when they were elected, but they are no different than the Liberal Party. They are the same group of people illegally using the taxpayers' money and refusing to pay it back. I hope they will finally do the right thing and repay the millions of dollars they owe the Canadian taxpayer.

Ms. Françoise Boivin (Gatineau, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Canadians are not fooled by the non-answers from this member. It is all about the Prime Minister.

• (1120)

[*Translation*]

This political scandal is tarnishing the Prime Minister's Office. Canadians have a right to know why members of the Prime Minister's inner circle were trying so hard to protect Conservative Senator Mike Duffy in the face of serious fraud charges.

Why did the Prime Minister's entourage interfere in the Senate's internal affairs, going so far as to tamper with a confidential report? Did the Prime Minister know that his office was tampering with the Deloitte report?

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this case is before the court. It would be inappropriate for me to comment.

As I said, 68 NDP members unfortunately used taxpayer resources to support an illegal office in Montreal, violating the rules of the House. In fact, the member for Beauport—Limoilou used more than \$31,000 to support an illegal office.

[*English*]

I hope that these members of Parliament will do the right thing and pay back the millions of dollars they all owe the taxpayers.

Ms. Françoise Boivin (Gatineau, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I wish he had the courage to make those accusations outside so that we could sue him.

[*Translation*]

On February 7, 2013, the Prime Minister's chief of staff wrote the following to his colleagues: "A purpose of this is to put Mike in a different bucket and to prevent him from going squirrely in a bunch of weekend panel shows."

That is what people in the Prime Minister's entourage were doing to protect Senator Duffy.

Was the Prime Minister okay with his chief of staff playing a part in the schemes to protect Senator Duffy and prevent his excessive and illegal spending from turning into a political scandal?

[*English*]

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, again, I have answered that, and the member knows that this is in front of the courts, so it would be inappropriate to comment.

With respect to going outside, I would be delighted, after question period, to meet the member outside to talk about the \$24,498 this member personally owes the taxpayers. I would be very delighted to go outside and talk about the 68 members of the NDP. In fact, I invite the member to meet me outside after question period so we can go over these 68 members, the \$2.7 million, and the 23 members who owe \$1.1 million. I look—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Order, please. The hon. member for Kings—Hants.

* * *

TAXATION

Hon. Scott Brison (Kings—Hants, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal Party has a plan for fairness for Canada's middle class. A Liberal government will send a tax-free monthly Canada child benefit to families to help them raise their kids. The Liberal plan is more generous, it is simpler, and it is a fairer way to help Canadian families.

Meanwhile, the Conservatives are going ahead with their income-splitting scheme, which mainly benefits the wealthy. Why are the Conservatives prioritizing tax breaks for the wealthy instead of helping middle-class families who are struggling?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member should have read the *Financial Post* today. If he had, he would have seen this:

Almost one in five Canadians with a TFSA have maximized the contribution room in their account, according to documents from the Canada Revenue Agency obtained by the *Financial Post*.

It's not just high-income Canadians who appear to have maxed out their TFSA, which offers a life-time exemption from taxes on any investment gains. Right across the income spectrum, significant percentages of Canadians appear poised to benefit from the increase in contribution limits.

In fact, "Working-class finds ways to max out TFSAs". It is "60% of Canadians who earn less than \$60K". That is a quote.

Oral Questions

Hon. Scott Brison (Kings—Hants, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it shows how out of touch the Conservatives are with the challenges facing middle-income families when they think that at the end of the year a working middle-income family actually has an extra \$20,000 kicking around to put into a TFSA.

The Conservatives are also out of touch in terms of their priorities. They are spending \$100,000 per ad during the NHL playoffs. That could create 30 summer jobs for young Canadians. At the same time, the Conservatives are holding back funding for important programs that could actually help create jobs for young Canadians.

When will the government get its priorities straight, and when will it start caring more for struggling, middle-class families?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals do not think that people earning \$60,000 a year are middle class. The Liberals think that people who earn \$60,000 are too rich and therefore should pay higher taxes.

My data comes right from the Canada Revenue Agency publication. It was just in the *Financial Post* today. It shows that two-thirds of people who max out their tax-free savings accounts earn less than \$60,000 a year.

Maybe some of them had a loved one pass away and had a small inheritance. Maybe seniors downsized their homes and wanted to invest the proceeds. Maybe they had a one-time pension payment.

We want to ensure that those proceeds go into their tax-free savings accounts, not into the hands of a tax-happy Liberal government

* * *

• (1125)

[Translation]

EMPLOYMENT

Mr. Emmanuel Dubourg (Bourassa, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, young people across the country are unemployed. The youth unemployment rate is twice the national average.

Meanwhile, the Conservative government has no trouble spending money on partisan ads, and it is neglecting hiring programs for youth. It is now May and \$30 million of the funding for this program is just sitting there. That is 20% of the funding for this program that is not being used.

What are this Conservative government's priorities? Why does it not want to help our young people find jobs?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our priority is to create jobs by lowering taxes.

The Liberals think that a government needs to spend money as quickly as possible in order to create jobs. However, the Liberals have admitted to a hole of at least \$2 billion in their plan. Economists are saying that the hole would be much bigger than that. The only way the Liberals can fill that hole is by increasing taxes for job creators and workers. That is a big risk, and we will not adopt that policy.

ETHICS

Ms. Lysane Blanchette-Lamothe (Pierrefonds—Dollard, NDP): Mr. Speaker, still no answers to our questions.

Even Jill Anne Joseph, the Senate director of internal audit at the time, found that there were far too many changes to and deletions from the reports to the Senate. As she said to police:

The report, to my mind, was becoming very scant. There was very little in there to justify the acceptance of a repayment which had already been made.

I will ask the question again. Was the Prime Minister aware that his office was tampering with the Deloitte report?

[English]

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this is before the courts. The member knows it would be inappropriate for me to comment on that.

What is not before the courts right now, because I understand the NDP has admitted guilt and is trying to create a settlement, is the fact that this particular member personally owes the taxpayers close to \$30,000 for an illegal office in Montreal. Of course, the NDP broke the rules of the House.

It is a very troubling pattern that is emerging, a pattern of abuse from the NDP, whether it is robocalls, these illegal offices, inappropriate mailings or illegal union donations. I hope it will start to do the right thing and repay taxpayers.

[Translation]

Ms. Lysane Blanchette-Lamothe (Pierrefonds—Dollard, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it bothers me that the Conservatives are refusing to tell Canadians whether the Prime Minister's Office was involved in tampering with the report on Mike Duffy's expenses. That is troubling.

Corporal Jollette revealed that the Prime Minister's Office was in frequent contact with several senators involved in Senate committees that, coincidentally, were studying the Deloitte reports on three senators' expenses.

Can the Prime Minister confirm his office's involvement in tampering with the Deloitte report?

[English]

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, again, I just answered that question.

It is sad. When the NDP members came to the House, they came as a party, and said they would be different. Ottawa has really changed them. They have actually outdone the Liberals.

Now, the Liberals still owe \$40 million, but the NDP members are catching up very quickly. It is more its members who are personally responsible to the taxpayers, 68 of them for \$2.7 million, and another 23 of them for \$1.1 million. That is a lot of money that Canadians worked very hard for. I hope they will do the right thing and repay that money.

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, let us go through some facts.

Oral Questions

The RCMP have found that the Office of the Prime Minister of Canada secretly engaged in an elaborate strategy to cover up potential fraud and breach of trust, and manipulate the findings of the audit of Mike Duffy, and yet the Prime Minister continues to duck and hide.

Canadians deserve answers. Will the Prime Minister at least admit what the RCMP have already made clear, that it was his office that organized the coverup, that it was his key senators who manipulated the audit, and that it was his chief of staff who cut the \$90,000 cheque to keep Mike Duffy quiet? It is a simple question.

• (1130)

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, again, that is before the courts. It would be inappropriate for me to answer.

Let me quote a justice who reviewed our boundaries, “The advice received at those public hearings, combined with the inappropriate involvement of at least two Members of Parliament, persuaded the Commission to conclude that the status quo, with a few minor” changes was needed.

That is about the member of Parliament for Timmins—James Bay who just asked this question. He voted against his constituents on a number of occasions, so he was worried that he would not be elected again. He tried to gerrymander his riding to get rid of those people.

He gets up and asks a question about ethics, when he broke the biggest rule of all: do not interfere with the court process.

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, that the Prime Minister of Canada has to hide behind that man and those pitiful evasions is pretty sad.

We are talking about whether or not the Prime Minister of Canada misled this House and Canadians. He assured Canadians that that audit report was completely independent, and that has been proven false by the RCMP. It was his key advisers who told Tkachuk to whitewash issues of potential fraud and breach of trust.

The Prime Minister needs to explain himself. Either his key advisers misled him about the coverup, or the Prime Minister of this country has misled Canadians. Which is it?

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what is sad is this member of Parliament interfering with one of the most important processes that happen here. A justice brings that out and highlights two members of Parliament, of everybody in this place, highlights two NDP members of Parliament for trying to interfere in a very important process. The reason he was trying to do that is because he broke his promise to his constituents time and time again.

As opposed to apologizing to his constituents, he tried to get rid of them by realigning the boundaries in his favour.

Whether it is this member or the 68 others who owe \$2.7 million, they are not the same party that came here in 2011.

[Translation]

EMPLOYMENT

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Canada lost 20,000 jobs in April. In the regions, jobs are disappearing faster than we can count them. Some 30 workers lost their jobs at Enercon in Matane. Another 125 workers at the Resolute Forest Products mill in Mauricie will be out of a job. In Havre-Saint-Pierre, 31 workers learned last month that they will be laid off from Rio Tinto Iron and Titanium.

Why is there nothing in the Conservative budget for those workers?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have a training plan that includes the Canada job grant. We also introduced an apprenticeship grant. Thanks to the deal with Europe, international trade will create 80,000 jobs. Lastly, we are lowering taxes for job creators. We have introduced the largest tax reduction for small and medium-sized businesses in the past 25 years.

The NDP will vote against it, and the Liberal leader has already announced that he will raise taxes for small businesses.

Ms. Rosane Doré Lefebvre (Alfred-Pellan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, youth were particularly hard hit in April. The youth unemployment rate went from 0.6% to 13.6%, which is more than double Canada's unemployment rate. More than 13,000 jobs disappeared in just one month. Furthermore, there is nothing in the Conservative budget to create jobs for youth.

Will young people have to wait for a new government for this situation to turn around?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have already announced the apprenticeship grant, which will help get young workers into skilled trades that are in demand. We also established the Canada job grant, which, in partnership with employers, will create jobs and train future young employees. We have also reduced taxes for small and medium-sized businesses, which are job creators. Our budget delivered the largest tax cut in 25 years for small business.

The NDP will vote against it, and the Liberal leader has already announced that he wants to increase small business taxes.

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TAXATION

Ms. Rosane Doré Lefebvre (Alfred-Pellan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, there are little things that the government can do sometimes to help people, and a very simple thing that the Conservatives could do to support women in Canada would be to support the NDP proposal to remove the GST from feminine hygiene products. It is simple because these products are far from being luxury items. They are as essential as other products that are tax-exempt.

Is the government prepared to adopt this very simple measure in order to help women across Canada?

Oral Questions

•(1135)

[English]

Mrs. Susan Truppe (Parliamentary Secretary for Status of Women, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government does support this motion and will consider this proposal in future budgets. I would just like to point out that our Conservative government has spent nine years reducing taxes on Canadian families. They know it is our government that puts money back in their pockets.

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the latest Conservative budget is full of tax breaks and loopholes for the wealthy few. The Conservatives are trying to actually ram through income splitting and TFSA increases that cost billions, and they are ramming it through because they know it is unfair policies that will spend billions on those wealthy few. At a time when so many Canadian families are struggling to make ends meet, we should be looking for every and any way we can to help make life more affordable.

Just a simple yes or no question. They have got billions for the wealthy, will Conservatives support the NDP motion to take the tax off feminine hygiene products and make everyday necessities more affordable for Canadian women and Canadian families?

Mrs. Susan Truppe (Parliamentary Secretary for Status of Women, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I just said our government does support the motion and we will consider the proposal in future budgets.

I would also like to point out again that the federal tax burden is at its lowest level in 50 years, and a typical Canadian family is saving \$6,600.

* * *

EMPLOYMENT

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Conservative priorities are to spend billions on the wealthy rather than lift a finger to help make life more affordable for Canadian families. The Conservatives' so-called plan is failing-middle class families and working Canadians. The Conservatives are failing our economy. New job numbers show that the Canadian economy shed another 20,000 jobs just last month. That is 20,000 more Canadians looking for work on top of the 1.3 million already unemployed.

Young Canadians still have not recovered from the depths of the last recession. Why did the Conservatives cynically refuse to spend tens of millions of dollars to help young Canadians find jobs?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the long-term trend is positive with 1.2 million net new jobs. Our plan for tax cuts, training and trade is creating jobs.

The member across the way said that people earning less than \$60,000 a year are wealthy. Let me quote from the *Financial Post* today, "Working-class finds ways to max out TFSAs" and "60% of Canadians who earn less than \$60K".

The NDP's plan to roll back tax-free savings accounts would raise taxes on thousands of Canadians earning less than \$60,000 a year. That is an attack on the middle class, and we will not allow it.

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Hon. Geoff Regan (Halifax West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister's videos revealed the identity of Special Operations troops to terrorists. The PMO staff broke DND protocols that protect our Armed Forces. They said they had DND's consent; they did not.

We now know PMO staff received two briefings on operational security protocols, yet they still published these propaganda videos. Why has not anyone in the PMO been fired for putting our troops and their families at risk?

Mr. James Bezan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as we have already said in here, we regret this error. We have apologized and we are reviewing all the protocols to ensure it does not happen again. These videos should not have been posted.

However, General Tom Lawson, who is the Chief of the Defence Staff, said:

Following a CAF assessment of the photos and video in question, we have determined, though the risk is assessed as low, to recommend two not be posted. There is certainly no requirement for any CAF personnel to be withdrawn from Op IMPACT.

* * *

ETHICS

Mr. Sean Casey (Charlottetown, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, RCMP documents directly implicate PMO officials in helping Mike Duffy by interfering in what was supposed to be a strictly confidential and independent Senate audit. The PMO was into this up to its elbows, but the Senate's director of internal audit was not even told that changes were being made; nor were the opposition senators on the committee.

Why was this audit shared with PMO officials without the knowledge of the Senate, and who ultimately ordered the Duffy whitewash?

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as I have said on a number of occasions, this is before the courts so it would be inappropriate to comment.

Oral Questions

However, last night somebody did tell me a joke about four Liberals. They are in a \$1-million convertible Mercedes driving around Rockcliffe. They find a \$2-million mansion and they get it for a really good deal. They decide to sit around the table and one says to the others, "How can we take money out of the pockets of middle-class Canadians?" Actually, it is not a joke because it is reality. It is they who want to take millions of dollars from Canadians' pockets.

We are going to do just the opposite. We are going to continue to fight to keep money in Canadians' pockets every single day, and focus on jobs and economic growth because that is what we do.

• (1140)

Mr. Sean Casey (Charlottetown, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we know that Nigel Wright had Conservative senator, Irving Gerstein, call Deloitte to tamper with the Duffy audit. We also know that the Prime Minister's former press secretary, Senator Carolyn Stewart Olsen was the perfect accomplice to help carry out the PMO's orders on the coverup.

Will the Prime Minister now admit that he masterminded the efforts of his henchmen to save his star Conservative fundraiser, Mike Duffy?

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, again it is the same answer: the case is before the courts and we will allow the process to unfold as it will.

At the same time, later on this year, disgraced former Liberal senator Mac Harb will be in front of the courts. We understand that he served in the Liberal caucus for many years. We know it was the leader of the Liberals' father who appointed the senator for Puerto Vallarta. They did nothing about it for over 30 years.

We are bringing accountability to the Senate. We are helping the Crown in its case against Mr. Duffy. Anybody found guilty will suffer the severest consequences.

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ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill, NDP): Mr. Speaker, an internal report compiled by the RCMP shows clearly how closely the government is keeping tabs on first nation protestors. Even more troubling, the report calls the Idle No More movement "bacteria that" could "spread across the country.". We are talking about events that included ceremony, drum circles, and round dances.

Would the minister stand in this House, apologize, and clearly tell Canadians that this kind of discriminatory language toward first nations is unacceptable?

Ms. Roxanne James (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians know and recognize that it is this party, the Conservative government, that has brought in measures, both legislative as well as funding, for national security agencies. I absolutely reject the premise of that question. Painting the RCMP in that light is absolutely unacceptable. These are men and women who risk their lives on a day-to-day basis in order to keep Canadians safe. I find it absolutely abhorrent that she would bring that up and say that in this place.

Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I suggest that the parliamentary secretary look at the documents that have come forward and recognize the severity of this situation. These words are discriminatory and only serve to further damage the relationship between the RCMP, the current government, and first nations. This is on top of ramming through Bill C-51, a dangerous bill that would limit Canadians' rights and freedoms, and target first nations for simply defending their rights.

The question, again, is, what will the minister do to ensure that the RCMP clears the record and treats first nations with respect instead of hostility?

Ms. Roxanne James (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC): Mr. Speaker, again, the misinformation about Bill C-51 from the opposition party, the NDP, is absolutely unacceptable. At the very heart of that particular bill, which I am very proud to say passed through this House this week, is the national security of this country and the protection of all Canadians.

Unfortunately for the NDP, the only measures it would support is if the RCMP had handcuffs on and CSIS was blindfolded.

* * *

[Translation]

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Ms. Éloise Michaud (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the government still has not responded to the disturbing allegations of mistreatment of Afghan detainees during the Canadian mission in 2010 and 2011. At least two investigations were launched, but the reports were not made public and no charges were laid. We still do not know who was aware of this at the Department of National Defence.

Can the minister confirm whether or not his predecessor had been informed of these allegations?

[English]

Mr. James Bezan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have already addressed this in the House. We take all of these allegations very seriously, and anything like this would be inappropriate if there were any conduct in this way.

However, we have been informed that there was an investigation 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 any charges.

• (1145)

Mr. Jack Harris (St. John's East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we are talking about serious allegations of mistreatment of prisoners.

Oral Questions

As well as secrecy, we also have disinformation coming from the current government. The truth is that military officials did not pre-approve the videos of soldiers on the Prime Minister's propaganda website, despite what the Prime Minister's Office said on Tuesday.

This is an important security matter involving the safety of Canadian Armed Forces members and their families. Why did the Prime Minister's officials lie to Canadians?

Mr. James Bezan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have apologized. These videos should never have been posted. We are reviewing all of the protocols.

I can tell members that according to the Chief of the Defence Staff, no Canadian Armed Forces personnel are at risk. I can also tell members that all of us on this side of the House are extremely proud of men and women in uniform who are serving on Operation Impact.

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EMPLOYMENT

Mr. Mike Wallace (Burlington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the strong leadership of this Conservative government has steered Canada out of the global recession. It has created over 1.2 million new jobs. They are overwhelmingly full-time private-sector jobs, in high-wage industries.

Would the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance please tell the House the next steps that this government will take in this year's budget to create more jobs?

Mr. Andrew Saxton (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for Burlington for that excellent question.

Our government is continuing to introduce job-creating measures in budget 2015, such as reducing the small business tax rate down to 9%, providing manufacturers with an accelerated capital cost allowance for another 10 years, supporting young entrepreneurs through Futurpreneur Canada, and introducing the new public transit fund.

However, the Liberals and the NDP want higher taxes on the middle class. We know that would kill jobs and harm the Canadian economy.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Laurin Liu (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the youth unemployment rate continues to climb.

Apparently, the budget implementation act will finally provide health and safety protection to unpaid interns. However, the legislation fails to guarantee other minimum standards, such as protection from sexual harassment or a cap on hours of work.

In Canada, there are roughly 300,000 interns, and most of them are young.

Will the minister correct these serious flaws in the budget implementation bill in order to better protect interns?

[*English*]

Mrs. Susan Truppe (Parliamentary Secretary for Status of Women, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government knows that intern-

ships can provide important workplace-based learning experiences. However, we recognize that many Canadians are concerned about the potential for abuse and lack of protections for unpaid interns. That is why, through economic action plan 2015, our Conservative government would amend the Canada Labour Code to ensure that interns under federal jurisdiction, regardless of pay, receive occupational health and safety protections and are subject to basic safety standards.

Ms. Laurin Liu (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it took years of pressure from the NDP and intern advocates to get any action from the government whatsoever, but after voting against the NDP's intern protection act, it has now introduced a BIA that would leave interns without key workplace protections, such as those against harassment or excessive working hours.

With youth unemployment at twice the national average, hundreds of thousands of young Canadians are forced into unpaid internships. We can do better. Will the minister fix the government's omnibus bill to ensure real protection for Canadian interns?

Mrs. Susan Truppe (Parliamentary Secretary for Status of Women, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I just mentioned that in our economic action plan 2015, our Conservative government will amend the Canada Labour Code to ensure that interns under federal jurisdiction, regardless of pay, receive occupational health and safety protections and will be subject to basic safety standards. It would be nice if the member got on board and supported it.

* * *

[*Translation*]

CBC/RADIO-CANADA

Ms. Hélène Laverdière (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives really have it in for the CBC. We know that the Prime Minister said that Radio-Canada employees hate Conservative values.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Hélène Laverdière: Mr. Speaker, that is just great. It is very enlightening to see what is happening on the other side of the House.

Now, we have learned that Conservative Senator Maltais insulted one of the crown corporation's executive vice-presidents before a parliamentary committee. It comes as no surprise that the senator also said that he hopes the CBC will not get any additional funding.

I see the members opposite chuckling, and that says it all.

Rather than feeding its own obsessions, will the government finally support our public broadcaster?

*Oral Questions**[English]*

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as you know, the government provides the CBC with over \$1 billion in taxpayer funding each and every year. It has more than enough resources to continue and complete its mandate, in both official languages, in all regions of the country

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• (1150)

*[Translation]***AIR TRANSPORTATION**

Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault (Sherbrooke, NDP): Mr. Speaker, on April 29, 2015, the House unanimously adopted Motion No. 553, which I sponsored. This motion seeks to support the economic development of many cities and regions across the country. The House of Commons has spoken. Like the Prime Minister, the Minister of Transport must act as quickly as possible to set up a mechanism whereby non-designated airports, such as the Sherbrooke airport, can have access to security screening services.

Will the minister quickly introduce this new mechanism—and I do mean quickly—or will she continue to put off taking care of my region's economic development?

Mr. Jeff Watson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to ensuring that Canada's aviation security system supports economic growth.

If screening has to be carried out at non-designated airports or if it is not required for security purposes, another source of funding must be established. The minister asked her officials to develop a mechanism whereby non-designated, low-risk airports are able to obtain security screening services on a cost-recovery basis.

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*[English]***ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS**

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Shoal Lake 40 First Nation is a reserve. It is actually located on an island. It has no ferry service. That means that they do not have access to bottled water. They do not have access to groceries, in the same manner. The government has sat back and done nothing to deal with these very important needs of the community.

My question for the minister responsible is, what has the government done? This question has been posed on several occasions. What has the minister done to resolve the state of emergency for the Lake 40 nations?

Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our immediate priority, of course, is the health and safety of the Shoal Lake residents. For the information of the member, repairs are being carried out on the ferry as we speak. Our officials are in daily contact with the people to ensure food, medicine, and good care is taken of the residents. We will continue to co-operate with the chief and council of Shoal Lake.

Hon. Carolyn Bennett (St. Paul's, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this week it is Shoal Lake. Last month it was Kashechewan, where residents were evacuated for the fourth consecutive year because of predictable flooding of the community.

The government is not only underfunding emergency management, but would rather spend \$750 million on partisan ads rather than invest in long-term solutions. This is not just economic mismanagement, it impacts real people, real families, who are paying the price for these selfish choices.

Why is the government stubbornly refusing to help aboriginal communities until they are a crisis on the front page?

Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would be tempted to say that the good news is never on the front page. If we look at this budget, for example, we are increasing expenditures and investment in first nations and aboriginals in Canada by over \$500 million. We are going to continue to work on our shared priorities with first nations throughout Canada, with Inuit and Métis, and continue to have them prosper along with other Canadians.

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HOUSING

Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the former B.C. RCMP headquarters in the heart of Vancouver is being redeveloped by the federal government. Young families, seniors, low-income earners, folks with disabilities, and many others, are struggling to find affordable homes in the world's second most expensive city. It is essential that affordable housing be part of this property's future, and the federal government must be part of the solution.

Will the Conservatives address the housing crisis in Vancouver and commit to building affordable housing on this important site?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have a housing first strategy which puts money directly into the construction of new housing stock. That said, let us remember that the best way to get someone a roof over their head is to put money in their pocket. That is exactly what we have done with the universal child care benefit. That benefit alone has lifted 41,000 children out of poverty and into the middle class.

During the recession, UNICEF confirms that Canada actually lifted 180,000 children out of poverty and into the middle class. We did that, according to UNICEF, by putting money directly in the pockets of moms and dads. When moms and dads have more money, they do the right things, and they lift their kids up for a brighter future.

Oral Questions

• (1155)

*[Translation]***EMPLOYMENT**

Mr. Pierre Dionne Labelle (Rivière-du-Nord, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in 2014, ICI par les arts, an organization in Rivière-du-Nord, applied for a grant through the skills link program.

After being approved at the regional level, the project was blocked by Employment and Social Development Canada. Why? We still have no idea.

The organization is nearly bankrupt. Young people are left to their own devices on the streets. However, we just learned that the minister had a leeway of \$30 million for his youth employment strategy that he failed to spend. I wrote to the minister to ask why the project had been blocked.

I am asking him now: why did the project from ICI par les arts get blocked by his own department?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we help young people get training in order to find jobs.

For example, we provided 500,000 apprenticeship grants; these are \$4,000 grants that help young people get training to work in skilled trades. I understand that the New Democrats and the Liberals do not support skilled trades, but we support them and we are making these investments. That is one reason why Canada has created 1.2 million new jobs since the recession.

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*[English]***TAXATION**

Mrs. Patricia Davidson (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, families with children in my riding of Sarnia—Lambton are pleased with our government's plan to put more money back in their pockets. That is why we introduced the enhanced universal child care benefit and family tax cuts, which benefit low and middle-income families.

Could the Minister of Employment please update the House on how we can ensure that all Canadian families with children benefit from our plan?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for her great work on behalf of taxpayers and families. The family tax cut and benefits help 100% of families with kids. The family tax cut, or income-splitting, helps almost half of all families with kids under the age of 18 by allowing parents to split their income to save up to \$2,000.

The universal child care benefit will be raised to \$2,000 per year per child under the age of six, and \$720 a year for kids ages 6 through 17. There are about 200,000 families that have not yet signed up. I would encourage members of all parties to go out this weekend and tell them that they have until May 15 to get signed up under the extended deadline so that they get their lump sum payment in July.

*[Translation]***FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

Hon. Irwin Cotler (Mount Royal, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, people gathered in Quebec City and Montreal to mark the sad anniversary of Raif Badawi's sentence to 10 years in prison and 1,000 lashes. Every time we ask the government to demand Raif's immediate release, the government talks about clemency. However, clemency does not mean his immediate release or reunification with his family in Quebec. In this case, clemency is not justice.

When will the government demand the immediate and unconditional release and exoneration of Raif and his lawyer, Waleed Abu al-Khair.

Mr. Bernard Trottier (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and for La Francophonie, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have repeatedly and publicly expressed Canada's strong objections to the imprisonment and punishment of Raif Badawi.

We will do so again today. Canada considers Mr. Badawi's sentence to be a violation of human dignity. We will continue to call for clemency in this case. We have made representations to Saudi Arabia's ambassador here in Ottawa, and Canada's ambassador in Riyadh has met with senior Saudi representatives a number of times.

We have also registered our government's concerns with the Government of Saudi Arabia. This will continue going forward until clemency is granted.

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*[English]***ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS**

Mr. James Rajotte (Edmonton—Leduc, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Nunavut land claims agreement was signed in 1993. It provides Inuit with significant land ownership, mineral rights, resource royalties, hunting rights, and a capital transfer of \$1.14 billion. However, soon after the agreement was signed, it was not implemented properly and Nunavut Tunngavik sued the government.

I would ask the Minister of the Environment to give the House an update on this situation.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (Minister of the Environment, Minister of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency and Minister for the Arctic Council, CPC): Mr. Speaker, earlier this week, I was in Iqaluit to see the signing of an agreement that ended the lawsuit. The lawsuit came about because a former Liberal government failed to implement the Nunavut land claims agreement.

Since our government came to power, it has taken the time to work with its partners to resolve the complex issue and find a fair and reasonable solution for all parties. The signing of this agreement will result in more opportunities for Inuit to unlock economic opportunities and create jobs in Nunavut.

I am very proud to be part of a government that stands up for Inuit and northerners.

Points of Order

● (1200)

[Translation]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mrs. Sana Hassainia (Verchères—Les Patriotes, Ind.): Mr. Speaker, two young women from my riding were in Dhunche, Nepal, in the Langtang Valley, during the earthquake. Family members back home saw how disorganized Canada was. The government had no plan to go get Canadians trapped in Langtang. The families were told that the girls would have to find their own way to Kathmandu.

How can the Canadian government care so little about the safety of its own citizens? Does Canada have no emergency response plan for this kind of situation? What concrete measures will be implemented to ensure that this kind of chaos does not arise when the next international disaster strikes?

[English]

Hon. Lynne Yelich (Minister of State (Foreign Affairs and Consular), CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is absolutely false that Canada had not been there and working very hard. The emergency watch and response centre has worked tirelessly to reach out to Canadians in Nepal. If there are concerns, they can call the emergency watch and response centre at the 1-800 number: 1-800-387-3124.

On three separate occasions a C-17 was made available to evacuate the Canadian citizens who required assistance. We deployed additional consular staff. We have a dedicated staff that has worked around the clock to provide assistance to Canadians, and we have provided hundreds of emergency documents to assist in travelling. Consular operations were being run out of the Canadian consulate in New Delhi and assisted through help from the American embassy.

* * *

[Translation]

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Manon Perreault (Montcalm, Ind.): Mr. Speaker, after dismantling a large part of the EI program paid for by workers, the government held back nearly \$100 million intended for disability support, literacy and youth unemployment programs. These programs help the most vulnerable in our society.

Will the government finally commit to cutting back on the assistance it gives to multinational corporations and making our society fairer and more equal?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have agreements with our provincial partners to create jobs for people with disabilities.

I am pleased to inform the House that these programs have created jobs for people who are struggling. Of course, we are trying to deliver these programs in the most cost-effective way possible for taxpayers and in a way that is most helpful to those in need. I am pleased to inform the House of Commons that we have met those two objectives.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Mr. André Bellavance (Richmond—Arthabaska, Ind.): Mr. Speaker, the government's rhetoric regarding the negotiations for the trans-Pacific partnership is not reassuring anyone at all. In fact, farmers are so worried that the Quebec minister of agriculture, fisheries and food and the Ontario minister of agriculture, food and rural affairs had to write a letter to the federal minister of agriculture, asking him to honour the motion on supply management that I had unanimously adopted in 2005. Minister Pierre Paradis said this week that if it falls apart, it will be a disaster. He emphasized that the federal government is what poses the threat.

Will the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food commit to maintaining his previous position, which was to support the key pillars of this system, as Quebec and Ontario are calling on him to do?

[English]

Mr. Parm Gill (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government will continue to promote Canadian trade interests across all sectors of our economy, including supply management. That has never prevented us from successfully completing other free trade agreements, such as free trade with Europe and South Korea.

We make no apologies for ensuring that any deal reached must be in Canada's best interest. As always, we will only sign a trade agreement if it significantly benefits Canadian businesses, workers and their families.

* * *

[Translation]

PRESENCE IN GALLERY

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): To commemorate the 70th anniversary of the end of the Second World War, I would like to draw to the attention of hon. members the presence in the gallery of two veterans of that war, Jacques Viger and André Rousseau.

Some hon. members: Bravo!

* * *

● (1205)

[English]

POINTS OF ORDER

ORAL QUESTIONS

Mr. Peter Julian (Burnaby—New Westminster, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would ask you to review the question period tapes from today and what you will find very clearly on the tapes is the Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons saying entirely inappropriate and unparliamentary things. It is not the first time he has been caught on audio or video saying inappropriate things. He needs to understand that when his microphone is on, everything he says, whether parliamentary or not, is actually broadcast into the audiotape.

Routine Proceedings

I would ask that you review the tapes, Mr. Speaker, because the kind of insulting and degrading terms that he used today are simply unacceptable whether one is standing in the House or sitting behind a microphone. I would ask you to review the tapes and I am sure he will stand later and apologize for those comments.

Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am not sure exactly what the member opposite is referring to, but if I did use any unparliamentary language, I unreservedly apologize. Of course, any reaction from my side was prompted by the antics of the member opposite, who continuously during question period keeps talking and interrupting speakers from our side.

If I did react inappropriately, I certainly apologize.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): I thank hon. members for their interventions.

Indeed, we will check them. I know there was some commentary today that was somewhat close to the line in terms of the usual decorum that one would expect in the House, but having said that, I will take this under advisement and get back to the House, if necessary.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. Bernard Trottier (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and for La Francophonie, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, pursuant to Standing Order 32(2), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the treaty entitled, "Agreement between the Government of Canada and the Government of the Republic of Chile on Mutual Administrative Assistance in Customs Matters", done at Puerto Natales on April 13, 2015. An explanatory memorandum is included with this treaty.

* * *

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 responses to five petitions.

* * *

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. Mike Wallace (Burlington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 18th report of the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights in relation to Bill C-35, an act to amend the Criminal Code (law enforcement animals, military animals and service animals).

[Translation]

The committee has studied the bill and has agreed to report it back to the House without amendment.

[English]

I also have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 19th report of the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights in relation to the study on the subject matter of Bill C-583, an act to amend the Criminal Code (fetal alcohol spectrum disorder).

Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to this report.

[Translation]

Ms. Françoise Boivin (Gatineau, NDP): Mr. Speaker, indeed, in response to the 19th report of the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights, the official opposition is presenting a supplementary report regarding consideration of Bill C-583, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (fetal alcohol spectrum disorder).

I quickly want to thank all my committee colleagues, especially the hon. members for Nanaimo—Cowichan and for La Pointe-de-Île, who were responsible for this bill on behalf of the team.

Although we, along with the government, support the report, our main regret is that the bill introduced by the hon. member for Yukon was too watered down. We think it is a shame that the government persuaded that member to withdraw his bill, which would have represented a step forward and would really have been more effective than a report with extremely soft recommendations.

I would ask the government to pay particular attention to the recommendations submitted by the official opposition. These recommendations would move things forward much more quickly than the very simplistic recommendations made by the Conservative government members in the committee.

* * *

● (1210)

[English]

PHILIPPINE HERITAGE MONTH ACT

Mr. Mark Adler (York Centre, CPC) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-675, An Act to designate the month of May as Philippine Heritage Month.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am proud to stand in the House today to introduce this bill.

Canada is home to one of the largest Filipino diaspora communities in the world. Some 800,000 Filipinos currently call Canada home. I am proud that York Centre is home to one of Canada's largest Filipino communities.

Let us make every month of May Philippine heritage month. I certainly look forward to the support of every member of the House in supporting this bill.

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

* * *

[Translation]

RAILWAY SAFETY ACT

Mr. Denis Blanchette (Louis-Hébert, NDP) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-676, An Act to amend the Railway Safety Act (maintenance of railway works).

He said: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the people of the Quebec City area, I am proud to introduce this bill, which contains two measures: a measure to recognize that a railway work that is designated as a historic place must be preserved in a way that enhances its beauty and historic character; and, more importantly, a measure that allows the government, in the case of default, to order the work to be done at the expense of the owner.

For 10 years, the Conservative government has been unable to have the Quebec Bridge painted. It has given the people of Quebec City a false impression by claiming that it has put \$100 million on the table, but on condition that CN does its part, which CN is refusing to do because it has no obligation in that regard.

My bill would force CN to paint the Quebec Bridge, and the mayors of Quebec City and Lévis think it is a good idea.

Therefore, I invite all members of the House, especially government members, to work together and agree to quickly pass this simple, pragmatic and effective bill.

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

* * *

[English]

PETITIONS

AGRICULTURE

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Wascana, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have a petition to file today, signed by many people from across the province of Saskatchewan, about the rights of farmers, particularly farmers of small farms.

The petitioners call upon Parliament to enshrine in legislation the inalienable rights of farmers and other Canadians to save, reuse, select, exchange and sell their own seeds.

●(1215)

[Translation]

TAXATION

Ms. Laurin Liu (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I believe that on this NDP opposition day, this petition is especially relevant because we know that Canadians pay more than \$336 million a year in GST on feminine hygiene products.

The people who signed this petition are calling on the government to pass the NDP's Bill C-282 in order to eliminate the GST on all feminine hygiene products.

[English]

SEX SELECTION

Mr. Maurice Vellacott (Saskatoon—Wanuskewin, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions.

The first petition is from quite a number of people from across my province.

The petitioners draw attention to the fact that a CBC documentary revealed that ultrasounds were being used in Canada to tell the sex of an unborn child so expectant parents could choose to terminate that pregnancy if the unborn child was a girl. They remind us that 92% of Canadians believe sex-selective pregnancy termination should be

Routine Proceedings

illegal and that gendercide has created a global gender imbalance, resulting in violence and the human trafficking of girls. The three deadliest words in the world are “It’s a girl”.

The petitioners therefore want members of Parliament to condemn discrimination against girls occurring through sex-selective pregnancy termination.

PROSTITUTION

Mr. Maurice Vellacott (Saskatoon—Wanuskewin, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the second petition draws attention to the fact that a high percentage of prostitutes are forced or coerced into the sex trade and trafficked.

The petitioners ask the House of Commons to legislate that it be a criminal offence to purchase sex with a woman, man or child, and that it be a criminal offence for pimps, madams and others to profit from the proceeds of the pernicious sex trade.

TAXATION

Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise in the House to present a petition that connects with our opposition day motion, a petition that was signed by thousands of Canadians, many Canadian women.

The petitioners call on the Government of Canada to cease taxation on menstrual hygiene products. These women and men across the country call for leadership from the federal government and a fundamental stand in support of equality, ensuring women are not penalized because of their need for products because we are women.

I submit this petition, sharing the hope of so many Canadians that the government will listen and take action now.

AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS

Ms. Kirsty Duncan (Etobicoke North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am presenting a petition regarding autism spectrum disorders, ASDs.

These disorders are characterized by social and communication challenges, and a pattern of repetitive behaviours and interests. They are lifelong, affect development and life experience, and exert emotional and financial pressures on families.

The petitioners call on the government to work with the provinces and territories and stakeholders to develop a pan-Canadian strategy for autism spectrum disorder.

MINING INDUSTRY

Mr. James Rajotte (Edmonton—Leduc, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present two petitions. The first petition is on behalf of many constituents in my riding.

The petitioners call for the creation of a legislative ombudsman mechanism for responsible mining.

Routine Proceedings

AGRICULTURE

Mr. James Rajotte (Edmonton—Leduc, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the second petition calls upon Parliament and the Government of Canada to recognize the inherent rights of farmers derived from thousands of years of custom and tradition to save, reuse, select, exchange and sell their own seeds.

[Translation]

TAXATION

Mr. Raymond Côté (Beauport—Limoilou, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am presenting a petition signed by dozens of people who are calling on the government to remove the tax on feminine hygiene products.

I am pleased to present this petition because, when working in food banks, I realized that the more expensive this type of product is, the more inaccessible it is to people with limited means and the more difficult it is for them to make ends meet and fill their grocery carts.

[English]

THE BUDGET

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise to table a petition signed by residents of Winnipeg North with reference to the budget, indicating that the 2015 budget favours the wealthy over middle-class and low-income Canadians, and lacks a true plan for jobs and economic growth.

The petitioners call on the House of Commons to recognize the failure of the 2015 budget to meet the needs of Canadians.

[Translation]

CANADA POST

Mr. Réjean Genest (Shefford, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present a petition about a cause that is very important to the NDP. The petitioners are calling on the government to stop making cuts to our postal services. When will we have a government that will stand up and give services to everyone?

* * *

• (1220)

[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, the following questions will be answered today: Nos. 1123 and 1129.

[Text]

Question No. 1123—**Mr. Craig Scott:**

With respect to Natural Resource Canada's latest plant hardiness zones map: (a) what factors does the government consider when determining the plant hardiness zone of a particular geographical area; (b) are some variables given more weight than others in determining the plant hardiness zone of a particular geographical area; (c) given the impact of climate change across Canada, how is it that Vancouver Island is the only place in Canada to have gained additional plant hardiness zones since the last release of climatic zone data ten years ago; (d) has the government explored using climate envelope models; and (e) given the growing numbers of trades people that contribute to the economy through plant growth and maintenance, what is the government's plan to ensure that they are regularly getting the most accurate information on plant hardiness zones?

Mrs. Kelly Block (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources, CPC): Mr. Speaker, with regard to (a), hardiness zones are geographic areas associated with the probability of plant survival in relation to the average climatic conditions present.

NRCan scientists use two different approaches for delineating hardiness zones.

They use a made-in-Canada approach, first developed in the 1960s by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, revised and modernized by Natural Resources Canada in 2001 and again in 2010. The Canadian map delineates plant hardiness zones using seven relevant climate variables. See part b for the list of variables.

They use a hardiness zone map developed by the United States Department of Agriculture, USDA, that relies solely on extreme minimum temperature to delineate hardiness zones.

Both approaches are recognized and widely used by the horticultural community in Canada.

With regard to (b), the made-in-Canada system is based on statistical analyses of plant survival at test sites across the country and involves seven climate variables, each with a different weight or importance. Application of the formula yields an index that is used to determine a hardiness zone. The variables, in order of importance, are:

monthly mean of the daily minimum temperatures, in °C, of the coldest month, the minimum temperature factor;

mean frost-free period above 0°C in days, length of the growing season;

amount of rainfall from June to November, in mm;

monthly mean of the daily maximum temperatures, in °C, of the warmest month, maximum temperature factor;

a “winter factor” that reflects the stress caused to plants by loss of winter cold adaptation caused by above-freezing temperatures in winter, calculated using the monthly mean of the daily minimum temperatures of the coldest month and the total rainfall in January;

mean maximum depth of snow, in mm, a positive factor that reflects insulation of plants against cold;

and maximum wind gust, in km/h, over 30-year period, reflecting environmental stress.

Routine Proceedings

With regard to (c), there are two new hardiness zones, 8b and 9a, that have emerged in Canada. Both are found on Vancouver Island, the warmest area of the country. These two new zones are the result of two factors: an increase in weather temperature; and an increased quantity of weather data, from 1930 to 1990, which incorporates a digital elevation model that captures the effect that topography has on plant hardiness. This important factor was not previously reflected in the Canadian hardiness zone map.

With regard to (d), yes the government explored using climate envelope models. Many are shown on the plant hardiness website at <http://planthardiness.gc.ca>. The aim of this work is to go beyond a single general map and develop range maps for individual species of trees, shrubs and perennial flowers.

With regard to (e), the work is made available at the plant hardiness website. A variety of knowledge transfer activities occur as opportunities arise, including presentations at conferences, journal articles, including in trade magazines, and posters.

Question No. 1129—Mr. Charlie Angus:

With respect to each senate appointment made by Prime Minister Harper: (a) did the government verify that each individual being appointed to the senate met their constitutional residency requirement; (b) how did the government verify that each individual met their constitutional residency requirement; and (c) what are the details verifying that each individual met their constitutional residency requirement?

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the government does not comment on matters before the court.

* * *

[English]

QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURNS

Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, if Questions Nos. 1122, 1124, 1126, 1127, 1128, 1130 and 1134 could be made orders for returns, these returns would be tabled immediately.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[Text]

Question No. 1122—Mr. Matthew Kellway:

With regard to government funding for each fiscal year from 2008-2009 to 2014-2015: what is the total amount allocated within the constituency of Beaches—East York, broken down by each (i) department or agency, (ii) initiative, (iii) amount?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1124—Ms. Laurin Liu:

With regard to trade missions conducted by the government since 2011: (a) how many trade missions have occurred and which countries have been visited; and (b) which Canadian companies have participated in each trade mission, identifying (i) the location of each company's headquarters, (ii) the dollar value that each participating company billed, (iii) the dollar value that the government covered for each participating company?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1126—Mr. Sean Casey:

With regard to the National Crime Prevention Centre (NCPC): what are the details of programs that have received NCPC funding since 2006, broken down by (i) year, (ii) recipient organization, (iii) amount of funding received, (iv) percentage of program's funding supplied by the NCPC, (v) length of funding commitment, (vi) expiry date of funding, (vii) file number of the grant or contribution, (viii) whether the program was renewed and, if so, length of renewal, (ix) whether the program evaluations were conducted and, if so, by whom, and what were the outcomes, (x) whether the program receives funding from any other federal government department or agency and, if so, what are the amounts and sources of that funding, (xi) whether any Minister of the Crown has been involved in funding decisions and, if so, what was the nature of the involvement and when did it occur?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1127—Ms. Kirsty Duncan:

With regard to international development assistance: what are the particulars of all grants, contributions, loans, or other financial assistance made by any department, agency, crown corporation, or other federal government organization, to any organization, body, or government, related to any project aimed at the development, promotion, or provision of sex education curriculum, services, products, or programming in any country other than Canada, since 2006, indicating in each case (i) the recipient, (ii) the amount of the financial assistance, (iii) the government organization providing the financial assistance, (iv) the program or policy pursuant to which the financial assistance was provided, (v) the location of the activity in respect of which the financial assistance was provided, (vi) the nature or description of the project, (vii) the file or reference number associated with the financial assistance?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1128—Mr. Charlie Angus:

With respect to the government's lawful intercept condition of licenses that requires the licensee to maintain interception capabilities, since 2006, broken down by year and by government departments, institutions and agencies: (a) how many times was a request made for interception; (b) was this request made with a warrant; (c) if a request was made without a warrant, what lawful authority was used, if any; and (d) was the request made for reasons of national security, terrorism, or other?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1130—Mr. Charlie Angus:

With respect to the use of the government owned fleet of Challenger jets since September 2006, for each use of the aircraft: (a) how many flights have been reimbursed; (b) which flights were reimbursed; (c) who has reimbursed the flights; (d) what was the amount reimbursed; and (e) for what reason was each flight reimbursed?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1134—Mr. Fin Donnelly:

With regard to Infrastructure Canada, from fiscal year 2011-2012 to the present, broken down by fiscal year: what is the total amount allocated within the municipalities of (i) New Westminster, British Columbia, (ii) Coquitlam, British Columbia, (iii) Port Moody, British Columbia?

(Return tabled)

[English]

Mr. Tom Lukiwski: Mr. Speaker, I ask that the remaining questions be allowed to stand.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

*Business of Supply***GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

[English]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

OPPOSITION MOTION—FEMININE HYGIENE PRODUCTS

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

Ms. Kirsty Duncan (Etobicoke North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me begin by thanking Change.org for its work in this initiative, the tens of thousands of Canadian women who signed petitions and the NDP for bringing this motion to the House, namely, that the government should remove the GST from feminine hygiene products. The Liberal Party agrees that these products are an essential purchase, and we will support the motion.

The GST was originally designed to designate essential products with a zero rating, which ensures Canadians do not pay tax on them. As an essential product that is used by women, charging GST on them is akin to sex-based taxation. For Canadian women living in poverty, the extra cost of GST can make access to feminine hygiene products prohibitive.

Manitoba exempts feminine products from its provincial sales tax, while Nova Scotia, Ontario and British Columbia exempt them from the provincial portion of the HST. Data available through the government of Manitoba shows that the province forgoes \$18 million per year by not charging its PST on feminine hygiene products. Extrapolating this data across Canada, given current demographics, it is estimated that Canadians spent \$520 million on these products since 2014 and paid an additional \$36 million in GST payments.

Currently the Excise Act allows for a GST zero rating on several products that are considered essential, including basic groceries, with a loss of \$4.2 billion per year in tax revenue; most prescription medications, about \$785 million; medical devices, \$335 million; and child care and personal services, about \$170 million.

It is time to recognize feminine hygiene products as essential purchases and remove what is akin to sex-based taxation, because quite simply it is unfair, and in the words of one woman, “Underlines sexism in society, a financial handicapping that extends to dry cleaning and pay equity”.

The tax on feminine hygiene products represents a ground zero of the ways in which women in Canada face unfairness and must be addressed. I will outline other areas now.

Despite significant global and national attention to gender equality and women's empowerment, Canada is nowhere near achieving equality. For example, the World Economic Forum's 2014 Gender Gap report found that Canada's ranking had fallen from a high of 14th in 2006 to 31st in 2008, and then flatlined between 18th and 21st position since 2010.

According to the World Economic Forum's 2014 report, Canada scores 17th on economic participation and opportunity, 25th on labour force participation and 27th on wage equality for similar work.

Women have been fighting for pay equity for one hundreds years in Canada, yet the gap in income between men and women in

Canada still remains at 19%. Accordingly to the Conference Board, Canada ties with the United States for the 11th spot out of the 17 countries and earns a C grade. A 2005 Royal Bank of Canada report estimated the lost income potential of women in Canada due to the wage gap at about \$126 billion a year.

A new report just this week from Catalyst paints a disturbing picture for Canadian women. The report found Canadian women doing the same work earned \$8,000 less than men. The gap is double the global average of \$4,000. The gap has serious consequences for women, their families and the Canadian economy.

• (1225)

Canadians should remember that in budget 2009, the Conservatives attacked the rights of Canadian women by undermining pay equity, and in 2010, they voted down the Liberal private member's bill to implement the recommendations of the 2004 Pay Equity Task Force. It included a new pay equity commission for the federal public service, crown corporations, and federally regulated corporations.

It is more than time that the value of women's skills and contributions to the labour force was recognized and the injustice of wage discrimination acknowledged and that efforts were made to achieve equal pay.

Another gap is in unpaid work. Each week I am struck by the enormous unpaid, often unknown, and under-valued contributions women make in my own community and in communities across Canada: grandmothers who look after grandchildren while parents work, young mothers who choose to stay home to raise their children, women who volunteer daily for charities, and women who serve as caregivers to ailing family members.

A staggering two-thirds of the 25 billion hours of unpaid work Canadians perform every year is undertaken by women. It is estimated to be worth up to \$319 billion in the money economy, or 41% of GDP. The lack of pay for much of women's work has a direct impact on their economic security and even on their health. When women spend their time on unpaid work, they cannot undertake paid work, and as a result, their earning potential decreases considerably.

Because women's unpaid work traditionally has no dollar value attached, it took many years for governments to recognize and measure the hours dedicated to unpaid work. As a result, many women's activities were not taken into account in the development of laws and policies. This gross oversight worsened existing inequalities.

Business of Supply

A major breakthrough in the long journey towards women's equality was initiated by a Liberal government when we started measuring unpaid work in the 1996 long form census, which provided an example to countries around the world. However, in the summer of 2010, the Conservative government eliminated the mandatory census and later replaced it with the voluntary national household survey. Question 33, which gathered data on the time spent on unpaid work, was cut from the survey, despite Canada's commitments at the United Nations.

Everyone in the House should therefore be asking these questions: How will we know how women are fairing economically and socially and how far they have come or how far they have yet to go? Why are we paying more money to receive less information, which will then make it easier for the government to hide incompetence?

Another gender gap is Canada's shocking drop in the overall health category. According to the 2014 World Economic Forum, Canada ranked 100th out of 142 countries, a drop from 49th place last year. Canadians should remember that the tragic gaps in aboriginal health outcomes continue unabated.

This past summer, Canadians grieved 15-year-old Tina Fontaine, who was found dead, wrapped in plastic, and dumped in Winnipeg's Red River. Her tragic death prompted renewed calls from families, from every provincial and territorial government, from every indigenous group, and from international organizations like the United Nations for a national public inquiry into the 1,181 missing and murdered indigenous women.

While aboriginal women make up 4.3% of Canada's population, they account for 16% of female homicides and 11.3% of missing women.

• (1230)

The Prime Minister and the Conservative government are on the wrong side of history in their refusal to launch a public inquiry to study the appallingly high number of missing and murdered indigenous women.

More broadly, after falling for a decade, rates of domestic violence in Canada have now levelled off, with rates of self-reported spousal violence in 2009 being the same as in 2004. We know from our daily lives that gender-based violence remains rampant. The facts support this conclusion. Half of women in Canada have suffered physical or sexual violence.

Exactly when did we as a society become accustomed to violence? Why do some men still respond angrily when the issue of gender-based violence is raised, and why does the government respond to a long-standing serious crisis in our country in a fragmented and piecemeal fashion? Violence against women and girls is abhorrent. It is a human rights violation with devastating and serious impacts that may last generations.

Each year in Canada violence and abuse drive over 100,000 women and children out of their homes and into shelters. Women in Canada continue to outnumber men 9 to 1 as victims of assault by a spouse or partner. Girls between the ages of 12 and 15 are at the greatest risk of sexual assault by a family member. The human costs of violence are incalculable.

There are economic costs too. According to a study by the Department of Justice, violence against women costs Canadian society \$7.4 billion each year, including \$21 million in hospitalizations and visits to doctors and emergency rooms as well as \$180 million in related mental health costs.

In August 2013, the minister of health spoke at a meeting of the Canadian Medical Association, the CMA, where she announced that she would make ending family violence the theme of her tenure. She repeated a similar message at the most recent meeting of the CMA in April 2014. Canadians are still waiting for a national action plan to end violence.

According to the World Economic Forum, the gender gap is widest in politics. While the highest ranking Nordic countries have closed more than half the gap, Canada still ranks a dismal 42nd, with men outnumbering women in Parliament by a ratio of 3:1. In stark contrast, women held 45 of the 80 seats in parliament in Rwanda.

The Conservative government must put in place fundamental incentives to orient public action and policies to actually support gender equality. We need more women in politics to address the lack of fairness and justice in the institutions that formulate laws and programs that affect women's lives in such areas as family violence, health care, and pay equity. We must also understand that simply boosting the number of women in public office is only a first step.

There is a tool that would help address unfairness and address the gender gap. It is gender-based analysis, or GBA. GBA assesses how the impact of policies and programs on women might differ from their impact on men. Used correctly and implemented consistently, it can contribute to attaining the goal of gender equality.

Since 1995, the federal government has repeated its commitment to implement GBA through several announcements, yet in 2009, when the Auditor General undertook an audit of seven departments "whose responsibilities can impact men and women differently" the audit found that there was no government-wide policy requiring departments and agencies to apply GBA.

A briefing by Status of Women Canada officials revealed the presence of, and I quote, a "centre for excellence for gender-based analysis", yet when I questioned what this centre consists of, whether it is part of the network of centres of excellence, and whether it had dedicated funding, I was told that it was "just a name".

• (1235)

It is meant to reflect that GBA+ is a core competency for the government. The "plus" contained in the name is to highlight that GBA goes beyond gender and includes the examination of a range of other factors, such as age, culture, education, geography, income, and language.

Business of Supply

When I questioned what funding is provided for GBA+, I was informed that there is, quote, “no funding”, because it is considered a core competency, and thus everyone is expected to undertake it. When I questioned what it cost to produce the two-hour online course intended to train civil servants, no answers were available.

Some 1,500 officials were thought to have taken the interactive course and received certificates. According to the Clerk of the Privy Council, the number of employees of the federal public service in March 2013 was close to 263,000. How many of the bureaucracy's executives, deputy ministers, and associate deputy ministers have actually taken the course and have prescribed it to their teams?

It should be noted that no further training was thought to be required beyond this initial one-time, two-hour course. It is disturbing that there was no tracking of whether departments had a GBA+ unit, whether they had undertaken the pilot project, or what they had invested in GBA+.

More broadly, what agencies and departments can provide evidence that shows that GBA+ is used in designing public policy? What agencies and departments can provide evidence to cabinet and Treasury Board on the gender impacts of policy proposals? Has there been a gender-based analysis of the tax on feminine hygiene products?

Today we know that women account for 50.4% of the Canadian population. We also know that gender equality can enhance productivity, improve outcomes for the next generation, and make institutions more representative.

Ending unfairness and closing the gaps in Canada will require real answers regarding the government's level of commitment to GBA+. Let us all hold the federal government accountable for its responsibility to effectively engage Canadian women, and let us demand that it stop shirking this responsibility by disarming advocacy groups.

Women's help and ideas are needed to see what Canada can do better to increase the participation of women in our economy, to ensure their health and safety and that of their children, and to build a better life for all Canadians.

Mr. Rick Norlock (Northumberland—Quinte West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I was listening to the member intently, and she made a lot of accusations. I guess that she fails to realize that the government has done much for the women of this country.

She just needs to take a look at small businesses. We know that the majority, some 60%, of single-employer businesses or small businesses are owned by women. Those are the last statistics I have heard. What did we do? We turned around and made the employment insurance program for those small businesses, most of them owned by women, so that they could collect employment insurance and receive the same kinds of benefits, especially maternity benefits, that other people enjoy.

When we talk about reducing taxes, we have reduced taxes right across the board. We have reduced the GST by 2%, so every single person, including women, does not pay that amount in GST.

In this government, some senior civil servants and more and more heads of departments are women. Under the previous Liberal

government, I do not think there were any more senior bureaucrats who were women.

We have done much, especially in the private sector. My question is this: If a person is male, should he be refused a job in the civil service or anywhere else simply because of his gender, or should it be that the best person who is qualified for the job gets it?

• (1240)

Ms. Kirsty Duncan: Mr. Speaker, I will start by saying that I do not make accusations. This is an extremely carefully researched speech.

In this country, all people should be treated equally. The member has given some examples of what he says his government has done.

What has not been done is tackling pay equity. Women in this country have been fighting for pay equity for 100 years. It is not okay that women in Canada earn 81¢ for every dollar a man earns. This hurts women with their paycheques every month and every year. It hurts their families, if they have families. It hurts what women can put away for a pension. It hurts our economy.

When it comes to ending violence against women, the numbers have not gone down. Organizations across this country are calling for a national action plan to end the violence. It is time to stop talking about it. We have to do it. We need a national action plan to end the violence. We need a national public inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women.

Mr. Philip Toone (Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine, NDP): Mr. Speaker, there was a lot of material for careful reflection in the comments of my colleague from the third party. However, I will bring the topic back to the motion in front of us.

The member for Sarnia—Lambton, the previous Conservative speaker, mentioned over and over again that her government is doing a lot for women, including measures that have to do with what the Conservatives call the family tax cut but what in fact most people are calling income splitting. We know from the Parliamentary Budget Officer that income splitting will only benefit the richest 15% of Canadians.

We know that single-parent families are four times more likely to be poor than other families in this country. When the member for Sarnia—Lambton said that a lot of Canadians are no longer on the tax rolls, I question whether those families are in fact the poorer families who simply do not make enough money to be at the level where they could be taxed because they have insufficient annual income.

I would like to ask the member, when it comes to unfair, regressive tax measures where we have direct consumer taxes on feminine hygiene products, where these families have insufficient funds to afford a quality of life that most Canadians expect, how in the world will a direct tax that has not been touched by the government—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Order.

The hon. member for Etobicoke North.

Business of Supply

Ms. Kirsty Duncan: Mr. Speaker, I will just start by talking about gender-based analysis, and then I will explain what I have done regarding income splitting.

Failure to consider the disparate impacts of policies on men and women can have profoundly negative results. For example, cardiovascular disease, which is the number one killer of women, was traditionally considered a man's disease. As a result, research focused on middle-aged men and ignored the fact that some women with heart disease might have different symptoms.

Because the Parliamentary Budget Officer has raised concerns, as have other groups, about what would be the effect of income splitting, I wrote to the Minister of Finance and asked what gender-based analysis plus has been done with respect to income splitting. I am awaiting those answers.

• (1245)

Hon. Irwin Cotler (Mount Royal, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend my colleague from Etobicoke North for her very carefully researched and evidence-based policy submission.

I want to ask the member, as someone who has also been engaged in protecting against violence against women in armed conflict and internationally, whether she believes that a national plan of action with regard to protecting against violence against women should include reference to protection against international violence against women.

Ms. Kirsty Duncan: Mr. Speaker, I do want to recognize all the work my hon. colleague and friend does on human rights, and what he does to fight for women in conflict around the world.

We absolutely must include women in conflict in fragile states, in areas for example like the Central African Republic and South Sudan. Just yesterday there was a new report on Iraq and Syria talking about sexual violence in those two countries. It is important that we do support women internationally and work to end the violence.

Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with my colleague, the member for Rivière-des-Mille-Îles.

Never before has the old feminist adage been more appropriate. In the case of today's opposition day motion, the political is very, very personal. Almost all women, and even a few men, are united in menstruation for most of their lives. The tampon tax has brought Canadians together, because in a country where the gender pay gap is twice the global average, our bodies deserve a tax break.

More than 85,000 Canadians have signed a petition calling on the federal government to stop charging HST and GST on menstruation products. I am very proud to be joining with them today in supporting my colleague from London—Fanshawe in calling on the government to classify menstrual products as an essential item, because guess what? They are. I am pretty sure that if men menstruated, they would never have been taxing tampons in the first place.

The remarkable thing about this motion is it is living proof of the political strength and savvy of grassroots feminist activism. This campaign began on the ground, or I should say online. I am consistently impressed and inspired by how young activists have

actualized themselves and how they are changing the conversations we are having in our country through social media. This campaign went viral online and a few short months later, we are debating it here in the House of Commons.

This issue is clear and it is a matter of discrimination. Only those who menstruate are being taxed. Cisgender men get off tax free. The government is making \$36 million every year exclusively off of women and trans men. To remove this tax would be to correct a clear case of gender-based discrimination.

Can the government really argue that tampons and pads are not essential products?

It is not just a matter of principle. For women living in poverty, in the most practical terms it is about economic security. Among adults 18 and older, women account for 54% of people living in poverty in Canada. More than one million adult women are living in poverty. Twenty-one per cent of single mothers in Canada raise their children while living in poverty, as opposed to 7% of single fathers.

Meanwhile, menstrual products are extremely expensive. For women who are living in poverty and women in shelters, we heard how onerous it is to buy these things. In fact, these women are so financially vulnerable that an extra \$20 every month can be a real burden.

Corporate manufacturers know that they can charge a lot for tampons and pads because women have no choice in buying them. This underscores my point. We are talking about an essential product.

As Jen Zoratti wrote in the *Winnipeg Free Press*:

As for me, though, “that time of the month” is a minor inconvenience. For those who are living in poverty or are experiencing homelessness, it can be incredibly challenging. Many are forced to stretch their stocks of menstrual product, get creative or go without.

On the positive side, I feel incredibly happy to be here with my colleagues pushing for this change. The fact that women across the country have taken matters into their own hands to bring menstruation into the mainstream makes me proud to be a feminist.

I also want to note that the puns have been pretty great: “No tax on periods, period”, or on this issue there is “no womb for debate”.

The reality is we need more de-stigmatizing debates like this one. When women can take up space in this House, their House, our House, to talk about our bodies, our rights, and our reproductive health, we see the power of feminism in Parliament. I have to say that I am very proud to be NDP, because it is our party that chose to facilitate this dialogue between young women and their government.

Business of Supply

•(1250)

Finally, we need to recognize that the gender gap in Canada is real and the government time and time again does nothing to address it. Economic issues are women's issues. Tax issues are women's issues. Gender-based discrimination can be perpetrated by the federal government as surely as it can be perpetrated by an individual on the street or in the workplace.

In closing, I want to thank the fierce women who started this campaign and the tens of thousands of women who have joined it. I want to give a shout-out to the men and my male colleagues who support this cause. My message today is let us pass this motion. Let us take immediate action rather than putting it off, because the argument is clear; the argument is accurate, and let us be honest, there is just no womb for debate.

Mr. John Rafferty (Thunder Bay—Rainy River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is interesting that feminine hygiene products are under the luxury tax category, but that is not what I want to ask the member about.

The government has suggested it will be supporting this motion, but that it will not be doing anything now about it.

I wonder if the member for Churchill would like to make a comment on that.

Ms. Niki Ashton: Mr. Speaker, Canadians need to know that that kind of support, which is not support in and of itself, is not good enough.

We are talking about a case of unequal treatment and the need to recognize that this is an essential product, the need to recognize the kind of barriers that women face as a result of this situation. It is a simple act and an act, frankly, of leadership. However, what can Canadian women expect more from the government? The government time and time again has ignored measures that would help women achieve equality. In fact, it has taken measures that further serve to marginalize women, whether they are measures regarding taxation, economic policy or the government's failure to take action on missing and murdered indigenous women and violence against women.

I hope that the activists who have been pushing on this issue will continue to push, and to push beyond this so-called support of the government and call for immediate action as we in the NDP are calling for today.

•(1255)

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, obviously it is ridiculous and makes no sense that feminine hygiene products would be classified as a luxury item, and I hope that has been well established on both sides of the House. It shows a case of misprioritization by the Conservatives where they have billions to help out wealthy families and \$700 million every year for a CEO tax loophole, but when it comes to an issue like this one, they say they cannot do anything about it right now, but look to the future. Well, the future is the next election. We have a budget bill in front of us right now, but the Conservatives have chosen not to act on this.

In the budget documents from the Conservatives, every year they refer to a typical family, usually a family of four, a husband and wife with two kids and that is fine in the Conservatives' world view. In

their typical family in past years the woman has earned more than the man, and then this year, suddenly the Conservatives flipped that ratio around, because in order to justify their \$2 billion income-splitting plan, in order for that to make sense in a Conservative world view, suddenly the man had to earn quite a bit more than the woman and the woman had to take a \$50,000 or \$60,000 pay cut to qualify for income splitting.

The Conservatives can show their social agenda through taxation which is not only did they scrap pay equity law in Canada, but now they want to describe how they want families to work under their *Leave it to Beaver* world view. They want to go back in time and make choices for Canadian families and particularly for Canada women. We know women still earn three-quarters of what men do for the same work in this country. Rather than helping to rectify that, the Conservatives seem to be interested in enshrining that and making it even worse in some cases.

I wonder if my friend would like to comment on that.

Ms. Niki Ashton: Mr. Speaker, that was a great synopsis of what we are dealing with. The Conservative policy vis-à-vis Canadian women ranges from the era of the 1950s, and frankly the 1850s some days, especially when we talk about their regressive views on access to abortions and reproductive services.

However, let me bring it back to the debate today. We are talking about a very simple step of moving the categorization from luxury items, which we have all made the case that they are not, to essential items. With some simple steps, this change could be brought into effect. The Conservatives could follow the lead of numerous provinces that have done this very same thing.

As for waiting, I would like to remind the government that young people in Canada have had enough of these kinds of antics. If there is one demographic that is solidly opposed to the kinds of policies coming from the government, it is young Canadians. What better way to show some sense of listening, or reflection of the kinds of priorities that young people, particularly young women, are putting forward, then saying, "No tax on tampons. We're going to take this action". Yet, once again, the Conservatives are willing to put it off; once again they avoid listening to the voices of Canadian women, and once again they are stuck in the 1950s, or maybe the 1850s.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Laurin Liu (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, NDP): Mr. Speaker, today, I am pleased to speak to the NDP opposition day motion to eliminate the unfair tax on feminine hygiene products. I would like to commend my colleague from Churchill for her speech, my colleague from London—Fanshawe for the work she has done on this issue, and the hundreds of thousands of women in Canada who worked so that we could talk about this issue in the House today. They did a wonderful job.

Business of Supply

I consider myself lucky to be part of a feminist caucus in the House of Commons that is 40% female. That makes us a strong team that is able to raise issues about the status of women. In fact, in February, I launched a campaign that calls on the federal government to implement a national eating disorder strategy. I would like to thank my colleagues in the NDP caucus, specifically my male colleagues, for supporting this motion.

The NDP just won a huge victory in Alberta. The province elected a caucus made up of 47% women. I am very proud that the majority New Democrat government caucus in Alberta almost reached parity. The only way to improve the status of women in Canada is to elect more women to the House of Commons.

Today, the NDP is calling on the government to eliminate the GST and HST that apply to sanitary napkins and other feminine hygiene products because these products are deemed non-essential. We know that these products are essential since most women cannot live without them. This tax is unfair because it is imposed only on Canadian women who need to use these products. That is why we are calling on the Conservative government to abolish this tax on women. Sanitary napkins and feminine hygiene products are not luxury products.

The tax on sanitary napkins clearly discriminates against women. It makes no sense that women have to pay tax on sanitary napkins while other non-essential products like wedding cakes and cocktail cherries are exempt. That is why the New Democrats want to adopt this motion that will help all women in Canada, especially low-income women, for whom an additional \$12 in tax a month constitutes a monthly economic burden.

There are already precedents in Canada, and other jurisdictions around the world have taken similar measures. Ontario, British Columbia and Nova Scotia already exempt feminine hygiene products from PST. This is a hot topic all over the world. Similar campaigns have already been launched in Australia and the United Kingdom. This is an issue that is uniting feminists around the world.

Here in Canada, women pay more than \$36 million a year in GST on feminine hygiene products. We consulted a number of studies by the Library of Parliament. That is not an insignificant amount of money for women. In Canada, a disproportionately large number of women live below the poverty line.

• (1300)

I first became aware of the issue of poverty among women in 2012, when I was working on my private member's bill to automatically register all Canadian seniors for the guaranteed income supplement. In my research I learned that women were overrepresented among seniors living below the poverty line. This is extremely disconcerting.

Women are also overrepresented in part-time employment that pays minimum wage. They often have to work two or more jobs in order to make ends meet. What is more, they often have family responsibilities. They have to take care of their children or aging parents, which prevents them from participating in the economy and having a well-paying job. They are often forced to work less. All these factors and more make women more likely to live in poverty.

Today's motion to eliminate taxes from feminine hygiene products will help women, regardless of how much money they earn or their socio-economic status.

A few weeks ago, a very interesting study was mentioned in an article in *The Globe and Mail* about the wage gap between men and women in Canada, which is double the global average. That is impressive since Canada considers itself a leader that is more progressive than other countries. This study shows that is not so.

A study published by Catalyst Canada showed that women who work in Canada earn on average \$8,000 less a year than men who do equivalent work. That is not an insignificant amount of money. It could be used toward a mortgage. By comparison, elsewhere in the world, the average wage gap is only \$4,000 a year. The wage gap in Canada is double the global average, which is troublesome. We still have a lot of work to do on this in Parliament.

The NDP has put forward several measures to reduce that wage gap. Just the other day, I was talking about the bill introduced by my colleague from Toronto to create a national strategy to help workers in precarious jobs and those who are self-employed.

We still have a long way to go before we eliminate the wage gap between men and women. The NDP is ready to do it. The Conservative government wants to bring in income splitting, which will help only the richest 15% of families and will encourage women to stay home to look after their kids. This backward policy will not help us achieve gender equality, and we are opposed to the principle. Many people in my riding are angry about the Conservatives' approach, which benefits only the richest families.

The NDP has also put forward measures to create affordable day care spaces because we know that similar measures in Quebec are working. This has encouraged far more Quebec women to participate in the labour market, which is important. We need to keep day care costs to no more than \$15 per day across Canada.

• (1305)

I am glad that the Conservative government is supporting our motion today, and I encourage all of my colleagues to support the NDP motion.

Mr. Peter Julian (Burnaby—New Westminster, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I commend my colleague on her excellent speech. She emphasized the importance of this issue and she spoke very eloquently, as she always does.

The government just said that it will vote in favour of this motion, but it does not want to do anything, so basically it is saying yes because it knows that there is an election coming up and that this is an important issue. However, in reality, the government is not going to do anything to implement this measure that Parliament is voting in favour of. We know it is true. The Conservatives do this systematically. They adopt motions and then they do not do anything about them. It is the same as voting no.

Privilege

I wanted to ask my colleague whether she really thinks that this government is sincere or whether she thinks it will not do anything between now and the October election.

• (1310)

Ms. Laurin Liu: Mr. Speaker, in fact, I am pleased to know that the government is taking the NDP's good ideas and incorporating them into the budget, but I am also concerned about it because we know that we cannot trust this government to really take action, to go far enough to help Canadian families and women.

Let me give an example. Last year, I introduced a private member's bill to implement protections for unpaid interns. This is another gender equality issue, since women are overrepresented among unpaid interns. The Conservative government took the idea behind my bill and incorporated it into the 2015 budget implementation act, but the protections do not go far enough. Unlike my bill, the government is not offering protection against sexual harassment and it is not setting a maximum number of hours of work.

That is just one example of a government that does not go far enough and that implements half-measures. I am pleased that the government has said that it will support the motion. We will have to keep an eye on this issue, and I hope that the government will really take action.

Ms. Lysane Blanchette-Lamothe (Pierrefonds—Dollard, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for her work. She always shows great sensitivity to issues involving minorities as well as women and youth. That was very evident in her speech.

I would like to comment on the Conservatives' response to this motion from the beginning of this debate. They seem to be saying that they have already given out many tax credits, more or less, and so this one can wait.

The motion before us will definitely reduce the cost of feminine hygiene products. That is one aspect. However, there is another aspect that the Conservatives did not mention at all, namely that this is a matter of principle and justice, of gender equality. This is not just about money; it is also about the thousands of women who signed a petition calling on the government, the decision-maker, to recognize that their need for feminine hygiene products is not a luxury. That makes this a matter of principle, and for that reason alone we must vote in favour of the motion before us and implement it as quickly as possible.

Ms. Laurin Liu: Mr. Speaker, my honourable colleague is absolutely right. Getting rid of the tax on products that women buy would enhance the fairness of the tax system. Consequently, it is absolutely a matter of social justice, of gender equality.

I would like to follow up with an anecdote. Every year in December, I participate in the charity drives held in all the towns in my riding. We know that every year there is a great need for donations of feminine hygiene products. Women living in poverty and vulnerable situations are always in need of feminine hygiene products. This shows just how essential these products are. This is a problem that does not get enough attention.

[English]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): 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 yeas have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Pursuant to Standing Order 45 the recorded division stands deferred until Monday, May 11, at the ordinary hour of daily adjournment.

Mr. Rick Norlock: Mr. Speaker, I believe if you seek it, you will find the unanimous consent of the House to see the clock as 1:30 p.m.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): The Chair has received a notice of a question of privilege from the hon. member for Toronto—Danforth.

* * *

• (1315)

PRIVILEGE

PHYSICAL OBSTRUCTION

Mr. Craig Scott (Toronto—Danforth, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise today on a question of privilege. I was blocked from accessing Centre Block, and thus the House of Commons, by an officer of the RCMP. This physical obstruction impeded me from performing my parliamentary duties, which I believe constitutes a prima facie breach of my privileges as a member. I am rising at the first opportunity.

I remind the House that Erskine May's *Treatise on The Law, Privileges, Proceedings and Usage of Parliament*, defines "privilege" in the following way on page 75:

Parliamentary privilege is the sum of the peculiar rights enjoyed by each House collectively...and by Members of each House individually, without which they could not discharge their functions....

I will fairly briefly describe what happened, then the argument on procedure will be limited, as I will adopt other argument that has appeared before the House.

Today, on May 8, at approximately 10:35 a.m., I arrived on Parliament Hill on foot by the O'Connor entrance from Wellington. I proceeded up past the lawn along the sidewalk that runs north, east of the West Block. At the top, at about the midpoint of where the sidewalk curves along the balustrade overlooking the lawn, a cluster of people were stationary in front of an RCMP officer just in front of a barrier running alongside the driveway. At this point, I was directly below the MPs' entrance to the House of Commons and obviously very close to it. My trajectory was to be, and later became, the same as it always is for me and other MPs arriving on foot: to proceed straight north from that point in the sidewalk and enter the Centre Block via the West Block entrance and thereafter the lobby and the chamber where today proceedings in which I wanted to participate were under way.

At that point, I walked through a gap in the waiting group and proceeded to walk toward and then alongside the RCMP officer, gesturing to my pin, which I was wearing on my lapel. I was asked to stop. I told the officer I was an MP and she said that did not matter. I asked whether she wanted to see my ID. She said that it was irrelevant. I nevertheless took out my MP identity card, which she glanced at in my hand but did not take to inspect. I asked whether she knew she had a duty to let an MP through. She said that she had orders to stop everyone. At that point, I proceeded to take two or three steps up the sidewalk, saying that I wanted to get to the House. She moved toward me with her arm outstretched to block my way, without physically touching me. So, I stopped to resume the discussion, as I was not going to put her in the position of acting in any further physical fashion on what were clearly orders from her superior officers. She was doing her job as best she understood it, in light of orders from the RCMP command on the Hill.

To be clear about what her orders were, I then asked whether she was under orders to stop MPs as well as others. She replied she was under orders to stop "everyone".

At one point in the conversation I asked why I was being stopped. She said that VIPs were coming. I could see in the near distance the red carpet going up the main steps of the Centre Block. I asked whether the fear was that an MP would do something to these VIPs. She avoided the question, understandably recognizing its rhetorical nature. However, the point is clear. The only logic at work in this obstruction was one of protecting the safety of a VIP from a person the RCMP knows to be an MP. On that logic, there is little to stop the RCMP from putting in place orders that obstruct the movements of MPs inside Parliament's buildings in order to protect VIPs from us, the MPs. This may sound like a stretch, Mr. Speaker, but that is the logic of what happened. I was stopped because I was treated indistinguishably from non-MPs, as an equal threat to a visiting dignitary.

I then asked for the RCMP officer's name, and she showed her badge. I then pointed out to the waiting group that they were witnessing an MP being stopped from getting to the House of Commons. At that point, she got on her radio and asked whether she could let an MP through. An answer came back to let "everyone" through, with no specific response about an MP. I then walked the rest of the short distance to the West Block entrance to Centre Block.

I have the officer's name, but the name is irrelevant, as this issue is about the command of the RCMP, all the way up to and including

Privilege

the Commissioner and the Deputy Commissioner for Federal Policing, and their disregard for the rules of Parliament Hill related to the parliamentary privilege of MPs. This is about the system within which the officer had orders to operate. It is not about the officer, who I want to emphasize was firm but also polite.

● (1320)

I also took no record of the time that elapsed because it is irrelevant to the issue, which is that in these circumstances no obstruction of an MP was justified in the least. I am happy to say for the record, if it matters to some, that it lasted no longer than the time taken for the events and the conversation just described to transpire, almost certainly less than a minute.

As for precedents, as you know, Mr. Speaker, the second edition of the *House of Commons Procedure and Practice* states the following:

In circumstances where Members claim to be physically obstructed, impeded, interfered with or intimidated in the performance of their parliamentary functions, the Speaker is apt to find that a *prima facie* breach of privilege has occurred.

Having reminded you of something that you do not need to be reminded of, Mr. Speaker, I am sure I will save the House's time by adopting by reference all of the authorities cited and argued by my colleague, the member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley, in his question of privilege on April 30. *Hansard* will, of course, have those arguments in full for the Speaker to consult.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I would ask you to consider my question of privilege and the facts I have just related to the House. I believe you will find that my privilege was breached and that I was prevented from carrying out my functions as an elected member of the House of Commons. If you find that there was a *prima facie* breach of my privileges as a member, I am prepared to move the appropriate motion.

Mr. Rick Norlock (Northumberland—Quinte West, CPC): I am rising, Mr. Speaker, to advise that the government will be looking into this matter. We will get back to the House once we have looked at the issue and have been able to ascertain certain precedents and facts. We will get back to the House with a response from the government in due course.

Mr. Peter Julian (Burnaby—New Westminster, NDP): Mr. Speaker, that is exactly the problem. The government has usurped your role as Speaker to look into a question of privilege. It is not up to the partisan Conservative government to look into breaches of privilege; it is up to you, Mr. Speaker. This is exactly the point that was made by the government House leader when the member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley raised what is now becoming a pattern of breaches of privilege of members of the House.

Private Members' Business

New Democrats had raised significant concerns when the government decided to throw up in the air the existing security systems in the House of Commons. It did it in a very irresponsible way. It did not consult the Speaker at all. The Prime Minister's Office decided in a very partisan way how to proceed. Now we are consistently seeing breaches of privilege of members of the opposition.

The government is saying it will look into it. That is entirely inappropriate, and a breach of your privileges, Mr. Speaker; we are asking you to look into this breach of parliamentary privilege, as we asked you to look into the breach of privilege that occurred to the member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley and the member for London—Fanshawe. This is becoming a pattern.

We know that you will want to take some time, Mr. Speaker, to reflect and to look into it, but it is your purview, your office, and it is your role as Speaker to look into this, not a partisan Conservative government trying to take over what is clearly an issue of breach of privilege of a member of the opposition.

Mr. Rick Norlock: Mr. Speaker, under no circumstances would the government ever suggest that the Speaker does not have authority here. When I hear the member across the way say “partisan Conservative”, that is what that is all about.

What I meant by that response is that every single member of the 308 members of Parliament has a right to speak on an issue, including the government. That is what I addressed the Chair about, not to question your authority, not to preach to the Speaker, suggesting that somehow you had better be careful, Mr. Speaker, because we are keeping an eye on you. That is exactly the sentiment.

We respect, 100% and wholly, the authority of the Chair. We think there are certain things we would like to look into to be able to give the government's side of the issue, and that is it only.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): I thank hon. members for their interventions and the hon. member for Toronto—Danforth for bringing this matter to the attention of the House.

Members will know that this is an issue that is currently being considered, and these other interventions are noted. I also note that there is an interest on the part of the hon. member for Northumberland—Quinte West, indicating that the government would like an opportunity to address the question of privilege raised this afternoon at a later time.

We will, of course, take all of this under advisement in the course of the deliberations on the matter.

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

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

•(1325)

[*English*]

FERRY SERVICES TO PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Cardigan, Lib.) moved:

That, in the opinion of the House, the government should ensure a safe, efficient, and sustainable transportation system for Prince Edward Island by: (a) recognizing the integral economic importance of the ferry service between Wood Islands, Prince Edward Island, and Caribou, Nova Scotia; and (b) committing to stable, long-term, sustainable, and adequate funding, notably by ensuring that all future contracts (i) are for no less than five years, (ii) maintain or exceed current levels of service.

He said: Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to stand in this great chamber. This is an issue that I have dealt with over quite a few years, and it is important in my riding. I want to thank the hon. member for Charlottetown for seconding my motion. He is also well aware of how important this service is to Prince Edward Island and Pictou County in Nova Scotia.

Members will also be aware of how important the Wood Islands ferry service is to me and to Prince Edward Island, particularly eastern Prince Edward Island and Pictou County, Nova Scotia. Every year, this ferry takes over 475,000 passengers, 160,000 vehicles, and 18,000 commercial trucks between Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia. The ferry has an economic impact of \$27 million a year to the island, and it has a good effect on the communities, mostly Charlottetown and eastern Prince Edward Island. The ferry also has an economic impact of over \$12 million to Nova Scotia, particularly the Pictou County area.

For background, the ferry service connects the Trans-Canada Highway from Wood Islands in eastern Prince Edward Island to Caribou, Nova Scotia. It is run by Northumberland Ferries Limited, or NFL, with headquarters located in Charlottetown. NFL has operated this ferry service since it was established in 1941 by the Government of Canada.

To go back even further, in 1935, prime minister Mackenzie King brought Saskatchewan politician Charles Dunning back into federal politics to make him the minister of finance after the Great Depression and to help with the country's finances. Dunning was the minister of finance in 1929, but was defeated in the R.B. Bennett election of 1930. He had a great reputation for hard work and fairness. In the 1930 general election, as I said, he was defeated.

He restarted his business career and earned a great reputation. Mackenzie King regained power in the 1935 general election, and immediately convinced Dunning that he needed him in those tough economic times. Dunning was elected by acclamation as a candidate in the dual riding of Queen's County and Prince Edward Island, which was one of the four dual ridings across the nation at that time.

One of the biggest local issues at the time for the people of Prince Edward Island, and I am sure for Pictou County in Nova Scotia, was that the establishment of this ferry service was vital to the economy of both areas. Dunning made sure that the interests of the people he represented were looked after and established the ferry terminal at Wood Islands. A new privately owned company, Northumberland Ferries Limited, was established to manage and operate the ferry service, and the government kept ownership of the terminal properties and the vessels.

Private Members' Business

Charles Dunning left politics in 1939, but the ferry service was nevertheless established in 1941. It has continued to be one of the most important issues for the people of eastern Prince Edward Island to this day. I might add that Mr. Dunning was elected from Regina, and I am pleased to say that the Regina area has a habit of electing very good finance ministers.

It is also important to realize that this was done after the Great Depression. The people had the wisdom at the time of how important this was, and that if we were going to have a good economy, we had to have good transportation links. Mackenzie King, Charles Dunning, and many other people, certainly understood the vital importance of this link.

• (1330)

A major redevelopment of the Wood Islands terminal took place in the early nineties. I happened to be here at the time. One of the things that was done was double deck loading. This meant that the new vessel that came into service was able to load vessels a lot quicker, and it made for more efficiency.

The federal government continues to provide financial assistance to NFL under the terms of a contribution agreement while the company leases two ferry terminals and the vessels from the federal government. Today, it is the only ferry service to the mainland. As an interprovincial ferry service, the route qualifies for federal funding, with the amount of approximately \$6 million per year to keep the critical link between Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia operating safely and efficiently.

The way that the government has treated this critical link to the mainland over the past few years is quite concerning. Near the end of the last five-year deal, which was put in place by the Liberal government, there was quite a lot of speculation that the funding would be cut and the service reduced to one vessel or eliminated entirely. Eventually, with the support of the people from Prince Edward Island and Pictou County in Nova Scotia, we convinced the government to back away from that awful idea. Thanks to the government and the people who rallied, they put a three-year deal in place. That was followed by a one-year extension, in 2013. Then last year the government extended the service for two more years.

Short-term contracts are not enough. The operators of the ferries, the people and business people in Prince Edward Island and Pictou County, Nova Scotia need stability. They need to understand that this critical service will remain in place. They need to have a longer term deal in place for at least five years, and one that maintains or exceeds the current service that is provided.

In fact, a document put together by the four Atlantic provinces called "Charting the Course Atlantic Canada Transportation Strategy 2008-2018" highlights that ferry service is integral to an economy of a region. It lists Wood Islands and Caribou as strategic marine ports and service centres for cargo and passenger movements.

This important document, which I encourage all members to read, also states that federal cuts to ferry services have potentially serious consequences for our entire region. We all know that things have only become worse in the last number of years. The fact is, the government does not do anywhere enough to supply our country's ferry services, especially in the Atlantic region. I hope that this

motion will bring to the attention of the government how vital this is to our region and other regions in Atlantic Canada.

We just have to look at the Marine Atlantic and the government's recent cut of \$108.1 million to the service. This service is also an interprovincial service connecting the Trans-Canada Highway to Newfoundland. Marine Atlantic expected that there would be more money in the budget, but instead it got nothing, and the government thinks that is the way to go.

This is what worries so many people in Atlantic Canada and in my district of Cardigan. The government fails to see the importance of these vital links in our region. In fact, it fails to see the importance of the Atlantic region in general. We are all aware of how much the cutbacks have affected our regions.

I am quite concerned about what will happen, but with the communities, the business leaders, and everyone working together, I am hopeful that we can secure a long-term deal. I hope my motion will be supported by the government and all of the people in the House.

All we want is to have a service provided to us in eastern Prince Edward Island and Pictou County, Nova Scotia. The government may highlight its spending of \$13 million on engine upgrades and rehabilitation for infrastructure of the wharves in 2013, which was a good idea, but we have to be careful where that goes.

• (1335)

Most of this work had already begun and was planned and budgeted for by Transport Canada, so it was not actually new money. The work had already begun well before the announcement. It is work that was needed to be done, and I am pleased the work was done, but we have to make sure that the service continues the way it is.

Conservatives on the island after this had happened had great hopes that there would be a long-term investment coming, but we only ended up with a short two-year contract. I can assure this House and the people of Canada that this fight is just beginning

I would like to say I am hopeful that these needed infrastructure upgrades would set the stage for the government to put a new deal in place, but there are a number of things that concern me about it.

The Conservative government likes to hand things over to the private sector. It is in a cost-cutting mode and it has already hit eastern Prince Edward Island especially hard with the closure of the additions research centre, our national award-winning EI claims processing centre, the devastating changes to the EI program, and a number of other federal government jobs lost in the area.

The federal subsidy is critical for the survival of the Wood Islands-Caribou ferry service. It is also important for the people of Nova Scotia, especially Pictou County and central Nova Scotia. We truly cannot afford to lose this kind of economic activity after having to deal with so many other losses.

Private Members' Business

We need a long-term contract. We need stability. I hope the government will see fit to support this motion, support this vital ferry service, and ensure future contracts are at least five years in length and maintain or exceed the service levels currently provided. It is vital to the business communities and the people I represent.

I hope the government will take a look at just what took place over the last number of years. We have to go back and see the wisdom that there was in the people who established this. It goes back to Mackenzie King's government. It goes back to just after the Great Depression. Money was very short, but King and Charles Dunning saw the great need for this ferry service and how important it would be for Prince Edward Island and the Pictou County area of Nova Scotia.

About \$6 million is the amount involved, and it generates about \$27 million. It is vital to every part of our economy in eastern Prince Edward Island.

When we look at charting the course with the Atlantic Canada transportation strategy, they were able to indicate quite clearly how vital these services are if we are to have an efficient and vibrant economy in the areas where these ferry services are in place.

If there is any concern about whether it is valuable or not, I wish that government members would talk to Tom Carver or Morley Annear. These people own large trucking companies. They understand the cost that is involved. They understand what it would cost in order to take stuff even to a hardware store in eastern Prince Edward Island. They understand the costs that there would be for even fertilizer to come to the province. All of us understand exactly how important it is for the tourism industry.

It is very important that the House understand how vital the Wood Islands-Caribou ferry service is to the economy of eastern Prince Edward Island and Pictou County, Nova Scotia. I urge my colleagues to support this motion and give us a long-term contract.

• (1340)

Mr. Jeff Watson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have had the great pleasure of extending a Nova Scotia vacation into Prince Edward Island, specifically by way of the ferry that the member mentioned.

In his speech the member noted a number of significant investments made by this government since 2006. I believe it is over \$100 million in that particular ferry now. He did forget to mention the over \$1 billion that we put into Marine Atlantic, and more coming.

He called these things “good things to do”. He did say he was “pleased”. He was so pleased, but he could not bring himself or his colleagues to vote in support of any of the appropriations to make the ferry meaningful.

The member knows very well that this government is looking at the long-term sustainability of our ferries, including this one, but based on his past performance, can he tell us whether he is just going to vote against any of that support anyway?

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay: Mr. Speaker, I truly believe my colleague from Essex is a fair politician. However, to indicate that I would vote against an omnibus bill that contains a number of poison

pills that we cannot accept has absolutely nothing to do with the Wood Islands-Caribou ferry service. It has absolutely nothing to do with the economy of Pictou County in Nova Scotia or the economy of eastern Prince Edward Island.

I would ask my fair and hon. colleague from Essex this. He used the ferry service. Could he please understand and indicate to his colleagues how vital this is, in fact, indicate that to my colleague from Pictou County himself? If they use this service, they will understand how vital it is. Again, I ask that they please evaluate this and do the right thing.

[Translation]

Mr. Philip Toone (Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Cardigan for his speech. He raises a very interesting question, especially for the people of eastern Canada, the Maritimes and Quebec, where there are many ferries.

We are all wondering how it is possible that budget 2015 makes no mention whatsoever of ferries and provides no funding. We heard the parliamentary secretary say that the Conservatives are interested in examining the issue of ferries. I would like to get it in writing that they are willing to support us in eastern Canada with real measures to support ferry services throughout the Maritimes and in western Canada.

When the Liberals were in power, they abandoned and dismantled public services. One example is CN, which is a basic, essential service across Canada and one that they utterly abandoned.

Is it not true that the Liberal Party developed the bad habit first and simply paved the way for the Conservatives, so that they could do what the Liberals did, only faster? Is that not the case? Are the Conservatives not simply Liberals in a hurry?

[English]

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay: Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague from Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine started off quite well but then he went astray. If we want to talk about what governments did, I sit alongside a former minister of finance who balanced the budget, but that is not the subject today.

The subject today is to ensure that we have a proper contract signed for the Wood Islands-Caribou ferry service. We want to ensure we have the proper transportation system in place.

My hon. colleague from Essex indicated that there were a lot of expenditures. My concern is the Conservatives spent a lot of money on the Montague post office, but then they sold it to the private sector. If they take away the federal government investment in the Wood Islands-Caribou ferry service, the service will end.

We cannot play games here and talk about other issues. The issue here is the Wood Islands-Caribou ferry service, and to ensure the Government of Canada puts a proper contract in place.

•(1345)

Mr. Jeff Watson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for his annual Chicken Little motion that he brings before the House once again.

Canada is a maritime nation with vast coastlines. Ferry services have allowed for greater economic development and the building of stronger and more integrated communities.

Ferry operators employ Canadian businesses to help ensure Canadians receive the safest and most efficient ferry service possible. According to the Canadian Ferry Operators Association, ferry services directly employ over 8,400 people with well-paying jobs and indirectly help generate over 22,600 jobs throughout Canada.

Moreover, as important components of regional transportation networks, these ferries connect families, bring tourists to the far corners of our country and ensure businesses in remote communities have opportunities to connect to larger markets every day.

Our government recognizes the benefits that ferry services provide and supports ferries from British Columbia to Newfoundland and Labrador.

It is for these reasons that I am pleased to rise and have the opportunity to speak on private member's Motion No. 591 on ferry services between Wood Islands, Prince Edward Island and Caribou, Nova Scotia. The motion before us today proposes that we recognize the importance of the Wood Islands to Caribou ferry service, that all future contracts with the ferry operator are at least five years in length and that we maintain or exceed current service levels.

I can assure this chamber and Canadians that our government does support the Wood Islands to Caribou ferry service. Our support is long-standing and consistent.

This ferry service was first established in 1941 when the federal government began providing support for the service through Northumberland Ferries Limited, which has remained the ferry operator for all of these years. While the Wood Islands-Caribou ferry is only an eight-month service, it helps to meet the diverse transportation needs of Prince Edward Island's economy. During the 2014-15 operating year, the ferry moved over 353,000 people and over 15,000 commercial vehicles across the Northumberland Strait. It is an important component of the island's economy. As such, our government has provided \$100 million in funding to support the continuation of service since 2006.

Another way our government supports the ferry service is by leasing the two terminals and chartering the two ferries used on the Wood Islands to Caribou route, the MV *Holiday Island* and MV *Confederation*, to the current operator for a nominal amount. However, the MV *Holiday Island*, built in 1971, and the MV *Confederation*, built in 1981, are aging. These ferries have required significant investments over the past four years to maintain safe and reliable operations.

Our government has invested over \$10 million in the past four years to undertake a number of repairs on the terminals and ferries, including a main engine replacement for the MV *Holiday Island*.

Private Members' Business

Our government has made these investments because it recognizes that important economic and social infrastructure has developed and been enhanced by the presence of the ferry service.

Finally, our government further supports the island through its contribution towards the Confederation Bridge. To support this alternative transportation route, this government provided \$61.7 million in funding toward the bridge in 2014.

Our government's commitment to ensuring safe and secure transportation linkages in the Atlantic region is further highlighted by the approximately \$150 million our government has provided to support the Îles-de-la-Madeleine, Quebec to Souris, Prince Edward Island and the Saint John, New Brunswick to Digby, Nova Scotia ferry services.

I would like to note that a new vessel was purchased in October 2014 at a cost of \$44.6 million to replace the MV *Princess of Acadia* on the Saint John to Digby route. This vessel will ensure the continued safe and reliable operation of another important eastern ferry service, while creating jobs and economic opportunities in the region. The competition to name the vessel closed in February, and so I know everyone is looking forward to learning the winning name and a date for the ferry's entry into service.

•(1350)

Also, on les Îles de la Madeleine, our government heard the need for a year-round link to the islands. In 2009, our government extended the 10-month service to year-round service.

As announced in July 2014, our government is working toward developing a long-term sustainable approach to supporting eastern Canada's ferry services. This initiative, along with our government's announcement of a \$58-million investment in the three eastern Canada ferry services until March 31, 2016, has created an opportunity to establish a sustainable, long-term approach to supporting these ferry services into the future. Our government is using this time to engage the Atlantic provinces, Quebec, and ferry operators to further this initiative that is in the interest of all Canadians.

I understand the member for Cardigan's desire to ensure that the region continues to be served by a reliable and efficient ferry service. However, our government is conducting this work because ferry services are facing challenges. Pressure on ferry sustainability is following a worldwide trend. Domestic and international ferry operators are responding to these pressures through new and innovative approaches. These new approaches could be implemented in a way that would allow our ferry services to be more efficient while also improving the passenger experience. There is a need to understand and learn from these approaches to ensure that the eastern Canada ferry services continue to meet the high standards Canadians expect.

To conclude, our government is committed to supporting the Wood Islands-Caribou ferry service through a long-term, predictable, and sustainable approach.

Private Members' Business

Our current objective, however, is to ensure that our government has the time to complete its examination of options to determine the right level of service under the right parameters to support the long-term prosperity and economic development of the region.

Motion No. 591 would impede our government's ability to do that. It is for this reason that our government cannot support Motion No. 591.

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of Motion No. 591, concerning the ferry between Wood Island, P.E.I. and Caribou, Nova Scotia.

As somebody who represents northwestern British Columbia in this place, we know the ferry system as well as anybody does. It is good to support our friends and fellow Canadians on the other side of the country who are dealing with a government that has shown inconsistent support to the ferry services across Canada and has fallen far short of promises made by the Canadian government, time and time again.

The fact that the government could not even bring itself, in hundreds of pages of the 2015 budget, to even mention Wood Island and the vital ferry service shows where the government's priorities are. It is certainly not with the people of P.E.I. and Nova Scotia. That is the reality. Those are the choices it is making.

The government has lots of money for unfair income-splitting initiatives, \$2 billion-plus for that. It has billions more for other pet projects. However, when it comes to vital services that actually help Canadians stay connected to other Canadians and when it comes to helping services that actually help our economy, the Conservatives are nowhere to be found.

We saw it again today with 20,000 more jobs lost in the Canadian market. That parenthetically marks 16 months in a row that Canada has had less than 1% growth in our economy, which is the worst stretch of economic performance outside of a recession in the last 40 years. The Conservatives are wrapping themselves in this idea of how well they are doing on the economy, except for the facts. The facts are the facts that Canadians face each and every day.

It goes without saying that many of the services like the one we are talking about today, and many other ferry services across the country, pay for themselves in whatever support is offered by the government. If we look around the world, particularly the developed world, the developed nations in Europe, Australia and whatnot, the ferry services provided there, and the strength of the central government, is much stronger and consistent than what we have in Canada.

Coming from British Columbia, as anyone who has ever visited the coast of B.C. from south all the way through to the north, ferries are an integral link. They are in fact our highway system. If people are driving down Highway 16 in northern British Columbia and get to Prince Rupert, they get on the ferry and keep going when they get to the other side, in Haida Gwaii, some four or five hours away on the ferry. I have taken that ferry many times.

It is a vital link. To suggest that it does not deserve support would be like saying to people in the Greater Toronto Area that there will be no support for development on Highway 401, or saying to people along the TransCanada, that it is not a vital link anymore. For us, the

ferry service is exactly what it is. It is a link between us and the rest of the country.

When B.C. entered confederation, as part of the deal, the Government of Canada promised to support ferry service. Yet, what we have seen from consecutive Conservative and Liberal governments is a constant bleeding of the funds, a constant shortfall, again and again.

The B.C. ferry service, to put this into some context, moves more than 20 million British Columbians, other Canadians and visitors every year; 20 million people get on and off ferries in British Columbia. That is an absolutely essential component, not just to our tourism economy, which is obviously vibrant and vital to the people of British Columbia, but it is essential to just about every part of the economy. People living on Vancouver Island or any of the southern or northern gulf islands, or where I live on the north coast, the ferry service is essential, yet it is not treated as an essential service by the government. We have seen cutbacks year after year on the north coast routes. We have seen prices continue to climb, while service continues to drop.

Again, the Conservatives pretend to be good at business, but imagine a business that offered less and less service of a lower and lower quality and charged more and more for the product. The business would not last very long, but that is exactly how the Conservatives have treated the ferry service in British Columbia with their partners in Victoria, the so-called Liberal government of Christy Clark.

What they have done, year after year, is cut back support for the ferry services. The Conservatives have mismanaged it entirely. They have done what Conservatives always do with vital crown corporations, with vital services, they have privatized it. We know how the promises always go when Conservative politicians get up and say they that will privatize something and let the private sector do better. What the private sector has done to the ferry service in British Columbia has been nothing but a disaster. It was good at one thing, which was paying executives a lot of money. The previous CEO of BC Ferries made more than \$1 million, each and every year he was CEO as he was cutting services to British Columbians and raising the costs.

● (1355)

The new CEO took a huge pay cut, coming in at a little north of half a million dollars a year. I just do not know how he makes ends meet. That must be tough. He has two vice-presidents who are making more than \$650,000 a year to run the ferry system. To put that into some context, just south of us, in Washington state, the same job is being done by a CEO at \$145,000. That is a sixth of what they are paying themselves in British Columbia, yet they claim poverty. They claim poverty when it comes time to actually provide services to British Columbians.

For the routes I represent in northern British Columbia, going from Prince Rupert to beautiful Haida Gwaii, the very western tip of this country, a place that, for any Canadian or anyone who has the fortune to go there, burns in the memory—it is a magnificent place, a place we all should get to—this ferry service is essential for business and tourism.

Private Members' Business

However, for the nearly 5,000 people who live on Haida Gwaii, often just getting to a dentist appointment or a medical appointment or having a baby requires them to leave the island and take the ferry across. That can run, for a family of four, up to nearly \$1,000 just to get back to the mainland to get basic services, because the downturn in the economy on that island has been so devastating that they have lost many of their essential services. They have closed so many of the important things that for any particular care people might need they have to come off the island, and they are hit with this huge tax.

The subsidy that came from the federal government, which was promised by the federal government to British Columbia, was consistent for a while and has since started to roll into general revenues, as Conservatives are so wont to do. They take a very specific thing for a very specific and important measure and they roll it all into general revenues. Guess what happens to it when it goes there, into the black hole of Conservative economics and government. It can go into any project and anything they deem to be important to them on any given day. That is a problem for us, because we see dedicated money just not going to the dedicated purpose.

The effect on places like Bella Bella, Bella Coola, and some of the smaller coastal communities along the central and north coasts has been even more devastating. These are vital and vibrant communities, yet they require that connection, as any Canadian does, of transportation to get across to talk with and visit people, do business, and be with family and friends.

To us, this has been a reprehensible approach to government. We have long put in our platforms, as New Democrats, year after year, more and stronger, consistent support for ferry services on the west coast. It is good that we are being joined by our Liberal colleagues now to talk about sustainable ferry service, predictable ferry service. We have to keep in mind, particularly for those businesses that rely on the tourist trade in Îles de la Madeleine and on the east coast, along with the west coast, the unpredictability the Conservatives are causing now by saying they are in consultation, while the contract is running out

For those who are in the tourism business, the time to make money is a very tight window of three, four, or five months, maybe. If they are setting up that operation and hiring staff, and they do not know if or what kind of ferry service they are going to have to their island and to their business, that can be devastating, because those people looking to come to visit make their decisions four and five months out, because they sometimes travel from far away. If they do not know if they are able to get there, they are not going to come.

We saw this last year with BC Ferries, which has this so-called private-sector approach, being such brilliant managers of something like the ferry service. They had actually allowed construction companies to book virtually the entire deck of what was a now reduced ferry, just in case they wanted to put any equipment on it. People were phoning BC Ferries, a privately run company that is supposed to be efficient, and were being told that the ferry was full, so people did not come, because they had to come from far away to the get to the north coast, to Prince Rupert, just to get over to Haida Gwaii and some of the other islands. Therefore, the ferry was sailing 40% to 50% empty most of the time, because the construction

companies were not coming up, and they were not paying for any of the space.

This is the Conservative world view of how to run an essential service. It is terrible business practice. It is awful public management practice, because it hurts communities that, in some cases, are just struggling to hang on, doing all they can to remain vital and a contributing part of Canadian society.

● (1400)

We have known that for many years the subsidy from the federal government to the 20 million passengers who ride B.C. ferries is around \$1.40 a year, which is dramatically less than it is in other parts of the country. We do not wish the other parts of the country, the east coast in particular, to come down to our level, because we see the results in massive cuts, layoffs, strife and uncertainty. We want to bring it up to a reliable and vibrant ferry service. That is what the country needs. It is what the economy needs.

The Conservatives say that they are concerned about the economy and that they want to reverse the trend of anemic job growth for 16 months now, which the Governor of the Bank of Canada called an atrocious situation with respect to our economy. Let us start with the practical things, the smart things, such as helping out the ferry service. For the life of me, I cannot understand why the Conservatives will not support this motion. I cannot for the life of me understand why the Conservatives so consistently look to bleed the ferry system across this country, from east to west to north, to the point where people cannot rely on it anymore. It is what helps connect this country. It is what helps keeps us strong.

Mr. Sean Casey (Charlottetown, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when I heard the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport speak, he described this motion as the annual *Chicken Little* motion from the member for Cardigan. While I thought that was a terribly insulting thing to say, I remembered the story of *Chicken Little*, which was that there was alarm unnecessarily raised over the fact that the sky was falling when, in fact, the sky was not falling. Therefore, when he described it as *Chicken Little* motion, I thought the Conservatives would support the motion and the ferry service. This is a motion that says that things could go badly, but they will not go badly at all. Then at the end of his remarks, he indicated they would not be supporting the motion. The government's position on this motion will only add to the sense of abandonment that Prince Edward Islanders feel from the government.

I am probably one of the better customers of this ferry service due to the fact that 27 years ago I married a Cape Bretoner. I am the father of two St. Francis Xavier University graduates and I can say, with some experience, that the drive from the soccer field at St. Francis Xavier University to the Caribou ferry terminal is exactly 51 minutes. I have done it on several occasions. I have had more than my share of the Islander breakfast special onboard the *Holiday Island*, the very fine clam chowder it serves. If one is lucky enough to hit the MV *Confederation*, there is nothing quite like the COWS ice cream that is served on board.

Private Members' Business

Up front, I need to declare my personal bias. As a fellow Prince Edward Islander, I am very proud to speak to the motion put forward by my hon. colleague from Cardigan. He has been, and continues to be, a true champion for the ferry service in Wood Islands because he understands that it is a vital service to Prince Edward Island and his constituents, in particular.

There are many things to love about living in Prince Edward Island, although this past winter would not be one of them. One of the things to love about Prince Edward Island is its proximity to the water. Beaches are close at hand, and spending days on the water or near the water is a favourite pastime of Islanders and visitors alike. The only downside to being surrounded by water on all sides is that it makes travel a bit more complicated.

Thankfully, for eight months of the year, there are two options for travelling off island. Many Islanders have family, work commitments or travel plans in Nova Scotia and the Northumberland ferry, which travels from Wood Islands to Caribou, provides an additional, reliable method of transportation.

The motion today calls on the government to ensure a safe, efficient and sustainable transportation system for Prince Edward Island. It is a little troubling that the member for Cardigan has to move a motion in the House of Commons to seek stable, adequate funding for a service that has proven to be necessary and valuable to two separate local economies. In my view, this should be a logical decision.

As I prepared my notes for the motion, it became increasingly obvious to me that this was an issue, and will continue to be an issue, until the government acknowledged that it need not be an issue. In 2010, the five-year contract negotiated in 2005 by the Liberal government expired. At the time, there was a concern in our province that the federal government would cut its funding altogether, which would have resulted in the loss of one of the two ferries or the entire ferry service. With the hon. member for Cardigan leading the charge, support flooded in from the good people of Prince Edward Island, as well as from the communities in Pictou County, Nova Scotia.

The Council of Atlantic Premiers called upon the government to put in place a 15-year funding agreement for the Northumberland ferry service. Of course, in 2010, the premiers of Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia were Liberal and New Democrat respectively. This may have had an impact on why the next funding agreement was for only three years.

The next agreement after that was for just one year, followed by an additional two years in Budget 2014. Perhaps coincidentally, we also saw a Liberal premier in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island at the time.

• (1405)

The Northumberland ferry provides islanders with one of only two links to the rest of Canada. The other, of course, is the Confederation Bridge, which links Prince Edward Island to New Brunswick. For people living in the eastern end of Prince Edward Island, the ferry service is a faster and safer alternative to driving across the island and back through Nova Scotia to reach their ultimate destination.

I realize that many of my colleagues in this House are not so fortunate as to be from Atlantic Canada. For those who are less familiar with Prince Edward Island, let me try to explain the importance of the Northumberland ferry.

From May to December, the ferry provides a central link from Wood Islands to Caribou, Nova Scotia. In the fall semester, Prince Edward Island students who are attending that fine educational institution at St. Francis Xavier University, Cape Breton University or the universities in Halifax or the Annapolis Valley use the ferry to get themselves to and from university. This also applies to Nova Scotia students attending the University of Prince Island or Holland College. For many students, the fee to walk on the ferry is significantly lower than the cost of driving across Nova Scotia to get to the Confederation Bridge. In many ways, it is much safer to board the ferry and to take a break from driving.

The ferry welcomes approximately half a million passengers travelling between Wood Islands and Pictou; that is half a million passengers on an island of 145,000 people. This includes students, but it also includes visitors who are either from Nova Scotia or Prince Edward Island, or they are visitors who want to see more than one maritime province during their trip to the east coast of Canada.

I look forward to the support from some of our Nova Scotia colleagues from across the aisle. This is not and should not be an issue solely for Prince Edward Island. Besides visitors, students and islanders looking to travel off-island, the ferry transports nearly 160,000 vehicles including 18,000 commercial trucks. Tourism is a major component of the Prince Edward Island economy, and the ability to get to and from the island is perhaps the most important component of our tourism strategy. Year-to-year funding or a two-year funding agreement is just not cutting it for the Northumberland ferry.

The Minister of Transport, who is also originally a Cape Bretoner, is no doubt aware of the importance of the ferry service. The Minister of Justice represents the riding of Central Nova, which includes Pictou County, the home of the Nova Scotia ferry terminal. I can say that I have personally seen the Minister of Justice on board. I have also seen the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands on board the Northumberland ferry for one particular crossing. That probably, again, speaks to her Cape Breton roots. Surely they understand that the ferry service is important, and that multi-year funding would be hugely beneficial to the local service. I am hopeful that the Minister of Transport, the Minister of Justice and their colleagues are prepared to support this motion. These short-term contracts do nothing to inspire confidence or security in Northumberland Ferries Limited. This is a vital service that has proven itself year after year, but the government still refuses to make a long-term commitment.

Private Members' Business

As the motion reads, the member for Cardigan is seeking a minimum of five years of stable funding. The economic impact of the ferry service to Prince Edward Island is approximately \$27 million, and over \$12 million to Nova Scotia. The service is extremely important to Prince Edward Island. It is not only important to our economy and to our people who are employed by Northumberland Ferries; it is also important because, as the member for Cardigan mentioned in his speech, the ferry service connects the Trans-Canada Highway from Wood Islands to Caribou, Nova Scotia. The ferry service offers P.E.I. a physical and symbolic link to the rest of Canada.

I have a couple more points. In any business, uncertainty is the enemy. For the people of Northumberland Ferries to be able to properly plan their business, their capital expenditures and their commitments to their employees, long-term stable funding is a must.

• (1410)

I would also add that probably the most dangerous stretch of highway in Atlantic Canada is the Cobequid Pass between Amherst and Truro. This ferry allows people to avoid that stretch of highway, thereby saving lives.

Business travellers have a chance to be much more productive on their travel between provinces as a result of the availability of Wi-Fi on the ferry.

This is a good and sensible motion from my hon. colleague. He is simply asking the government to make a multi-year commitment. I hope the House will support him on this motion. I certainly will be proudly voting for it.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott (Saskatoon—Wanuskewin, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am quite pleased to speak to this private member's motion on ferry services between Wood Islands, Prince Edward Island, and Caribou, Nova Scotia, brought forward by the good member for Cardigan. I have known him a long time. He has served honourably in the House. He is a good man, and I am sure that he has the very best intent with the motion that he proposes here today.

Motion No. 591 proposes that the federal government recognize the importance of the Wood Islands to Caribou ferry service, that the government commit to stable, long-term, sustainable and adequate funding by ensuring that all future contracts with the current ferry operator are for at least five years, and that the government maintain or exceed the current level of service.

Our government understands the importance of this ferry service to Prince Edward Island. Our members, individually, use this ferry service and have used other ferry services across the country. I have, and I certainly appreciate the tremendous value of the ferries in our country.

This ferry contributes toward a sustainable economy. It meets the diverse transportation needs of the island's businesses and communities. It connects friends and families across the Northumberland Strait. It allows tourists to explore the far corners of Atlantic Canada. It helps to maintain some very vibrant communities in that part of our nation.

The government has a long history of supporting ferry services across Canada. Most recently, in June 2014, our government

announced an investment of \$58 million in federal funding to support the Wood Islands to Caribou ferry service and two other eastern Canada ferry services until March 31, 2016. At the very same time, our government also stated that it remains committed to examining options for a long-term approach for the delivery of the eastern Canada ferry services. This work is still ongoing with Transport Canada officials working closely with private operators, the Atlantic provinces, and with Quebec, as well. Our government wants to ensure that the analysis is complete and that an assessment has been done before it determines how best to support ferry services in the future.

That said, this government does support the Wood Islands to Caribou ferry service, and it has supported it in a consistent and long-standing fashion. I will describe the many ways in which the federal government supports the Wood Islands to Caribou ferry service.

Since 2006, the federal government has invested \$100 million in supporting this service. In addition to this significant level of funding of \$100 million, the government leases two terminals and charters the MV *Holiday Island* and the MV *Confederation* to the ferry operator at a nominal cost of \$1 for each vessel and \$500 only for each terminal per year. That support has ensured that the operator has been able to provide a safe, efficient and reliable service since the Wood Islands to Caribou ferry was established back in 1941. This is important to all Canadians and particularly to those who are from that area, and our government recognizes that. Our government has made these investments because it recognizes that ferries are a part of the social and economic fabric of the coastal regions, in particular. They link families, communities and businesses together to make a strong and more integrated Canada.

I would also note that our commitment to ferry services goes beyond just the Wood Islands ferry service. Our government is also supporting two other privately operated ferry services on Canada's east coast, and it also provides an annual grant to the Province of British Columbia for coastal ferry services.

I want to first speak about the Saint John, New Brunswick, to Digby, Nova Scotia, ferry service, which some members in the House will be familiar with. The legacy of ferry services on the Bay of Fundy runs very deep. The Saint John to Digby ferry service was first established in the early 1900s and has received government support through most of its history. The responsibility for the Saint John to Digby ferry service has changed hands over the years. It was operated by Marine Atlantic from 1986 until 1997, and then the service was commercialized to a private operator following a competitive process. Following its commercialization, government support for this service was phased out.

However, by 2006, it became clear that some level of public subsidy and support was required to maintain a viable service, so at that time, the federal government and the Province of New Brunswick and the Province of Nova Scotia stepped in to ensure that the region continued to be served by an interprovincial ferry service.

Private Members' Business

●(1415)

Since this time, our government has invested \$43 million in support of this service. In addition, our government also purchased a replacement vessel for the 44-year-old MV *Princess of Acadia*, at a cost of \$44.6 million. That new vessel, which has yet to be officially named, is expected to be in service this year, in 2015. Thanks to that investment, the government has ensured the continued safe, reliable, and efficient operation of the Saint John to Digby service.

The second privately operated ferry service supported by this government on Canada's east coast is the Îles de la Madeleine, Quebec to Souris, Prince Edward Island ferry. That ferry service was established in 1971 and has been receiving federal support since that time.

Les Îles de la Madeleine are a remote set of islands only accessible on a year-round basis by government-supported ferry and air services, with the ferry service being the primary means of accessing the islands. In support of this ferry, our government has invested \$118 million since 2006 to ensure that residents, tourists, and businesses have a reliable alternative to air services.

Les Îles de la Madeleine service was not always a year-round ferry service. Our government heard the requests from residents and businesses on les Îles de la Madeleine for a year-round ferry service and responded.

In 2009, our government began supporting an extended winter service in February and March because we recognized the contribution this made toward a more sustainable economy for les Îles de la Madeleine. Extending the winter services required an additional financial investment from our federal government, and included chartering an ice-class ferry to push the ice away in the winter months so the operator could safely navigate the icy Gulf of St. Lawrence waters.

Our government made this investment because it recognized the substantial benefits for residents, including decreased transportation costs and increased economic opportunities for local businesses.

Our government's support is also extended to contributing to ferry services on British Columbia's coast, as was mentioned earlier. As

part of an agreement, in 1977, the federal government and Province of British Columbia determined that federal support for ferry services within British Columbia would be provided through a yearly indexed grant. The initial grant was set at \$8 million, and has grown to over \$28 million in 2014. That money is used by the Province of British Columbia to support BC Ferries coastal services.

As members can note from my remarks, we are committed to supporting ferry services across Canada, including the Wood Islands to Caribou ferry service. What this government can do, and what we are doing, is working with provinces and ferry operators to complete the examination of options for a long-term, predictable, and sustainable approach to the delivery of the eastern Canada ferry services. Supporting this motion in its current form would prematurely jeopardize that analysis, which would undermine an important opportunity to find the right approach.

For the reasons I have outlined today, our government is unable to support the private member's Motion No. 591, but we definitely support ferry services all across our fair land.

●(1420)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): The time provided for private members' business has now expired, and the order is dropped to the bottom of the order of precedence on the order paper.

Before we adjourn, I want to remind all hon. members that we have a very special day coming up this Sunday.

[*Translation*]

On behalf of the Speaker, I want to wish all hon. members and all staff of the House a wonderful day this Sunday, as we celebrate and pay tribute to our mothers, our grandmothers and all of the women in our life whom we love. Happy Mother's Day to everyone.

[*English*]

It being 2:25 p.m., this House stands adjourned until next Monday, at 11 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 2:25 p.m.)

APPENDIX

**ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS WITH THEIR
CONSTITUENCIES, PROVINCE OF CONSTITUENCY
AND POLITICAL AFFILIATIONS;
COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE,
THE MINISTRY AND PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY**

CHAIR OCCUPANTS

The Speaker

HON. ANDREW SCHEER

The Deputy Speaker and Chair of Committees of the Whole

MR. JOE COMARTIN

The Deputy Chair of Committees of the Whole

MR. BARRY DEVOLIN

The Assistant Deputy Chair of Committees of the Whole

MR. BRUCE STANTON

BOARD OF INTERNAL ECONOMY

HON. ANDREW SCHEER

MRS. STELLA AMBLER

HON. JOHN DUNCAN

MR. PETER JULIAN

HON. DOMINIC LEBLANC

MR. PHILIP TOONE

HON. PETER VAN LOAN

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

Second Session—Forty-first Parliament

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Ablonczy, Hon. Diane	Calgary—Nose Hill	Alberta	CPC
Adams, Eve	Mississauga—Brampton South	Ontario	Lib.
Adler, Mark	York Centre	Ontario	CPC
Aglukkaq, Hon. Leona, Minister of the Environment, Minister of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency and Minister for the Arctic Council	Nunavut	Nunavut	CPC
Albas, Dan, Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board	Okanagan—Coquihalla	British Columbia	CPC
Albrecht, Harold	Kitchener—Conestoga	Ontario	CPC
Alexander, Hon. Chris, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	Ajax—Pickering	Ontario	CPC
Allen, Malcolm	Welland	Ontario	NDP
Allen, Mike	Tobique—Mactaquac	New Brunswick	CPC
Allison, Dean	Niagara West—Glanbrook	Ontario	CPC
Ambler, Stella	Mississauga South	Ontario	CPC
Ambrose, Hon. Rona, Minister of Health	Edmonton—Spruce Grove	Alberta	CPC
Anders, Rob	Calgary West	Alberta	CPC
Anderson, David, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Consular	Cypress Hills—Grasslands	Saskatchewan	CPC
Andrews, Scott	Avalon	Newfoundland and Labrador	Ind.
Angus, Charlie	Timmins—James Bay	Ontario	NDP
Armstrong, Scott, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister of Labour	Cumberland—Colchester— Musquodoboit Valley	Nova Scotia	CPC
Ashfield, Hon. Keith	Fredericton	New Brunswick	CPC
Ashton, Niki	Churchill	Manitoba	NDP
Aspin, Jay	Nipissing—Timiskaming	Ontario	CPC
Atamanenko, Alex	British Columbia Southern Interior	British Columbia	NDP
Aubin, Robert	Trois-Rivières	Québec	NDP
Ayala, Paulina	Honoré-Mercier	Québec	NDP
Barlow, John	Macleod	Alberta	CPC
Bateman, Joyce	Winnipeg South Centre	Manitoba	CPC
Bélanger, Hon. Mauril	Ottawa—Vanier	Ontario	Lib.
Bellavance, André	Richmond—Arthabaska	Québec	Ind.
Bennett, Hon. Carolyn	St. Paul's	Ontario	Lib.
Benoit, Leon	Vegreville—Wainwright	Alberta	CPC
Benskin, Tyrone	Jeanne-Le Ber	Québec	NDP
Bergen, Hon. Candice, Minister of State (Social Development)	Portage—Lisgar	Manitoba	CPC
Bernier, Hon. Maxime, Minister of State (Small Business and Tourism, and Agriculture)	Beauce	Québec	CPC
Bevington, Dennis	Northwest Territories	Northwest Territories	NDP
Bezan, James, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence	Selkirk—Interlake	Manitoba	CPC
Blanchette, Denis	Louis-Hébert	Québec	NDP
Blanchette-Lamothe, Lysane	Pierrefonds—Dollard	Québec	NDP
Blaney, Hon. Steven, Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness	Lévis—Bellechasse	Québec	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Block, Kelly, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources	Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar	Saskatchewan	CPC
Boivin, Françoise	Gatineau	Québec	NDP
Borg, Charmaine	Terrebonne—Blainville	Québec	NDP
Boughen, Ray	Palliser	Saskatchewan	CPC
Boulerice, Alexandre	Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie	Québec	NDP
Boutin-Sweet, Marjolaine	Hochelaga	Québec	NDP
Brahmi, Tarik	Saint-Jean	Québec	NDP
Braid, Peter, Parliamentary Secretary for Infrastructure and Communities	Kitchener—Waterloo	Ontario	CPC
Breitkreuz, Garry	Yorkton—Melville	Saskatchewan	CPC
Brison, Hon. Scott	Kings—Hants	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Brosseau, Ruth Ellen	Berthier—Maskinongé	Québec	NDP
Brown, Gordon	Leeds—Grenville	Ontario	CPC
Brown, Lois, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Development	Newmarket—Aurora	Ontario	CPC
Brown, Patrick	Barrie	Ontario	CPC
Bruinooge, Rod	Winnipeg South	Manitoba	CPC
Butt, Brad	Mississauga—Streetsville	Ontario	CPC
Byrne, Hon. Gerry	Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Calandra, Paul, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs	Oak Ridges—Markham	Ontario	CPC
Calkins, Blaine	Wetaskiwin	Alberta	CPC
Cannan, Hon. Ron	Kelowna—Lake Country	British Columbia	CPC
Carmichael, John	Don Valley West	Ontario	CPC
Caron, Guy	Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques	Québec	NDP
Carrie, Colin, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment	Oshawa	Ontario	CPC
Casey, Sean	Charlottetown	Prince Edward Island	Lib.
Cash, Andrew	Davenport	Ontario	NDP
Chan, Arnold	Scarborough—Agincourt	Ontario	Lib.
Charlton, Chris	Hamilton Mountain	Ontario	NDP
Chicoine, Sylvain	Châteauguay—Saint-Constant	Québec	NDP
Chisholm, Robert	Dartmouth—Cole Harbour	Nova Scotia	NDP
Chisu, Corneliu	Pickering—Scarborough East	Ontario	CPC
Chong, Hon. Michael	Wellington—Halton Hills	Ontario	CPC
Choquette, François	Drummond	Québec	NDP
Christopherson, David	Hamilton Centre	Ontario	NDP
Clarke, Rob	Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River	Saskatchewan	CPC
Cleary, Ryan	St. John's South—Mount Pearl	Newfoundland and Labrador	NDP
Clement, Hon. Tony, President of the Treasury Board	Parry Sound—Muskoka	Ontario	CPC
Comartin, Joe, The Deputy Speaker	Windsor—Tecumseh	Ontario	NDP
Côté, Raymond	Beauport—Limoilou	Québec	NDP
Cotler, Hon. Irwin	Mount Royal	Québec	Lib.
Crockatt, Joan	Calgary Centre	Alberta	CPC
Crowder, Jean	Nanaimo—Cowichan	British Columbia	NDP
Cullen, Nathan	Skeena—Bulkley Valley	British Columbia	NDP

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Cuzner, Rodger	Cape Breton—Canso	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Daniel, Joe	Don Valley East	Ontario	CPC
Davidson, Patricia	Sarnia—Lambton	Ontario	CPC
Davies, Don	Vancouver Kingsway	British Columbia	NDP
Davies, Libby	Vancouver East	British Columbia	NDP
Day, Anne-Marie	Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles	Québec	NDP
Dechert, Bob, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice	Mississauga—Erindale	Ontario	CPC
Devolin, Barry, The Acting Speaker	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock	Ontario	CPC
Dewar, Paul	Ottawa Centre	Ontario	NDP
Dion, Hon. Stéphane, Saint-Laurent—Cartierville	Saint-Laurent—Cartierville	Québec	Lib.
Dionne Labelle, Pierre	Rivière-du-Nord	Québec	NDP
Donnelly, Fin	New Westminster—Coquitlam	British Columbia	NDP
Doré Lefebvre, Rosane	Alfred-Pellan	Québec	NDP
Dreeshen, Earl	Red Deer	Alberta	CPC
Dubé, Matthew	Chambly—Borduas	Québec	NDP
Dubourg, Emmanuel	Bourassa	Québec	Lib.
Duncan, Hon. John, Minister of State and Chief Government Whip	Vancouver Island North	British Columbia	CPC
Duncan, Kirsty	Etobicoke North	Ontario	Lib.
Duncan, Linda	Edmonton—Strathcona	Alberta	NDP
Dusseault, Pierre-Luc	Sherbrooke	Québec	NDP
Dykstra, Rick, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage	St. Catharines	Ontario	CPC
Easter, Hon. Wayne	Malpeque	Prince Edward Island	Lib.
Eglinski, Jim	Yellowhead	Alberta	CPC
Eyking, Hon. Mark	Sydney—Victoria	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Falk, Ted	Provencher	Manitoba	CPC
Fantino, Hon. Julian, Associate Minister of National Defence	Vaughan	Ontario	CPC
Fast, Hon. Ed, Minister of International Trade	Abbotsford	British Columbia	CPC
Findlay, Hon. Kerry-Lynne D., Minister of National Revenue	Delta—Richmond East	British Columbia	CPC
Finley, Hon. Diane, Minister of Public Works and Government Services	Haldimand—Norfolk	Ontario	CPC
Fletcher, Hon. Steven	Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia	Manitoba	CPC
Foote, Judy	Random—Burin—St. George's	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Fortin, Jean-François	Haute-Gaspésie—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia	Québec	FD
Freeland, Chrystia	Toronto Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Freeman, Mylène	Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel	Québec	NDP
Fry, Hon. Hedy	Vancouver Centre	British Columbia	Lib.
Galipeau, Royal	Ottawa—Orléans	Ontario	CPC
Gallant, Cheryl	Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke	Ontario	CPC
Garneau, Marc	Westmount—Ville-Marie	Québec	Lib.
Garrison, Randall	Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca	British Columbia	NDP
Genest, Réjean	Shefford	Québec	NDP
Genest-Jourdain, Jonathan	Manicouagan	Québec	NDP
Giguère, Alain	Marc-Aurèle-Fortin	Québec	NDP

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Gill, Parm, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade	Brampton—Springdale	Ontario	CPC
Glover, Hon. Shelly, Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages	Saint Boniface	Manitoba	CPC
Godin, Yvon	Acadie—Bathurst	New Brunswick	NDP
Goguen, Robert, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice	Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe	New Brunswick	CPC
Goldring, Peter	Edmonton East	Alberta	CPC
Goodale, Hon. Ralph	Wascana	Saskatchewan	Lib.
Goodyear, Hon. Gary, Minister of State (Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario)	Cambridge	Ontario	CPC
Gosal, Hon. Bal, Minister of State (Sport)	Bramalea—Gore—Malton	Ontario	CPC
Gourde, Jacques, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, for Official Languages and for the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec	Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière	Québec	CPC
Gravelle, Claude	Nickel Belt	Ontario	NDP
Grewal, Nina	Fleetwood—Port Kells	British Columbia	CPC
Groguhé, Sadia	Saint-Lambert	Québec	NDP
Harper, Right Hon. Stephen, Prime Minister	Calgary Southwest	Alberta	CPC
Harris, Dan	Scarborough Southwest	Ontario	NDP
Harris, Jack	St. John's East	Newfoundland and Labrador	NDP
Harris, Richard	Cariboo—Prince George	British Columbia	CPC
Hassainia, Sana	Verchères—Les Patriotes	Québec	Ind.
Hawn, Hon. Laurie	Edmonton Centre	Alberta	CPC
Hayes, Bryan	Sault Ste. Marie	Ontario	CPC
Hiebert, Russ	South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale	British Columbia	CPC
Hillyer, Jim	Lethbridge	Alberta	CPC
Hoback, Randy	Prince Albert	Saskatchewan	CPC
Holder, Hon. Ed, Minister of State (Science and Technology)	London West	Ontario	CPC
Hsu, Ted	Kingston and the Islands	Ontario	Lib.
Hughes, Carol	Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapuskasing	Ontario	NDP
Hyer, Bruce	Thunder Bay—Superior North	Ontario	GP
Jacob, Pierre	Brome—Missisquoi	Québec	NDP
James, Roxanne, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness	Scarborough Centre	Ontario	CPC
Jones, Yvonne	Labrador	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Julian, Peter	Burnaby—New Westminster	British Columbia	NDP
Kamp, Randy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission	British Columbia	CPC
Keddy, Gerald, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture, to the Minister of National Revenue and for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency	South Shore—St. Margaret's	Nova Scotia	CPC
Kellway, Matthew	Beaches—East York	Ontario	NDP
Kenney, Hon. Jason, Minister of National Defence and Minister for Multiculturalism	Calgary Southeast	Alberta	CPC
Kent, Hon. Peter	Thornhill	Ontario	CPC
Kerr, Greg	West Nova	Nova Scotia	CPC
Komarnicki, Ed	Souris—Moose Mountain	Saskatchewan	CPC
Kramp, Daryl	Prince Edward—Hastings	Ontario	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Lake, Hon. Mike, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry	Edmonton—Mill Woods— Beaumont.....	Alberta	CPC
Lamoureux, Kevin	Winnipeg North	Manitoba	Lib.
Lapointe, François	Montmagny—L'Islet— Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup	Québec	NDP
Larose, Jean-François	Repentigny	Québec	FD
Latendresse, Alexandrine	Louis-Saint-Laurent.....	Québec	NDP
Lauzon, Guy.....	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengary	Ontario	CPC
Laverdière, Hélène	Laurier—Sainte-Marie	Québec	NDP
Lebel, Hon. Denis, Minister of Infrastructure, Communities and Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister of the Economic Devel- opment Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec	Roberval—Lac-Saint-Jean.....	Québec	CPC
LeBlanc, Hon. Dominic	Beauséjour.....	New Brunswick.....	Lib.
LeBlanc, Hélène.....	LaSalle—Émard.....	Québec	NDP
Leef, Ryan	Yukon.....	Yukon	CPC
Leitch, Hon. K. Kellie, Minister of Labour and Minister of Status of Women	Simcoe—Grey	Ontario	CPC
Lemieux, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs.....	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell .	Ontario	CPC
Leslie, Megan	Halifax	Nova Scotia	NDP
Leung, Chungsen, Parliamentary Secretary for Multiculturalism ...	Willowdale	Ontario	CPC
Liu, Laurin.....	Rivière-des-Mille-Îles.....	Québec	NDP
Lizon, Wladyslaw	Mississauga East—Cooksville .	Ontario	CPC
Lobb, Ben	Huron—Bruce.....	Ontario	CPC
Lukiwski, Tom, Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre.....	Saskatchewan	CPC
Lunney, James.....	Nanaimo—Alberni	British Columbia	Ind.
MacAulay, Hon. Lawrence	Cardigan	Prince Edward Island....	Lib.
MacKay, Hon. Peter, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada	Central Nova	Nova Scotia	CPC
MacKenzie, Dave	Oxford	Ontario	CPC
Maguire, Larry	Brandon—Souris.....	Manitoba	CPC
Mai, Hoang	Brossard—La Prairie	Québec	NDP
Marston, Wayne	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek .	Ontario	NDP
Martin, Pat.....	Winnipeg Centre	Manitoba	NDP
Masse, Brian.....	Windsor West	Ontario	NDP
Mathyssen, Irene	London—Fanshawe.....	Ontario	NDP
May, Elizabeth	Saanich—Gulf Islands	British Columbia	GP
Mayes, Colin	Okanagan—Shuswap	British Columbia	CPC
McCallum, Hon. John	Markham—Unionville.....	Ontario	Lib.
McColeman, Phil.....	Brant	Ontario	CPC
McGuinty, David.....	Ottawa South.....	Ontario	Lib.
McKay, Hon. John	Scarborough—Guildwood.....	Ontario	Lib.
McLeod, Cathy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health and for Western Economic Diversification	Kamloops—Thompson— Cariboo	British Columbia	CPC
Menegakis, Costas, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	Richmond Hill	Ontario	CPC
Michaud, Éline	Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier.....	Québec	NDP
Miller, Larry	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound...	Ontario	CPC
Moore, Christine	Abitibi—Témiscamingue	Québec	NDP

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Moore, Hon. James, Minister of Industry	Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam	British Columbia	CPC
Moore, Hon. Rob, Minister of State (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency)	Fundy Royal	New Brunswick	CPC
Morin, Dany	Chicoutimi—Le Fjord	Québec	NDP
Morin, Isabelle	Notre-Dame-de-Grâce— Lachine	Québec	NDP
Morin, Marc-André	Laurentides—Labelle	Québec	NDP
Morin, Marie-Claude	Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot	Québec	NDP
Mourani, Maria	Ahuntsic	Québec	Ind.
Mulcair, Hon. Thomas, Leader of the Opposition	Outremont	Québec	NDP
Murray, Joyce	Vancouver Quadra	British Columbia	Lib.
Nantel, Pierre	Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher	Québec	NDP
Nash, Peggy	Parkdale—High Park	Ontario	NDP
Nicholls, Jamie	Vaudreuil-Soulanges	Québec	NDP
Nicholson, Hon. Rob, Minister of Foreign Affairs	Niagara Falls	Ontario	CPC
Norlock, Rick	Northumberland—Quinte West	Ontario	CPC
Nunez-Melo, José	Laval	Québec	NDP
Obhrai, Hon. Deepak, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and for International Human Rights	Calgary East	Alberta	CPC
O'Connor, Hon. Gordon	Carleton—Mississippi Mills	Ontario	CPC
Oliver, Hon. Joe, Minister of Finance	Eglinton—Lawrence	Ontario	CPC
O'Neill Gordon, Tilly	Miramichi	New Brunswick	CPC
Opitz, Ted	Etobicoke Centre	Ontario	CPC
O'Toole, Hon. Erin, Minister of Veterans Affairs	Durham	Ontario	CPC
Pacetti, Massimo	Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel	Québec	Ind.
Papillon, Annick	Québec	Québec	NDP
Paradis, Hon. Christian, Minister of International Development and Minister for La Francophonie	Mégantic—L'Érable	Québec	CPC
Patry, Claude	Jonquière—Alma	Québec	BQ
Payne, LaVar	Medicine Hat	Alberta	CPC
Péclet, Ève	La Pointe-de-l'Île	Québec	NDP
Perkins, Pat	Whitby—Oshawa	Ontario	CPC
Perreault, Manon	Montcalm	Québec	Ind.
Pilon, François	Laval—Les Îles	Québec	NDP
Plamondon, Louis	Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet— Bécancour	Québec	BQ
Poilievre, Hon. Pierre, Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform	Nepean—Carleton	Ontario	CPC
Preston, Joe	Elgin—Middlesex—London	Ontario	CPC
Quach, Anne Minh-Thu	Beauharnois—Salaberry	Québec	NDP
Rafferty, John	Thunder Bay—Rainy River	Ontario	NDP
Raitt, Hon. Lisa, Minister of Transport	Halton	Ontario	CPC
Rajotte, James	Edmonton—Leduc	Alberta	CPC
Rankin, Murray	Victoria	British Columbia	NDP
Rathgeber, Brent	Edmonton—St. Albert	Alberta	Ind.
Ravignat, Mathieu	Pontiac	Québec	NDP
Raynault, Francine	Joliette	Québec	NDP
Regan, Hon. Geoff	Halifax West	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Reid, Scott	Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington	Ontario	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Rempel, Hon. Michelle, Minister of State (Western Economic Diversification)	Calgary Centre-North	Alberta	CPC
Richards, Blake	Wild Rose	Alberta	CPC
Rickford, Hon. Greg, Minister of Natural Resources and Minister for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario	Kenora	Ontario	CPC
Ritz, Hon. Gerry, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food	Battlefords—Lloydminster	Saskatchewan	CPC
Rousseau, Jean	Compton—Stanstead	Québec	NDP
Saganash, Romeo	Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou	Québec	NDP
Sandhu, Jasbir	Surrey North	British Columbia	NDP
Saxton, Andrew, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance	North Vancouver	British Columbia	CPC
Scarpaleggia, Francis	Lac-Saint-Louis	Québec	Lib.
Scheer, Hon. Andrew, Speaker of the House of Commons	Regina—Qu'Appelle	Saskatchewan	CPC
Schellenberger, Gary	Perth—Wellington	Ontario	CPC
Scott, Craig	Toronto—Danforth	Ontario	NDP
Seeback, Kyle	Brampton West	Ontario	CPC
Sellah, Djaouida	Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert	Québec	NDP
Sgro, Hon. Judy	York West	Ontario	Lib.
Shea, Hon. Gail, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	Egmont	Prince Edward Island	CPC
Shipley, Bev	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	Ontario	CPC
Shory, Devinder	Calgary Northeast	Alberta	CPC
Simms, Scott	Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Sims, Jinny Jogindera	Newton—North Delta	British Columbia	NDP
Sitsabaiesan, Rathika	Scarborough—Rouge River	Ontario	NDP
Smith, Joy	Kildonan—St. Paul	Manitoba	CPC
Sopuck, Robert	Dauphin—Swan River—Marquette	Manitoba	CPC
Sorenson, Hon. Kevin, Minister of State (Finance)	Crowfoot	Alberta	CPC
Stanton, Bruce, The Acting Speaker	Simcoe North	Ontario	CPC
St-Denis, Lise	Saint-Maurice—Champlain	Québec	Lib.
Stewart, Kennedy	Burnaby—Douglas	British Columbia	NDP
Stoffer, Peter	Sackville—Eastern Shore	Nova Scotia	NDP
Storseth, Brian	Westlock—St. Paul	Alberta	CPC
Strahl, Mark, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development	Chilliwack—Fraser Canyon	British Columbia	CPC
Sullivan, Mike	York South—Weston	Ontario	NDP
Sweet, David	Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Westdale	Ontario	CPC
Tilson, David	Dufferin—Caledon	Ontario	CPC
Toet, Lawrence	Elmwood—Transcona	Manitoba	CPC
Toone, Philip	Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine	Québec	NDP
Tremblay, Jonathan	Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord	Québec	NDP
Trost, Brad	Saskatoon—Humboldt	Saskatchewan	CPC
Trottier, Bernard, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and for La Francophonie	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	Ontario	CPC
Trudeau, Justin	Papineau	Québec	Lib.
Truppe, Susan, Parliamentary Secretary for Status of Women	London North Centre	Ontario	CPC
Turmel, Nycole	Hull—Aylmer	Québec	NDP
Uppal, Hon. Tim, Minister of State (Multiculturalism)	Edmonton—Sherwood Park	Alberta	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Valcourt, Hon. Bernard, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development.....	Madawaska—Restigouche	New Brunswick.....	CPC
Valeriote, Frank	Guelph	Ontario	Lib.
Van Kesteren, Dave	Chatham-Kent—Essex	Ontario	CPC
Van Loan, Hon. Peter, Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	York—Simcoe.....	Ontario	CPC
Vaughan, Adam	Trinity—Spadina	Ontario	Lib.
Vellacott, Maurice.....	Saskatoon—Wanuskewin.....	Saskatchewan	CPC
Wallace, Mike	Burlington	Ontario	CPC
Warawa, Mark	Langley	British Columbia	CPC
Warkentin, Chris, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services.....	Peace River.....	Alberta	CPC
Watson, Jeff, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport .	Essex.....	Ontario	CPC
Weston, John	West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country	British Columbia	CPC
Weston, Rodney	Saint John	New Brunswick.....	CPC
Wilks, David	Kootenay—Columbia.....	British Columbia	CPC
Williamson, John.....	New Brunswick Southwest.....	New Brunswick.....	CPC
Wong, Hon. Alice, Minister of State (Seniors)	Richmond	British Columbia	CPC
Woodworth, Stephen.....	Kitchener Centre	Ontario	CPC
Yelich, Hon. Lynne, Minister of State (Foreign Affairs and Consular)	Blackstrap	Saskatchewan	CPC
Young, Terence.....	Oakville.....	Ontario	CPC
Young, Wai	Vancouver South.....	British Columbia	CPC
Yurdiga, David	Fort McMurray—Athabasca ...	Alberta	CPC
Zimmer, Bob	Prince George—Peace River...	British Columbia	CPC
VACANCY	Ottawa West—Nepean.....	Ontario	
VACANCY	Peterborough	Ontario	
VACANCY	Sudbury.....	Ontario	

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS BY PROVINCE

Second Session—Forty-first Parliament

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ALBERTA (28)		
Ablonczy, Hon. Diane	Calgary—Nose Hill	CPC
Ambrose, Hon. Rona, Minister of Health	Edmonton—Spruce Grove	CPC
Anders, Rob	Calgary West	CPC
Barlow, John	Macleod	CPC
Benoit, Leon	Vegreville—Wainwright	CPC
Calkins, Blaine	Wetaskiwin	CPC
Crockatt, Joan	Calgary Centre	CPC
Dreeshen, Earl	Red Deer	CPC
Duncan, Linda	Edmonton—Strathcona	NDP
Eglinski, Jim	Yellowhead	CPC
Goldring, Peter	Edmonton East	CPC
Harper, Right Hon. Stephen, Prime Minister	Calgary Southwest	CPC
Hawn, Hon. Laurie	Edmonton Centre	CPC
Hillyer, Jim	Lethbridge	CPC
Kenney, Hon. Jason, Minister of National Defence and Minister for Multiculturalism	Calgary Southeast	CPC
Lake, Hon. Mike, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry	Edmonton—Mill Woods—Beaumont	CPC
Obhrai, Hon. Deepak, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and for International Human Rights	Calgary East	CPC
Payne, LaVar	Medicine Hat	CPC
Rajotte, James	Edmonton—Leduc	CPC
Rathgeber, Brent	Edmonton—St. Albert	Ind.
Rempel, Hon. Michelle, Minister of State (Western Economic Diversification)	Calgary Centre-North	CPC
Richards, Blake	Wild Rose	CPC
Shory, Devinder	Calgary Northeast	CPC
Sorenson, Hon. Kevin, Minister of State (Finance)	Crowfoot	CPC
Storseth, Brian	Westlock—St. Paul	CPC
Uppal, Hon. Tim, Minister of State (Multiculturalism)	Edmonton—Sherwood Park	CPC
Warkentin, Chris, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services	Peace River	CPC
Yurdiga, David	Fort McMurray—Athabasca	CPC
BRITISH COLUMBIA (36)		
Albas, Dan, Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board	Okanagan—Coquihalla	CPC
Atamanenko, Alex	British Columbia Southern Interior	NDP
Cannan, Hon. Ron	Kelowna—Lake Country	CPC
Crowder, Jean	Nanaimo—Cowichan	NDP
Cullen, Nathan	Skeena—Bulkley Valley	NDP
Davies, Don	Vancouver Kingsway	NDP
Davies, Libby	Vancouver East	NDP
Donnelly, Fin	New Westminster—Coquitlam	NDP
Duncan, Hon. John, Minister of State and Chief Government Whip	Vancouver Island North	CPC
Fast, Hon. Ed, Minister of International Trade	Abbotsford	CPC
Findlay, Hon. Kerry-Lynne D., Minister of National Revenue	Delta—Richmond East	CPC
Fry, Hon. Hedy	Vancouver Centre	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Garrison, Randall	Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca	NDP
Grewal, Nina	Fleetwood—Port Kells	CPC
Harris, Richard	Cariboo—Prince George	CPC
Hiebert, Russ	South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale	CPC
Julian, Peter	Burnaby—New Westminster	NDP
Kamp, Randy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission	CPC
Lunney, James	Nanaimo—Alberni	Ind.
May, Elizabeth	Saanich—Gulf Islands	GP
Mayes, Colin	Okanagan—Shuswap	CPC
McLeod, Cathy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health and for Western Economic Diversification	Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo	CPC
Moore, Hon. James, Minister of Industry	Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam	CPC
Murray, Joyce	Vancouver Quadra	Lib.
Rankin, Murray	Victoria	NDP
Sandhu, Jasbir	Surrey North	NDP
Saxton, Andrew, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance	North Vancouver	CPC
Sims, Jinny Jogindera	Newton—North Delta	NDP
Stewart, Kennedy	Burnaby—Douglas	NDP
Strahl, Mark, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development	Chilliwack—Fraser Canyon	CPC
Warawa, Mark	Langley	CPC
Weston, John	West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country	CPC
Wilks, David	Kootenay—Columbia	CPC
Wong, Hon. Alice, Minister of State (Seniors)	Richmond	CPC
Young, Wai	Vancouver South	CPC
Zimmer, Bob	Prince George—Peace River	CPC
MANITOBA (14)		
Ashton, Niki	Churchill	NDP
Bateman, Joyce	Winnipeg South Centre	CPC
Bergen, Hon. Candice, Minister of State (Social Development)	Portage—Lisgar	CPC
Bezan, James, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence	Selkirk—Interlake	CPC
Bruinooge, Rod	Winnipeg South	CPC
Falk, Ted	Provencher	CPC
Fletcher, Hon. Steven	Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia	CPC
Glover, Hon. Shelly, Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages	Saint Boniface	CPC
Lamoureux, Kevin	Winnipeg North	Lib.
Maguire, Larry	Brandon—Souris	CPC
Martin, Pat	Winnipeg Centre	NDP
Smith, Joy	Kildonan—St. Paul	CPC
Sopuck, Robert	Dauphin—Swan River—Marquette	CPC
Toet, Lawrence	Elmwood—Transcona	CPC
NEW BRUNSWICK (10)		
Allen, Mike	Tobique—Mactaquac	CPC
Ashfield, Hon. Keith	Fredericton	CPC
Godin, Yvon	Acadie—Bathurst	NDP
Goguen, Robert, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice	Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
LeBlanc, Hon. Dominic	Beauséjour	Lib.
Moore, Hon. Rob, Minister of State (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency)	Fundy Royal	CPC
O'Neill Gordon, Tilly	Miramichi	CPC
Valcourt, Hon. Bernard, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development	Madawaska—Restigouche	CPC
Weston, Rodney	Saint John	CPC
Williamson, John	New Brunswick Southwest	CPC

NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR (7)

Andrews, Scott	Avalon	Ind.
Byrne, Hon. Gerry	Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte	Lib.
Cleary, Ryan	St. John's South—Mount Pearl	NDP
Foote, Judy	Random—Burin—St. George's	Lib.
Harris, Jack	St. John's East	NDP
Jones, Yvonne	Labrador	Lib.
Simms, Scott	Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor	Lib.

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES (1)

Bevington, Dennis	Northwest Territories	NDP
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NOVA SCOTIA (11)

Armstrong, Scott, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister of Labour	Cumberland—Colchester—Musquodoboit Valley	CPC
Brison, Hon. Scott	Kings—Hants	Lib.
Chisholm, Robert	Dartmouth—Cole Harbour	NDP
Cuzner, Rodger	Cape Breton—Canso	Lib.
Eyking, Hon. Mark	Sydney—Victoria	Lib.
Keddy, Gerald, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture, to the Minister of National Revenue and for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency	South Shore—St. Margaret's	CPC
Kerr, Greg	West Nova	CPC
Leslie, Megan	Halifax	NDP
MacKay, Hon. Peter, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada	Central Nova	CPC
Regan, Hon. Geoff	Halifax West	Lib.
Stoffer, Peter	Sackville—Eastern Shore	NDP

NUNAVUT (1)

Aglukkaq, Hon. Leona, Minister of the Environment, Minister of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency and Minister for the Arctic Council	Nunavut	CPC
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ONTARIO (103)

Adams, Eve	Mississauga—Brampton South	Lib.
Adler, Mark	York Centre	CPC
Albrecht, Harold	Kitchener—Conestoga	CPC
Alexander, Hon. Chris, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	Ajax—Pickering	CPC
Allen, Malcolm	Welland	NDP
Allison, Dean	Niagara West—Glanbrook	CPC
Ambler, Stella	Mississauga South	CPC
Angus, Charlie	Timmins—James Bay	NDP
Aspin, Jay	Nipissing—Timiskaming	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Bélanger, Hon. Mauril	Ottawa—Vanier	Lib.
Bennett, Hon. Carolyn	St. Paul's	Lib.
Braid, Peter, Parliamentary Secretary for Infrastructure and Communities	Kitchener—Waterloo	CPC
Brown, Gordon	Leeds—Grenville	CPC
Brown, Lois, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Development	Newmarket—Aurora	CPC
Brown, Patrick	Barrie	CPC
Butt, Brad	Mississauga—Streetsville	CPC
Calandra, Paul, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs	Oak Ridges—Markham	CPC
Carmichael, John	Don Valley West	CPC
Carrie, Colin, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment	Oshawa	CPC
Cash, Andrew	Davenport	NDP
Chan, Arnold	Scarborough—Agincourt	Lib.
Charlton, Chris	Hamilton Mountain	NDP
Chisu, Comeliu	Pickering—Scarborough East	CPC
Chong, Hon. Michael	Wellington—Halton Hills	CPC
Christopherson, David	Hamilton Centre	NDP
Clement, Hon. Tony, President of the Treasury Board	Parry Sound—Muskoka	CPC
Comartin, Joe, The Deputy Speaker	Windsor—Tecumseh	NDP
Daniel, Joe	Don Valley East	CPC
Davidson, Patricia	Sarnia—Lambton	CPC
Dechert, Bob, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice	Mississauga—Erindale	CPC
Devolin, Barry, The Acting Speaker	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock	CPC
Dewar, Paul	Ottawa Centre	NDP
Duncan, Kirsty	Etobicoke North	Lib.
Dykstra, Rick, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage	St. Catharines	CPC
Fantino, Hon. Julian, Associate Minister of National Defence	Vaughan	CPC
Finley, Hon. Diane, Minister of Public Works and Government Services	Haldimand—Norfolk	CPC
Freeland, Chrystia	Toronto Centre	Lib.
Galipeau, Royal	Ottawa—Orléans	CPC
Gallant, Cheryl	Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke	CPC
Gill, Parm, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade	Brampton—Springdale	CPC
Goodyear, Hon. Gary, Minister of State (Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario)	Cambridge	CPC
Gosal, Hon. Bal, Minister of State (Sport)	Bramalea—Gore—Malton	CPC
Gravelle, Claude	Nickel Belt	NDP
Harris, Dan	Scarborough Southwest	NDP
Hayes, Bryan	Sault Ste. Marie	CPC
Holder, Hon. Ed, Minister of State (Science and Technology)	London West	CPC
Hsu, Ted	Kingston and the Islands	Lib.
Hughes, Carol	Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusking	NDP
Hyer, Bruce	Thunder Bay—Superior North	GP
James, Roxanne, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness	Scarborough Centre	CPC
Kellway, Matthew	Beaches—East York	NDP
Kent, Hon. Peter	Thornhill	CPC
Kramp, Daryl	Prince Edward—Hastings	CPC
Lauzon, Guy	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry	CPC
Leitch, Hon. K. Kellie, Minister of Labour and Minister of Status of Women	Simcoe—Grey	CPC
Lemieux, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Leung, Chungsen, Parliamentary Secretary for Multiculturalism	Willowdale	CPC
Lizon, Wladyslaw	Mississauga East—Cooksville	CPC
Lobb, Ben	Huron—Bruce	CPC
MacKenzie, Dave	Oxford	CPC
Marston, Wayne	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek	NDP
Masse, Brian	Windsor West	NDP
Mathysen, Irene	London—Fanshawe	NDP
McCallum, Hon. John	Markham—Unionville	Lib.
McColeman, Phil	Brant	CPC
McGuinty, David	Ottawa South	Lib.
McKay, Hon. John	Scarborough—Guildwood	Lib.
Menegakis, Costas, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	Richmond Hill	CPC
Miller, Larry	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound	CPC
Nash, Peggy	Parkdale—High Park	NDP
Nicholson, Hon. Rob, Minister of Foreign Affairs	Niagara Falls	CPC
Norlock, Rick	Northumberland—Quinte West	CPC
O'Connor, Hon. Gordon	Carleton—Mississippi Mills	CPC
Oliver, Hon. Joe, Minister of Finance	Eglinton—Lawrence	CPC
Opitz, Ted	Etobicoke Centre	CPC
O'Toole, Hon. Erin, Minister of Veterans Affairs	Durham	CPC
Perkins, Pat	Whitby—Oshawa	CPC
Poilievre, Hon. Pierre, Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform	Nepean—Carleton	CPC
Preston, Joe	Elgin—Middlesex—London	CPC
Rafferty, John	Thunder Bay—Rainy River	NDP
Raitt, Hon. Lisa, Minister of Transport	Halton	CPC
Reid, Scott	Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington	CPC
Rickford, Hon. Greg, Minister of Natural Resources and Minister for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario	Kenora	CPC
Schellenberger, Gary	Perth—Wellington	CPC
Scott, Craig	Toronto—Danforth	NDP
Seeback, Kyle	Brampton West	CPC
Sgro, Hon. Judy	York West	Lib.
Shiple, Bev	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	CPC
Sitsabaiesan, Rathika	Scarborough—Rouge River	NDP
Stanton, Bruce, The Acting Speaker	Simcoe North	CPC
Sullivan, Mike	York South—Weston	NDP
Sweet, David	Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Westdale	CPC
Tilson, David	Dufferin—Caledon	CPC
Trottier, Bernard, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and for La Francophonie	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	CPC
Truppe, Susan, Parliamentary Secretary for Status of Women	London North Centre	CPC
Valeriote, Frank	Guelph	Lib.
Van Kesteren, Dave	Chatham-Kent—Essex	CPC
Van Loan, Hon. Peter, Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	York—Simcoe	CPC
Vaughan, Adam	Trinity—Spadina	Lib.
Wallace, Mike	Burlington	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Watson, Jeff, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport.....	Essex.....	CPC
Woodworth, Stephen	Kitchener Centre	CPC
Young, Terence	Oakville.....	CPC
VACANCY	Ottawa West—Nepean.....	
VACANCY	Peterborough	
VACANCY	Sudbury.....	

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND (4)

Casey, Sean	Charlottetown	Lib.
Easter, Hon. Wayne	Malpeque	Lib.
MacAulay, Hon. Lawrence.....	Cardigan	Lib.
Shea, Hon. Gail, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	Egmont	CPC

QUÉBEC (75)

Aubin, Robert.....	Trois-Rivières	NDP
Ayala, Paulina.....	Honoré-Mercier	NDP
Bellavance, André	Richmond—Arthabaska	Ind.
Benskin, Tyrone	Jeanne-Le Ber	NDP
Bernier, Hon. Maxime, Minister of State (Small Business and Tourism, and Agriculture)	Beauce	CPC
Blanchette, Denis	Louis-Hébert	NDP
Blanchette-Lamothe, Lysane	Pierrefonds—Dollard	NDP
Blaney, Hon. Steven, Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness	Lévis—Bellechasse	CPC
Boivin, Françoise	Gatineau	NDP
Borg, Charmaine.....	Terrebonne—Blainville	NDP
Boulerice, Alexandre	Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie	NDP
Boutin-Sweet, Marjolaine	Hochelaga	NDP
Brahmi, Tarik	Saint-Jean.....	NDP
Brosseau, Ruth Ellen	Berthier—Maskinongé.....	NDP
Caron, Guy.....	Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques	NDP
Chicoine, Sylvain	Châteauguay—Saint-Constant.....	NDP
Choquette, François	Drummond	NDP
Côté, Raymond	Beauport—Limoilou	NDP
Cotler, Hon. Irwin	Mount Royal	Lib.
Day, Anne-Marie	Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles	NDP
Dion, Hon. Stéphane, Saint-Laurent—Cartierville	Saint-Laurent—Cartierville.....	Lib.
Dionne Labelle, Pierre	Rivière-du-Nord.....	NDP
Doré Lefebvre, Rosane.....	Alfred-Pellan	NDP
Dubé, Matthew	Chambly—Borduas	NDP
Dubourg, Emmanuel	Bourassa	Lib.
Dusseault, Pierre-Luc.....	Sherbrooke	NDP
Fortin, Jean-François	Haute-Gaspésie—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia	FD
Freeman, Mylène	Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel	NDP
Garneau, Marc	Westmount—Ville-Marie	Lib.
Genest, Réjean	Shefford	NDP
Genest-Jourdain, Jonathan	Manicouagan	NDP
Giguère, Alain	Marc-Aurèle-Fortin	NDP

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Gourde, Jacques, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, for Official Languages and for the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec	Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière	CPC
Groguhé, Sadia	Saint-Lambert	NDP
Hassainia, Sana	Verchères—Les Patriotes	Ind.
Jacob, Pierre	Brome—Missisquoi	NDP
Lapointe, François	Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup	NDP
Larose, Jean-François	Repentigny	FD
Latendresse, Alexandrine	Louis-Saint-Laurent	NDP
Laverdière, Hélène	Laurier—Sainte-Marie	NDP
Lebel, Hon. Denis, Minister of Infrastructure, Communities and Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec	Roberval—Lac-Saint-Jean	CPC
LeBlanc, Hélène	LaSalle—Émard	NDP
Liu, Laurin	Rivière-des-Mille-Îles	NDP
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Moore, Christine	Abitibi—Témiscamingue	NDP
Morin, Dany	Chicoutimi—Le Fjord	NDP
Morin, Isabelle	Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine	NDP
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Morin, Marie-Claude	Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot	NDP
Mourani, Maria	Ahuntsic	Ind.
Mulcair, Hon. Thomas, Leader of the Opposition	Outremont	NDP
Nantel, Pierre	Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher	NDP
Nicholls, Jamie	Vaudreuil-Soulanges	NDP
Nunez-Melo, José	Laval	NDP
Pacetti, Massimo	Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel	Ind.
Papillon, Annick	Québec	NDP
Paradis, Hon. Christian, Minister of International Development and Minister for La Francophonie	Mégantic—L'Érable	CPC
Patry, Claude	Jonquière—Alma	BQ
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Sellah, Djaouida	Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert	NDP
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Toone, Philip	Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine	NDP
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Trudeau, Justin	Papineau	Lib.
Turmel, Nycole	Hull—Aylmer	NDP

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
SASKATCHEWAN (14)		
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Block, Kelly, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources	Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar	CPC
Boughen, Ray	Palliser	CPC
Breitkreuz, Garry	Yorkton—Melville	CPC
Clarke, Rob	Desnethé—Mississippi—Churchill River	CPC
Goodale, Hon. Ralph	Wascana	Lib.
Hoback, Randy	Prince Albert	CPC
Komarnicki, Ed	Souris—Moose Mountain	CPC
Lukiwski, Tom, Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre	CPC
Ritz, Hon. Gerry, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food	Battlefords—Lloydminster	CPC
Scheer, Hon. Andrew, Speaker of the House of Commons	Regina—Qu'Appelle	CPC
Trost, Brad	Saskatoon—Humboldt	CPC
Vellacott, Maurice	Saskatoon—Wanuskewin	CPC
Yelich, Hon. Lynne, Minister of State (Foreign Affairs and Consular)	Blackstrap	CPC
YUKON (1)		
Leef, Ryan	Yukon	CPC

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(As of May 8, 2015 — 2nd Session, 41st Parliament)

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