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OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)

Tuesday, June 9, 2015

—

Speaker: The Honourable Andrew Scheer

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(Table of Contents appears at back of this issue.)

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, June 9, 2015

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

•(1005)
[English]

COMMISSIONER OF LOBBYING

The Speaker: I have the honour, pursuant to section 11 of the Lobbying Act, to lay upon the table the report of the Commissioner of Lobbying for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2015.

* * *

[Translation]

PRIVACY COMMISSIONER

The Speaker: I have the honour to lay upon the table the report of the Privacy Commissioner on the application of the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act for the year 2014.

[English]

Pursuant to Standing Order 108(3)(h), this document is deemed to have been permanently referred to the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics.

* * *

CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND ETHICS COMMISSIONER

The Speaker: Pursuant to paragraph 90(1)(a) of the Parliament of Canada Act, it is my duty to present to the House the annual report of the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner in relation to the Conflict of Interest Code for Members of the House of Commons for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2015.

[Translation]

Pursuant to Standing Order 108(3)(a), this document is deemed to have been permanently referred to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs.

[English]

Pursuant to paragraph 90(1)(b) of the Parliament of Canada Act, it is my duty to present to the House the annual report of the Conflict

of Interest and Ethics Commissioner in relation to the Conflict of Interest Act for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2015.

[Translation]

Pursuant to Standing Order 108(3)(h), this document is deemed to have been permanently referred to the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics.

* * *

[English]

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to 24 petitions.

* * *

PROTECTION AGAINST GENETIC DISCRIMINATION ACT

Hon. Peter MacKay (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, CPC) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-68, An Act to amend the Canadian Human Rights Act, the Privacy Act and the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act.

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

* * *

[Translation]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Blake Richards (Wild Rose, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 10th report of the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development in relation to its study entitled "Access to Capital".

[English]

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

CANADIAN HERITAGE

Mr. Gordon Brown (Leeds—Grenville, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present to the House, in both official languages, the 14th report of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage, entitled "Review of the Canadian Feature Film Industry". Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to this report.

Routine Proceedings

I would like to thank the clerk, the analysts, all the witnesses, and the members of the committee who worked so hard to complete this study.

* * *

EMPLOYMENT OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-687, An Act respecting the development of a national employment strategy for persons with disabilities.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to rise to introduce a private member's bill, seconded by the hon. member for Newton—North Delta. The bill is a product of the Create Your Canada contest in my riding. It owes its genesis to the imagination and hard work of a young high school student in Vancouver Kingsway, Harriet Crossfield from Sir Charles Tupper Secondary School.

Harriet's idea, enshrined in this bill, calls for the development of a national employment strategy for persons with disabilities. This legislation would require the Minister of Employment and Social Development to draft a plan to improve the economic participation of persons with disabilities throughout Canada. Included in this plan would be measures to educate private-sector employers about the great potential of persons with disabilities to contribute to the workforce, encourage more inclusive hiring practices, and reduce stigma. Harriet's idea would tackle the unfair social exclusion faced by too many persons with disabilities in Canada, and create new potential for a more dynamic and inclusive labour force.

I would like to congratulate Harriet on her contribution to Parliament and our country, and thank her teachers and all who entered this contest from Sir Charles Tupper Secondary School.

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

* * *

STUDENT DEBT RELIEF ACT

Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-688, an act respecting the development of a national strategy on student loan debt.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to rise to introduce a private member's bill today, with thanks to my seconder, the hon. member for Newton—North Delta.

This bill is particularly special because it owes its existence to the imaginations and hard work of two young people in my riding of Vancouver Kingsway, Triana Segovia and Kira Bennett from Windermere Secondary School. Both students are winners of my Create Your Canada contest, which invites high school students to develop and submit their ideas on how we can make Canada and the world a better place.

Triana and Kira's idea is captured by this bill, which proposes a national strategy on student loan debt reduction. This idea is timely and speaks to the growing sense of intergenerational unfairness expressed by many young Canadians. Average student loan debt for a university graduate in Canada today stands at over \$25,000 and this debt burden is felt more heavily by students from lower- and middle-income families. More can be done to make Canada a fairer

place for young Canadians, help with their education, and this bill would help accomplish these goals.

I would like to congratulate Kira and Triana on their contributions to Parliament and their country, and thank their teachers and all who entered this contest from Windermere Secondary School in Vancouver.

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

* * *

• (1010)

GLOBAL HUMAN RIGHTS ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

Hon. Irwin Cotler (Mount Royal, Lib.) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-689, Act to enact the Global Human Rights Accountability Act and to make related amendments to the Special Economic Measures Act and the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce the global Magnitsky human rights accountability act, seconded by the member for Winnipeg North, which would allow for the sanctioning of human rights violators through the imposition of travel bans and asset freezes. The House unanimously endorsed such measures in March. It is deeply disappointing, therefore, that the government still has not moved forward with the necessary corresponding legislation.

Magnitsky sanctions, which have been recommended by legislatures across Europe and implemented by the United States, are named for Moscow lawyer Sergei Magnitsky, who uncovered the largest corporate tax fraud in Russian history before being detained, tortured, and murdered in prison in 2009. Not only have the Russian officials complicit in that criminality escaped punishment, but many of them have, in fact, been rewarded by Vladimir Putin's regime.

It is therefore up to Canada and other members of the international community to impose tangible consequences on the perpetrators and on human rights violators generally by blocking their ability to travel and trade and launder their assets around the world. I would urge the government to either take over my bill or pass similar legislation on its own, both out of respect for the will of the House and out of solidarity with the victims of human rights violations and those who struggle valiantly on their behalf in Russia and around the world.

Routine Proceedings

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

* * *

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

Mr. Joe Preston (Elgin—Middlesex—London, CPC): Mr. Speaker, if the House gives its consent, I move that the 38th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs on the code of conduct for members, sexual harassment, presented to the House yesterday be concurred in.

The Speaker: Does the hon. member have the unanimous consent of the House to propose this motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Speaker: The House has heard the terms of the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mr. Jack Harris (St. John's East, NDP) moved that the fourth report of the Standing Committee on National Defence presented on Thursday, June 12, 2014, be concurred in.

He said: Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to bring this matter before the House today. This is the fourth report of the Standing Committee on National Defence, issued a year ago now. It is an ongoing situation with respect to the care and treatment of Canada's ill and injured military personnel and their families.

This report was a result of two years of study into the situation involving military veterans and soldiers who have been serving the country. We had a spike in serious injuries of soldiers in the period we were in Afghanistan. We had 12 years of participation in that war in Afghanistan, an unprecedented length of time for Canadian Forces to be serving, with multiple deployments of Canadian soldiers in a very dangerous situation.

We had an extraordinary experience. I do not think we were prepared for the consequences of soldiers being deployed for this long, this far away, or for the consequences to them.

The report made quite a few findings, one of which I think we are all very pleased with, which was that the response of the military medical personnel with respect to physical injuries and trauma, although they were obviously serious and tragic for the individuals involved, was very rapid, high level, and well-recognized for its professionalism; in fact, not only professionalism but an advanced state of ability to deal with traumatic injuries, of which we unfortunately had very many.

In terms of the provision of assistance to those who were injured in the course of the Afghanistan conflict, there was a high degree of responsiveness. In fact, the Canadian Forces medical team was recognized internationally for its efforts with high praise and awards.

The area that caused the most concern for the committee, and for returning soldiers and their families, was the consequences of the

mental injuries people suffered, which have now been widely and universally recognized as post traumatic stress disorder, PTSD.

Back in the 1990s, I was involved in representing a large number of victims of sexual assault as children. I recall learning an awful lot about PTSD but also being told at the time by an American military psychiatrist that there was no such thing as PTSD. That was what was believed to be the case, but he did not in fact believe in that.

I found it quite surprising, but it is worth noting that acceptance of the situation with PTSD is not something that has been around forever, particularly within military circles.

In Canada, we took a while to recognize the extent and state of the situation. We have very little in the way of statistics on it. Studies that were done of the needs of mental health professionals and health professionals within the Canadian Forces were based on projections done in the Statistics Canada study in 2002. Those were the figures upon which we were relying.

The study was repeated in 2013, but by the time we prepared the report, the results had not been made public. We were operating with information that was available at the time. We know that there had been, within the Canadian Armed Forces, very little in the way of support for independent research. Internal research was being done. Unlike other forces, like those of the United States and the U.K., there has not been widespread support for independent research on military and veterans' health, injuries, and treatment. That has changed, but it has only changed in recent years.

● (1015)

I see a couple of my colleagues from the defence committee opposite. We heard evidence from Dr. Alice Aiken of the Canadian Institute for Military and Veterans Health Research which was established recently at Queen's University with support from some 25 universities across the country. CIMVHR is an independent institute made up of 25 Canadian universities undertaking research into the needs of Canadian military personnel, veterans and military families.

Dr. Aiken told the committee that in terms of funding and sustainability for independent research we actually did not have any. That has changed. There was a recommendation by our committee in our dissenting report that Canada contribute to a significant and independent research fund that would allow CIMVHR, through its partner institutions, to undertake self-directed research into the health issues affecting CAF personnel, veterans and their families. That was actually done. There was a recommendation made not for this year's budget, but last year's, to have the support of the \$5 million fund which was contributed to CIMVHR from the last federal budget and was matched by the True Patriot Love Foundation. There is now a significant fund that is available for research across the country.

In fact, last week I attended a seminar at Memorial University in my riding of St. John's East. Researchers and those interested in military and veterans' health were gathered together to talk about ideas for research projects that are necessary to advance the cause of Canadian soldiers' and veterans' health issues.

Routine Proceedings

We talked about PTSD and the need for more professionals to deal with that. The whole issue of the families of soldiers who are also affected by the fact that their spouse has PTSD became something that we were focused on during the committee's study, because while we did have a program and the military is directly responsible for the health care of soldiers, the issue of families arose with respect to jurisdiction. It was stated quite specifically that the military and the federal government do not have responsibility for the health care of families of military personnel for constitutional reasons, because health is a provincial matter.

The consequences of that for our military families was that a soldier who had been suffering from PTSD would return home and be in the community with their spouse and family, suffering from PTSD and the consequences of that PTSD were not known to the family. The family was experiencing them. In fact, there is significant evidence to support the fact that spouses themselves would suffer from PTSD as a result of the soldier's experiencing PTSD. That was something that was brought home to the committee by witnesses, by family members, by discussions with soldiers in nearby businesses, for example, in Petawawa. We were told by some of these individuals that despite much effort, it was very difficult for spouses to get any access to treatment or counselling, or even some education to understand what was happening to their soldier spouse.

• (1020)

That was very debilitating. It caused serious problems within families, serious problems within marriages, and a situation of people suffering from PTSD not being able to actually advance and help to solve their problems.

There is another thing we found out with respect to the support for families in this whole area where there is no direct responsibility for the health care needs of families. People are moving across the country. We know the situation in the military. They can be posted every two years. They go to a different community. These are families with children. There are quite a lot of young children in the families of Canadian Forces members. The figure that was given to me last week was that there are some 68,000 children of Canadian military personnel. These families with children are moving across the country. The first thing families have to do when they arrive in a new community is find a family doctor. That is one thing that is absolutely necessary for the health and well-being of individuals.

What happens in these situations, particularly in some of the rural and remote areas where military bases are located in this country, is there is significant pressure on the local medical system. There is a lack of quick access to family doctors particularly when there are special needs children, those who may have learning disabilities or other types of needs that need assessment. There are long waiting lists. The problems multiply as families move around.

One of the things that is absolutely necessary and has not been resolved is how we deal with military families' health needs when they are being moved across the country. Often, in the case of PTSD, they are dealing with a family consequence, not simply an individual soldier's consequence. How do we do that, I suppose, without trampling on the jurisdictional situation that exists?

There are ways of doing it. It can be done. When the military moves families from place to place, the infrastructure of a city, of a

town, of a location, is often affected by the presence of the military. Let us face it. There are traffic needs, needs for transportation, bridges, housing, and all of that, and the military can influence those decisions. It can also provide support for clinics so that in an area where the military operates, money could be provided to ensure that an area is attractive to medical personnel so that they can go there and have access perhaps to a clinic that is already built and available that would provide for the needs of the local community as well as the military families. Some incentives could be offered. There are ways that the military, the Department of National Defence, can be proactive in ensuring that the opportunity for health care for the military families is present.

I know it has instituted programs now to involve spouses through the military family support centres and through programs that have been established. Recognizing that the health of the soldiers depends upon the health of the family, it is able to extend counselling and more services. We would like to hear an update from the government on how far along that is.

I know there is a need for more research in this field. There are a lot of different types of professionals, whether they be health professionals, social workers, researchers from a whole bunch of different academic disciplines, involved in this. I want to commend the work of Dr. Aiken, who has done a tremendous amount in a very short time to promote the notion of independent research throughout the country. It has been pretty much in the last five years that this work has been done. It is a tremendous effort by Dr. Aiken and her team, with the support of True Patriot Love, which has come on board and is working very closely with her and the institute to build support across the country.

• (1025)

I know there were members from all sides of the House who promoted this idea. They received a very strong welcome from me and my colleague, the member for Vancouver East, who was our health critic at the time and was very interested in the work that was being done. We fully supported that work. It is one area where we would like to hear more.

Another area that kept coming up again and again had to do with the transition for people who were in the military and were going to be medically discharged for one reason for another, but were being pushed out of the military prior to receiving their 10 years of service that would qualify them for a pension. We heard excruciating testimony from individuals.

In particular, I remember Corporal Glen Kirkland from Manitoba who testified before our committee. He said that he was about to be medically discharged, but he was not ready to go. There was a large debate in this House about it. In fact, he was told by the then minister of defence that this would not happen to him. He did not accept that, because he believed that if he was being made an exception, the rule would still be there that people would be discharged before they had reached the opportunity to get the security of a pension.

A whole series of recommendations came out of this dilemma, that the military was looking for ways to separate from individuals who were not going to be able to fully meet the universality of service requirement and were about to be discharged prior to getting a full pension and income security.

Routine Proceedings

This was the biggest fear of many people to even come forward to get treatment for PTSD, that it would be a career ender and would result in having no income security. They would not be able to stay in the military; they did not meet the universality of service requirement, and they would end up in a situation separated from their career with no prospects for the future. This was something that was very prevalent. It also prevented people from getting the treatment they needed to try to overcome the PTSD they were suffering.

These are some of the issues that the committee had to deal with. We put forward a number of serious recommendations. One recommendation followed from comments by the former ombudsman, Pierre Daigle, who talked about universality of service.

Universality of service means that anybody in the military has to be ready to deploy at any time for expeditionary operations within the domain of the Canadian Armed Forces. He said that there was a need to modernize that and modify it to the extent to allow people who may have certain disabilities as a result of PTSD or physical disabilities to be reintegrated into the force. We have some very prominent examples of how that has worked. There should be some modification to allow individuals to stay in the military even though they may not be able to be fully deployed in a battle situation.

These are some of the issues. There was a lot of work put into the report and a lot of recommendations. I think it is time we had a report on how these recommendations have actually been implemented, what progress has been made, and what are the steps forward on matters like universality of service and ensuring that people are able to transition with their health needs met from being a serving member to being a veteran.

• (1030)

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, not being a member of the committee, I was very interested in the member's observations.

I am particularly concerned about the number of veterans with post traumatic stress disorder who have told me that they are not able to get something they believe would be of great assistance to them. If this is not too far off the member's earlier comments, I wonder if he has any insights on access to service dogs, which I understand from a lot of veterans with PTSD is something that has been showing remarkably good results.

Mr. Jack Harris: Mr. Speaker, we heard from witnesses at committee who brought service dogs with them. I have seen veterans or serving members with their service dogs in public as well. They have told me that the service dog enables them to go out in public and that they would not leave their house without the presence of a service dog. One of the consequences of some of the more serious forms of PTSD is a high level of anxiety, which is sometimes called hypervigilance, that is related to a person's experiences in a war zone where they have experienced trauma or explosions. This can have flashback effects and all of the things that go with it. I am not trying to diagnose anybody here but some of the symptoms are what people talk about and experience. A service dog can act as a companion animal. People are not supposed to pet them. Often there will be a sign that reads, "Please do not pet. This animal is at work." The service dog is there to be a presence for the individual and can

provide a great deal of assistance to enable them to live a more normal life.

Mr. Peter Julian (Burnaby—New Westminster, NDP): Mr. Speaker, this is an extremely important debate. Nothing could be more important than how we care for our ill and injured military personnel. As members know, it is a way to give thanks from a grateful nation for the bravery of our women and men in uniform.

However, when I read the report I am disturbed by the fact that after consulting witnesses for two years it appears that there was only an hour given to adopt the report itself. The conclusions in the report from the Conservative majority are not as substantive as the 23 recommendations put forth by the NDP in its dissenting opinion.

I want to ask my colleague from St. John's East this. How is it that the government, with a few exceptions where there are valid recommendations, would take two years of work and try to push it through in the space of only an hour or two? What is the blueprint that the NDP is putting forward in its dissenting opinion with respect to how to effectively provide support to our ill and injured military personnel and their families?

• (1035)

Mr. Jack Harris: Mr. Speaker, we were quite concerned with the report, especially when so much time had been spent on it, which was about two years. Sometimes at the defence committee we spend a long time doing reports. We heard from a lot of witnesses who offered a tremendous amount of information to us, which was put into the report. Sometimes the reports are not strong enough, which is why we write a dissenting report, such as the one my colleague, the opposition House leader, referred to. We presented a 10-page report with 23 other recommendations in an effort to see significant steps taken to ensure actual, final and special results. We are disappointed that we did not have an opportunity to debate those recommendations in the House. Reports done in committee are sometimes put together as a result of a consensus but not always. This one was done in June of 2014, so it was as the House was closing. We just finished one last night at the defence committee on the defence of North America, so there will be no time to debate that one, which is unfortunate.

We still have situations that we are dealing with now. Ultimately, when a report is not debated and the recommendations do not sink in the government ends up being tone deaf to some of the problems that we talked about, such as transitioning from being a military personnel to a veteran. There is the case of Sergeant Nanson, an 18-year veteran of the Canadian Armed Forces who was permanently injured as the result of an IED blast in Afghanistan. He now needs a wheelchair to get around. He will be medically released on June 30. His house will not be ready because of a delay in fixing up the house to allow for wheelchair accessibility yet he will be kicked out of his military housing on June 30 anyway. Therefore, despite the fact that recommendations are made and good intentions are shown, we do not see the follow through and debate in this House to bring these issues home, which may keep people alive to the issues and keep people like Sergeant Nanson from falling through the cracks.

Routine Proceedings

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there is no question that the issue of PTSD is on the minds of many Canadians. The Liberal caucus has raised this issue through forums such as question period and other types of debates. We think that the government has fallen short in providing the necessary support for our veterans.

I am intrigued that the NDP House leader mentioned that nothing could be of more importance than having this particular debate. I am a bit surprised about how long we are waiting for concurrence on this report. It has been there now for almost a year or maybe even more than a year. That is not to take away from the subject matter the committee reviewed. The committee recognized that there are serious deficiencies.

I ask the member, what does he believe that we need to be doing today that would improve the conditions for members of our forces who are going through PTSD, a disorder that is obviously destroying lives, destroying families?

We talk about service dogs, which do have a very important role. Studies have clearly demonstrated that is the case, but I think we need to be more creative and ensure that there are the resources necessary to deal with this disorder. Would the hon. member want to add further comment?

• (1040)

Mr. Jack Harris: Mr. Speaker, we did find that there were significant problems along the way, but one of the things that stood out, and still stands out, is the DND decision and recommendation made in 2002 of having the objective 447 mental health staff. That still has not been met. That was based on 2002 statistics, not the study that was done in 2012, the reports of which have not really been made public.

Every time this is raised in the House we hear comments about how much money is being spent. Absolute dollars do not necessarily matter if the need is actually greater than the dollars being spent. We are still not getting the full picture from the government as to how far it has gone to meet the internal recommendations that were made, based on objective study.

We think it is very troubling to find that we still have to make ongoing complaints about this, about the need for more services, about the need to make sure that people do not fall through the cracks, and again, despite the good intentions of transition from being a serving soldier to a veteran, we still see that the needs are not being met by the government.

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

That the House do now proceed to orders of the day.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): The House has heard the terms of 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. Barry Devolin): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

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

Some hon. members: Nay.

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

And five or more members having risen:

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

• (1120)

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

(Division No. 434)

YEAS

Members

Ablonczy	Adler
Aglukkaq	Albas
Albrecht	Alexander
Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)	Allison
Ambler	Ambrose
Anders	Anderson
Armstrong	Ashfield
Aspin	Barlow
Bateman	Benoit
Bergen	Bernier
Blaney	Block
Boughen	Braid
Breitkreuz	Brown (Leeds—Grenville)
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)	Butt
Calandra	Calkins
Cannan	Carmichael
Carrie	Chisu
Chong	Clarke
Crockatt	Daniel
Davidson	Dechert
Dreeshen	Duncan (Vancouver Island North)
Dykstra	Eglinski
Falk	Fast
Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)	Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Galipeau	Gallant
Gill	Goguen
Goldring	Goodyear
Gosal	Gourde
Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)	Hawn
Hayes	Hillyer
Hoback	Holder
James	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)	Kent
Kerr	Komarnicki
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)	Lake
Lauzon	Leef
Leitch	Lemieux
Leung	Lobb
Lukiwski	Lunney
MacKay (Central Nova)	MacKenzie
Maguire	Mayes
McColeman	McLeod
Menegakis	Miller
Moore (Fundy Royal)	Nicholson
Norlock	Obhrai
Oliver	O'Neill Gordon
O'Toole	Payne
Perkins	Poillievre
Preston	Raïtt
Rajotte	Reid
Rempel	Richards
Ritz	Saxton

Government Orders

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): I declare the motion carried.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

ZERO TOLERANCE FOR BARBARIC CULTURAL PRACTICES ACT

BILL S-7—TIME ALLOCATION MOTION

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC) moved:

That, in relation to Bill S-7, an act to amend the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act and the Civil Marriage Act and the Criminal Code and to make consequential amendments to other acts, not more than one further sitting day shall be allotted to the consideration at report stage of the bill and one sitting day shall be allotted to the consideration at third reading stage of the said bill; and

That, 15 minutes before the expiry of the time provided for government orders on the day allotted to the consideration at report stage and on the day allotted to the consideration at third reading stage of the said bill, any proceedings before the House shall be interrupted, if required for the purpose of this order, and in turn every question necessary for the disposal of the stage of the bill then under consideration shall be put forthwith and successively without further debate or amendment.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): Order, please. Pursuant to Standing Order 67(1) there will now be a 30-minute question period. I invite hon. members who wish to ask questions to rise in their places so the Chair has some idea of how many members wish to participate in the question period.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Pierrefonds—Dollard.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Lysane Blanchette-Lamothe (Pierrefonds—Dollard, NDP): Mr. Speaker, this is now the government's 99th time allocation motion. This one is for a Senate bill. How shameful. The government could not even be bothered to introduce the bill itself, so it must not be a big priority.

Worse still, this bill is very controversial. According to many experts who appeared before the Senate and a House of Commons committee, this bill will make the very victims the sponsors say they want to help even more vulnerable.

I have a little advice for the government. Instead of limiting debate and undermining the democratic process in this House, the government could take a bit of time, while we debate the matter, to sit down and consult with the people who spoke to us. It could sit down with the president of the Council on the Status of Women, who says that the very title of the bill could alienate the communities that we need to work with.

It could also speak with the South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario or the Southall Black Sisters, who are saying that the provisions related to the criminalization of forced marriage will only make the victims more vulnerable and could make people less likely to report these crimes.

Schellenberger	Seeback
Shea	Shipley
Shory	Smith
Sopuck	Stanton
Strahl	Sweet
Tilson	Toet
Trost	Trottier
Truppe	Uppal
Valcourt	Van Kesteren
Van Loan	Wallace
Warawa	Warkentin
Watson	Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to
Sky Country)	
Wilks	Williamson
Wong	Woodworth
Yelich	Young (Oakville)
Young (Vancouver South)	Yurdiga— 136

NAYS

Members

Allen (Welland)	Angus
Ashton	Atamanenko
Aubin	Ayala
Bélangier	Bellavance
Bennett	Bevington
Blanchette	Blanchette-Lamothe
Boivin	Borg
Boulerice	Boutin-Sweet
Brahmi	Brisson
Brosseau	Byrne
Caron	Casey
Cash	Charlton
Chicoine	Chisholm
Choquette	Christopherson
Cleary	Comartin
Côté	Cotler
Crowder	Cuzner
Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)	Davies (Vancouver East)
Day	Dewar
Dion	Dionne Labelle
Donnelly	Doré Lefebvre
Dubé	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)	Dusseau
Easter	Eyking
Foote	Freeman
Garneau	Garrison
Genest-Jourdain	Godin
Goodale	Gravelle
Groguhé	Harris (Scarborough Southwest)
Harris (St. John's East)	Hsu
Hughes	Julian
Kellway	Lamoureux
Latendresse	Laverdière
LeBlanc (Beauséjour)	LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard)
Leslie	Liu
MacAulay	Mai
Marston	Martin
Mathysen	May
McCallum	McGuinty
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)	Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)
Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)	Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)
Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)	Mourani
Murray	Nash
Nunez-Melo	Papillon
Péclet	Pilon
Plamondon	Quach
Rafferty	Rankin
Ravignat	Regan
Sandhu	Scarpaleggia
Scott	Sellah
Sgro	Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Wind-
sor)	
Sims (Newton—North Delta)	Sitsabaiesan
St-Denis	Stoffer
Sullivan	Toone
Tremblay	Valeriote
Vaughan— 111	

PAIRED

Nil

Government Orders

The Conservatives could also speak to lawyers and university professors, who are telling us that the measures on polygamy will actually put women and children at risk, because they could be deported for being victims of polygamy.

Perhaps the Conservatives could take all of that into consideration and allow us the time to debate while they take some time to do their homework.

• (1125)

Hon. Chris Alexander (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member's comments illustrate how urgent it is to move forward with this bill. Since the beginning of the debate on Bill S-7, the NDP has been advising inaction when it comes to underage marriage, forced marriage and polygamy. These are problems faced by hundreds of millions of women and girls around the world, and Canada is no exception.

If the hon. member had paid attention to the 25 witnesses in committee and the 17 members of the House of Commons who spoke, most of whom supported this bill, she would have realized that this is not only necessary, but urgent.

It is unacceptable that Canada still does not have a minimum age for marriage like Quebec does. The NDP is basically saying that girls 11 or 12 have the right to be legally married in Canada. That is completely unacceptable. The NDP is incapable of supporting a single measure to protect women and girls and prevent those who are in a polygamous marriage from entering Canada through our immigration programs or by any other means. The time has come to pass this bill.

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the government House leader. I challenge him to explain his rationale as to why the Conservative-Reform government continues to use time allocation to pass its legislative agenda, more than any other government in the history of Canada. That is the attitude of the majority government. Canadians see this and I suspect they will want to change that later this year.

Failing the government House leader answering the question, I suspect the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration will stand. If he does, my question for him is this. Why not put emphasis on trying to assist individuals, who had legitimate marriages abroad, in getting them reunited as quickly as possible? I want to specifically cite India, particularly Punjab, where marriages are far too often unacceptably delayed in processing of applications, well over 18 months, at a substantial cost of families being prevented from being together. It is just not acceptable. It is angering a great deal of my constituents and I suspect Canadians in all regions.

Why is the government not putting enough emphasis on reuniting people who were married abroad in a more timely fashion?

Hon. Chris Alexander: Mr. Speaker, from that question, we learn all we need to know about the Liberal Party's position on forced marriage, polygamy and honour killings.

Technically, the Liberals have said that they support the bill, but they do not support getting it done before the end of this session. For them, seeking political advantage is much more important than

protecting women and girls who can still be legally married in our country, outside of Quebec, at the age of 12 or 13.

The hon. member has just asked about processing times for legitimate spousal cases. We are not talking about legitimate spousal cases in this bill. We are talking about protecting women and girls who are victims of marriages of convenience, who are victims of domestic violence and intimidation, leading to forced marriage. We are talking about polygamous relationships that are disguised as aunts and uncles, cousins and sisters who are brought to the country and who face a lifetime of abuse and domestic violence.

This bill will help to protect women and girls, newcomers and Canadian-born alike, from these barbaric practices. We need to move forward on the bill, and we will move forward on it, whether the Liberal Party really believes in its position. We know that the Liberal leader was unwilling to use the term “barbaric” even to address the issue or to describe the issue of female genital mutilation.

We, on this side of the House, are prepared to call these practices and these forms of violence by their real names. It is time to bring the bill forward, pass it in the House and for it to become the law of this land. No issue is more urgent than protecting women and girls from violence at home, in our streets and, indeed, in partnership with our friends and allies around the world.

• (1130)

[Translation]

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach (Beauharnois—Salaberry, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am really disappointed that the government is imposing yet another gag order today—the 99th one—on a very controversial bill that could have serious unintended consequences.

What is more, this bill originated in the Senate. It is a poorly designed bill introduced by unelected senators that could have serious consequences for people we want to protect.

Under this legislation, if a man is found guilty of violence against his wife or their children, the entire family, including the victims, could be deported. The bill could also split up families, which is something that the victims do not want to happen.

There really was not enough consultation with experts. The NDP wanted to make all sorts of amendments. However, the Conservatives simply dismissed those amendments even though they knew that experts had asked that we make them in order to improve Bill S-7, which is before us today.

In addition to all of these shortcomings, this bill does not address the issue of affordable housing, for example, or support for families in the area of prevention. These families are often already traumatized by what is happening to them, and now all of those resources are going to be taken from them.

Government Orders

In reality, this bill does not even offer them those resources. That critical aspect is missing from this bill, but the Conservatives have still decided to impose a gag order and ram this bill through. This bill does not make any sense because the serious consequences it could have will cause even more harm to families that have already been traumatized by violence.

It therefore does not make any sense to keep going full steam ahead with this. We need to take the time to look at a number of aspects of the bill to make sure that it is balanced and good for victims.

I do not understand why the Conservatives refuse to see that and how they can continue to suggest that they are taking care of victims of violence.

Hon. Chris Alexander: Mr. Speaker, this is what the hon. member just said: she would prefer, and I believe this is the NDP position, that women and girls who are forced into underage marriages be allowed to come to Canada and stay here and that they remain in polygamous relationships without any consequences or punishment. She would prefer that the minimum age for marrying, in Canada's nine provinces and three territories outside Quebec, not be defined and that it not be 16 years of age. She would prefer that victims of violence caused by forced marriages and those who facilitate forced marriages not be accountable or held criminally responsible for their actions. The NDP is once again wrong.

This bill has a great deal of support, not just from women and girls, but from all Canadians. Canadians want us to prevent these barbaric practices. They want us to protect women and girls from forced underage marriages, polygamy and honour crimes. They absolutely want us to prevent these kinds of barbaric practices from taking place in Canada. The goal of this bill is prevention.

Why has the NDP not understood that that is the goal and the reason for this bill? By opposing all these measures to prevent barbaric practices and forced marriages in this country, the NDP is showing that it lacks empathy and does not care about Canadians' real priorities.

• (1135)

[*English*]

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, members will know that the 99th time we have time allocation used marks a new low point for democracy in this Parliament and that the rights of members in smaller parties are more infringed upon than those of others, because we will have less opportunity to debate due to time allocation.

I know that the hon. government House leader is not responding to the questions about his abuse of this process, so I will put my question to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration on the subject of this absurd bill, the zero tolerance for barbaric cultural practices act, and ask, while he is in such high dudgeon about violence against women, how it is that when missing and murdered aboriginal women call out for an inquiry we are told by the current government, "Don't worry. It's a criminal matter. It's already covered by the law. We don't need an inquiry". Yet when practices that are already illegal, like honour killing and polygamy, are raised, we need a new piece of legislation, which will impinge on constitutional and useful defences, such as the defence of provocation, which could

never be used in an honour killing. We are told that it requires a special new law, which is more election propaganda than public policy.

How does the minister square his government's response to the crisis of missing and murdered aboriginal women with the much rarer cases of alleged forced polygamy?

Hon. Chris Alexander: Mr. Speaker, the member opposite has once again not done her homework. The defence of provocation has been used in murder cases. It has been used successfully to reduce a sought-after prosecution for murder to manslaughter, and it has been used on a number of occasions to call into question the actions of the perpetrators of murder and to say that the language used that provoked that action was actually some form of defence.

I cannot believe that this member would call for action, rightly, on missing and murdered aboriginal women. We are in favour of that action, and we are taking more action on that front than any government in Canadian history. We are the only party in this place determined to focus on action and not on more study. Yet the member will not take action to protect women and girls from forced marriage and early marriage, practices that are still taking place on a huge scale around the world and to some extent within Canada.

These issues have the support of Canadians. They have the support of women and girls. They have the support of newcomers to this country, because polygamy has been happening in this country. Without these rules, we will continue to face fraud and misrepresentation leading to the arrival of people in polygamous relationships to this country. Only through the actions in this bill will we start to make progress.

This is not a marginal issue. For it to be called election propaganda is downright offensive on a day when Human Rights Watch has just put out a report reminding us that 29% of girls in Bangladesh are married under the age of 15 and 2% are married under the age of 11. Canada still does not have a minimum age for marriage. We are raising it to 16, the minimum age for marriage in Quebec, which is not yet the case in any other province or territory.

This member will have to face the music on this issue. She is opposing basic standards of decency for women and girls across this country, and she should be ashamed of the question she just asked and her position on this issue, which is absolutely indefensible.

• (1140)

Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague, the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, for his defence on this issue.

Earlier this year, I had the privilege of visiting Zambia. I was in Lusaka, where a group of YWCA members, and many youth who had joined them, was trying to counteract early and forced marriage. I met a young girl who had been helped to escape an early forced marriage. I heard her story and saw the devastation this had brought to her life educationally, socially, and even physically.

Government Orders

I only saw a very small piece in Zambia of the devastation being caused, but I would like to give our colleague a little time to expand a bit on the devastation this is causing among young women and girls.

Hon. Chris Alexander: Mr. Speaker, in the context of another debate, we could definitely talk about Zambia, Chad, the Central African Republic, Niger, and Bangladesh, countries that have among the highest rates of forced marriage in the world. Thanks to this member's efforts and to support across this side of the House, Canada has been a leader in speaking out and providing resources to end forced marriage around the world. The Hon. John Baird was obviously instrumental in that regard when he was minister of foreign affairs, but we need look no further than our neighbourhoods and constituencies to see these cases.

The members opposite who deny that this is important clearly have no direct experience of Canadians who are themselves victims of these barbaric practices. Samra Zafar, a constituent in the greater Toronto area, spoke in my constituency recently. She was forced into marriage at 16. There were years of abuse, leading to enormous suffering, health care problems, and mental anguish. There was violence on a sustained basis, every time she came home. She left that marriage and is now courageously speaking out about it. She is in a happy marriage she chose for herself, and she is a great advocate for these issues.

Kamal Dhillon, one of our witnesses before committee, had her jaw broken by her husband after a forced marriage.

Nasira Fazli, an Afghan immigrant to this country and a resident of Ajax, Ontario, was killed in July 2013. Her young son, Yasin Wafa, was 18 months old at the time of that killing. The only suspect in that case, which is still before the courts, was her husband at the time. She had sponsored her husband to come from Afghanistan. He had been in the country for only three years. Now he is facing murder charges.

Forced and early marriage leads to real catastrophes, real violence, in the lives of real Canadians. It is our duty in this House not to play politics with these issues, not to cite absurd procedural grounds for continuing this debate ad infinitum. We owe it to the women and girls of Canada and of the whole world to take action against barbaric practices. Canada must never be the home, must never be a place, where there is impunity for these practices.

I am ashamed that the parties opposite have an absolutely different view of this issue and would see us run out the clock on this session and maybe never come back to this issue, in a country where we still do not have a minimum age of marriage outside of the province of Quebec. They would really do well, the Green Party and the NDP, to rethink their position, because it is indefensible in the eyes of women and girls and in the eyes of all Canadians.

Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims (Newton—North Delta, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am just reminded about what we are here to debate. We are not here to debate the bill. The minister is responding to what we are here to debate, which is yet another time allocation motion moved by the House leader. I also notice that the House leader is not here to respond to—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): Order, please. This member knows that it is not permissible to reference who is or who is not in the chamber.

The member for Newton—North Delta.

Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims: I apologize, Mr. Speaker.

I want to focus a little more on the time allocation part and get a response from the minister on that.

This is the 99th time that time allocation has been moved. We are close to 100, as we are only one away, in cricket language. It is disconcerting that in a parliamentary democracy where debate should be welcomed and robust that it is being limited and cut off once again.

The bill being time allocated has been referenced many times by the minister. However, I am taken by the fact that in this country, it is my understanding that we already have laws against polygamy. Polygamy is not allowed in the Canada I have lived in over the last number of years. I also believe that there can be no such thing as honour in any killing. If some people claim it is an honour killing, I think we have laws to address that. If there is domestic violence and abuse, we have laws for that as well.

I would urge the minister to focus on fixing a very broken immigration system, which keeps families apart, instead of introducing a bill, and now limiting debate, where I would say most of the items are already covered under the current legal provisions that we have in this country.

In light of the huge investment that the Conservative government could make in addressing domestic violence, in light of the fact that the government has absolutely refused, despite the fact that first nations communities and it seems like all Canadians from coast to coast are joining the call for an inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women, why is the minister not addressing these issues but instead is electioneering today?

● (1145)

Hon. Chris Alexander: Mr. Speaker, once again, the NDP shows its utter disregard for the real interests of women and girls and in really protecting women and girls.

The member opposite has just shown she has very little idea of what is going on in her home province.

Polygamy is happening in Canada. It is happening in Bountiful, British Columbia. We are proud that the first prosecutions for that crime in Bountiful took place under our government. They have not yet resulted in convictions. We hope they will.

The member is naive if she thinks that those in polygamist relationships are not still coming to this country through misrepresentation, through the weakness of our immigration system, which she would have us make weaker still.

Government Orders

The member has not read the story of the Shafia family that left Afghanistan in 1992. Mohammad Shafia married Rona Mohammad, who was unable to have children. In 1980 he took Tooba Yahya to be his second wife in a polygamist marriage. When the family immigrated to Canada, Rona was presented as an aunt.

If the member opposite thinks that was the only such case, and that it is not still possible today without polygamy being listed as an inadmissibility in the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, she is dead wrong.

Tooba, the second wife, allegedly said to Rona, “You are a slave. You are a servant.” She spoke these words to her not in Afghanistan, not in the UAE, not in Pakistan, but in Canada. Then on June 30, 2009, sisters Zainab, Sahar and Geeti Shafia, along with their stepmother Rona Amir, were found drowned in a submerged car in the Kingston Mills lock in eastern Ontario.

In that case and in any case involving murder in this country, it is still a legitimate defence for the perpetrator of a murder to stand in the court and say, “I had every right to do this because my wife called me names”, or “I had every right to do this because my wife disobeyed me”, or “I had every right to do this because the food she prepared was not adequate.” That is a legitimate defence under the defence of provocation in this country. It is, and members opposite are denying it. They do not know their stuff.

Under this bill, the defence of provocation would have to be itself an action that would have been indictable and punishable by five years of imprisonment.

We are going to end these absurdities. We are going to end this barbarism, whether the NDP or the Green Party, whose naivete is on full display today, like it or not.

• (1150)

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Anne-Marie Day (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I will not use the word “hypocrite” since it might be unparliamentary. However, I will use the word “contradictory”. I am very shocked—flabbergasted, even—by what I am hearing.

I have already submitted a number of requests. I sent the minister two letters asking him to protect a young immigrant woman back home who will be sent back to her country of origin, Togo, where she will be the victim of a forced marriage. I do not want to identify her because that is confidential. However, there are limits to the government's doublespeak. We need to protect women. We must not send them back to their country of origin, where they risk being the victims of forced marriage.

This is the 99th time allocation motion the government has moved. We have already broken all the records. It is completely unacceptable that we are not being given a chance to speak to such important topics and talk about the work the NDP is doing on this issue.

Hon. Chris Alexander: Mr. Speaker, unfortunately the hon. member used a word that she should apply to herself. If members do not support this bill, we cannot protect a woman who is facing deportation to Togo, where she will be the victim of a forced

marriage. This bill would help strengthen protections for a woman in such a situation—let us take a hypothetical example—because anyone who facilitates a forced marriage would face consequences and criminal sanctions. That is not the case right now. A generous and sound immigration system will make an independent ruling in the case that the hon. member is referring to. However, the NDP is saying that we should leave the door open and leave women and girls vulnerable to being forcibly removed to faraway countries where they will be the victims of forced or even underage marriages. The most important aspect of this bill has to do with forced marriage.

The hon. member is demonstrating her ignorance of the bill. She has not studied it. She does not understand what is happening in Canada, where there is no minimum age for marriage other than in Quebec. Why would the hon. member want to have a minimum age of 16 in Quebec, but not in Ontario, the province where I was born? There are so many contradictions on the other side of the House, and they are so impossible to understand that I think even more Canadians are encouraging and urging us to take action to make this bill a Canadian law as quickly as possible.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): It is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith the question necessary to dispose of the motion now before the House.

[*English*]

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. Barry Devolin): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

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

Some hon. members: Nay.

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

And five or more members having risen:

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

• (1230)

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

(*Division No. 435*)

YEAS

Members

Ablonczy
Aglukkaq
Albrecht
Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Ambler
Anders
Armstrong
Aspin
Bateman

Adler
Albas
Alexander
Allison
Ambrose
Anderson
Ashfield
Barlow
Benoit

Government Orders

Bergen	Bernier	Dion	Dionne Labelle
Blaney	Block	Donnelly	Doré Lefebvre
Boughen	Braid	Dubé	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Breitkreuz	Brown (Leeds—Grenville)	Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)	Dusseault
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)	Butt	Easter	Eyking
Calandra	Calkins	Foote	Freeman
Cannan	Carmichael	Garneau	Garrison
Carrie	Chisu	Genest	Genest-Jourdain
Chong	Clarke	Godin	Goodale
Crockett	Daniel	Gravelle	Groguhé
Davidson	Dechert	Harris (Scarborough Southwest)	Harris (St. John's East)
Devolin	Dreeshen	Hsu	Hughes
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)	Dykstra	Julian	Kellway
Eglinski	Falk	Lamoureux	Latendresse
Fast	Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)	Laverdière	LeBlanc (Beauséjour)
Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Fletcher	LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard)	Leslie
Galipeau	Gallant	Liu	MacAulay
Gill	Goguen	Mai	Marston
Goldring	Goodyear	Martin	Mathysen
Gosal	Gourde	May	McCallum
Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)	Hawn	McGuinty	McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)
Hayes	Hillyer	Michaud	Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)
Hoback	Holder	Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)	Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)
James	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)	Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)	Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)	Kent	Mourani	Murray
Kerr	Komarnicki	Nash	Nunez-Melo
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)	Lake	Pacetti	Papillon
Lauzon	Leaf	Patry	Pécllet
Leitch	Lemieux	Pilon	Plamondon
Leung	Lobb	Quach	Rafferty
Lukiwski	Lunney	Rankin	Ravignat
MacKenzie	Maguire	Regan	Sandhu
Mayes	McColeman	Scarpaleggia	Scott
McLeod	Menegakis	Sellah	Sgro
Miller	Moore (Fundy Royal)	Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor)	St-Denis
Nicholson	Norlock	Sims (Newton—North Delta)	Sullivan
Obhrai	O'Connor	Sitsabaiesan	Tremblay
Oliver	O'Neill Gordon	Stoffer	Vaughan— 116
O'Toole	Payne	Toone	
Perkins	Poilievre	Valeriotte	
Preston	Raït		
Rajotte	Reid		
Rempel	Richards		
Ritz	Saxton		
Schellenberger	Seeback		
Shea	Shiple		
Shory	Smith		
Sopuck	Stanton		
Strahl	Sweet		
Tilson	Toet		
Trost	Trottier		
Truppe	Uppal		
Valcourt	Van Kesteren		
Van Loan	Wallace		
Warawa	Warkentin		
Watson	Wilks		
Williamson	Wong		
Woodworth	Yelich		
Young (Oakville)	Young (Vancouver South)		
Yurdiga	Zimmer— 138		

NAYS

Members

Allen (Welland)	Andrews
Angus	Ashton
Atamanenko	Aubin
Ayala	Bélangier
Bellavance	Bennett
Bevington	Blanchette
Blanchette-Lamothe	Boivin
Borg	Boulerice
Boutin-Sweet	Brahmi
Brousseau	Byrne
Caron	Casey
Cash	Charlton
Chicoine	Chisholm
Choquette	Christopherson
Cleary	Comartin
Côté	Cotler
Crowder	Cuzner
Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)	Davies (Vancouver East)
Day	Dewar

Dion	Dionne Labelle
Donnelly	Doré Lefebvre
Dubé	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
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Godin	Goodale
Gravelle	Groguhé
Harris (Scarborough Southwest)	Harris (St. John's East)
Hsu	Hughes
Julian	Kellway
Lamoureux	Latendresse
Laverdière	LeBlanc (Beauséjour)
LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard)	Leslie
Liu	MacAulay
Mai	Marston
Martin	Mathysen
May	McCallum
McGuinty	McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)
Michaud	Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)
Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)	Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)
Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)	Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)
Mourani	Murray
Nash	Nunez-Melo
Pacetti	Papillon
Patry	Pécllet
Pilon	Plamondon
Quach	Rafferty
Rankin	Ravignat
Regan	Sandhu
Scarpaleggia	Scott
Sellah	Sgro
Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor)	St-Denis
Sims (Newton—North Delta)	Sullivan
Sitsabaiesan	Tremblay
Stoffer	Vaughan— 116
Toone	
Valeriotte	

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

* * *

INCORPORATION BY REFERENCE IN REGULATIONS ACT

The House proceeded to the consideration of Bill S-2, An Act to amend the Statutory Instruments Act and to make consequential amendments to the Statutory Instruments Regulations, as reported (without amendment) from the committee.

SPEAKER'S RULING

The Speaker: There are two motions in amendment standing on the notice paper for the report stage of Bill S-2. The Chair has been made aware that the member for La Pointe-de-l'Île will not proceed with Motion No. 1. Therefore, Motion No. 2 will be debated and voted upon.

[Translation]

I will now put Motion No. 2 to the House.

MOTION IN AMENDMENT**Ms. Ève Pécllet (La Pointe-de-l'Île, NDP)** moved:

Motion No. 2

That Bill S-2 be amended by deleting Clause 2.

Government Orders

She said: Mr. Speaker, I am extremely pleased to have this opportunity to speak to the House today about Bill S-2, An Act to amend the Statutory Instruments Act and to make consequential amendments to the Statutory Instruments Regulations, because I think it is very important.

This bill might seem very technical. However, as my colleague from Gatineau often says, the devil is in the details, and that is exactly what we are seeing with this particularly disturbing bill. In my speech, I will explain why we want to remove clause 2.

First of all, clause 2 reads as follows:

In the case of a document produced by the regulation-making authority, either alone or jointly with a person or body in the federal public administration, the document or part may be incorporated only if it

There are a number of criteria, such as “contains...elements that are incidental to...the rules...” and this one:

...reproduced or translated from a document, or part of a document, produced by a person or body other than the regulation-making authority, with any adaptations of form or reference that will facilitate its incorporation in the regulation...

Already, this poses a problem. What is “a person or body other than the regulation-making authority”? We are talking about regulations that can be passed by the government, that do not necessarily have to be debated in the House.

We are wondering who exactly is a person or body other than the regulation-making authority. There is nothing to define that. The problem is really about knowing what we can expect from this government. That is what the issue is. Why do the Conservatives want to pass a bill that is essentially enabling legislation for any authority to pass regulations?

This issue of regulations is quite problematic. For instance, when the Conservatives wanted to make changes to employment insurance, it was all done through regulations. The same thing happened with Bill C-51 on safety standards. All of this, then, will be passed through regulations. Regulations are the basis of legislation.

As proof, there are hundreds of pages of regulations. For example, at the federal level, there are 3,000 regulations and 30,000 pages. However, legislation accounts for only 450 laws and 13,000 pages. Thus, there are twice as many pages of regulations, which will be exempted from parliamentary scrutiny, and I will explain why.

When we were conducting our study at the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights, I asked a question about incorporating by reference a regulation from another country, for example a country with which we signed a free trade agreement or concluded any agreement, regardless of the criteria of the agreement.

International foreign parliaments adopt regulations, but the Parliament of Canada is not necessarily aware of the changes made in those other parliaments. We take care of Canada's business here in this Parliament. We do not know what will happen in the United States, France, or Brazil.

If we incorporate by reference legislation that falls under the jurisdiction of another parliament and it is agreed that these subsequent changes will be part of Canadian law, then we are also saying that regulations subject to review by Canadian Parliament

could be changed by another parliament without MPs' knowledge. This will become part of the law without Canadians knowing it. It is ridiculous.

The last clause of the bill, clause 18.7, reads as follows:

The validity of an incorporation by reference that conforms with section 18.1 and that was made before the day on which that section comes into force is confirmed.

•(1235)

Does this not remind hon. members of something? The government is currently trying to pass legislation to ensure that the RCMP cannot be found guilty of violating the Access to Information Act. The government is trying to pass a law that will make anything that has been incorporated by reference valid without having to be examined by parliamentarians. That is ridiculous. We are beginning to see a trend: the Conservatives are trying to go back and legalize things that they did in the past without respecting the regulations in place at the time. That is shameful. That is why we cannot support this bill in its current form.

The bill refers to a body other than the regulation-making authority. However, that body is not defined. The bill refers to another authority, another body or another person, as I already mentioned. This term comes up several times in the bill. Anyone who reads the bill will wonder what is meant by a person or body other than the regulation-making authority. What is comes down to is that, because this is enabling legislation, this bill allows regulations to be passed through incorporation by reference without having to be examined by the government.

The bill also addresses the issue of accessibility:

18.3 (1) The regulation-making authority shall ensure that a document, index, rate or number that is incorporated by reference is accessible.

However, there is no definition of the term “accessible”. I suggested amendments in Parliament but, unfortunately, the Conservatives voted against them. They seem to think that “accessible” is a clear term that does not require a definition. If this term is as clear as they claim, why not put a definition in the law? The witnesses agree that the term should be defined. We cannot use a legal term in a bill without including a definition. That is ridiculous.

I asked the executive director of the Standards Council of Canada a question about accessibility. A criterion of accessibility is imposed on all legislative and departmental authorities, except that there is no definition for this term. Even if a department or regulatory authority is required to issue a regulation whether or not it is subject to ambulatory incorporation by reference, is it possible that a fee would be charged? We do not know. A Canadian might have to pay to access a regulation. How can fees be charged to access what is part of our legislation? That is ridiculous. If you have to plead a case in court, for example, you must have access to the regulations.

The bill has other problems, especially with respect to translation. Will all of the regulations incorporated by reference be translated into French and English? The United States is not required to translate all of its regulations by incorporation. The U.S. does not have the constitutional obligation to translate its regulations. How can we ensure that everything that is incorporated by reference is subject to our bilingualism requirements, especially if Parliament cannot examine these regulations? That is another problem.

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I simply want to say that this is a very serious problem. We are passing a bill that validates all of the incorporations that have been made in the past 30 years—before this bill was passed—even if they did not meet the criteria. That is the first reason why we will not support this bill. The second reason is that the regulations would no longer be subject to parliamentary review because they would be adopted by reference. That is a big problem. The government will be adopting regulations, rates or indices, and members of Parliament and Canadians will not be aware of them and will never have an opportunity to oppose them.

● (1240)

In short, it is very important for all members of this House to reject this bill and to review it so we can pass something that makes sense and that will not exempt our regulations from review by Canadian parliamentarians.

● (1245)

Mr. Sean Casey (Charlottetown, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I work with that member on the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights, and we studied this bill.

I have a question about accessibility. The bill contains no definition of accessibility. Does the member have a problem with that? There is a possibility that a sanction could be imposed on someone who does something to violate one aspect of the law that was incorporated by reference, but that is not really accessible in the usual manner.

Ms. Ève Pécelet: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Charlottetown for his question. That is something that we made a point of raising in committee. For instance, I would like to read an excerpt from the letter that was sent by the Standing Joint Committee on Scrutiny of Regulations:

Where standards emanating from independent third parties are incorporated by reference, there is no reason why the regulation-making authority should not be responsible for making the necessary arrangements to obtain permission to make that standard available to the public free of charge.

Thus, when we talk about accessibility, that includes translation in both languages, French and English, so that all Canadians can read the text in the language of their choice. However, that also includes accessibility in terms of cost, in other words, free access. The law must be available to everyone because everyone must be able to read it.

Why, then, do the Conservatives not want to specify what the word “accessibility” means if, according to them, it is crystal clear? In that respect, they cannot have it both ways.

Ms. Françoise Boivin (Gatineau, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague from La Pointe-de-l'Île for her speech on a bill that is not necessarily easy to understand for everyone. As she pointed out, it is extremely technical. I am pleased to see that the problem of bilingualism of our regulations was raised. It is a problem that could very well surface quite regularly after Bill S-2 is passed.

There is also another obvious problem with Bill S-2: by proceeding with incorporation by reference, is there not a risk of further circumventing regulatory compliance with the Constitution and our Charter of Rights and Freedoms? This concept is quite foreign to the Conservative government when it comes to its bills, but it is a requirement for regulations.

I am extremely worried about the fact that it will be easier to adopt regulations without thorough study by the Standing Joint Committee on Scrutiny of Regulations. I would like the member to briefly comment on that.

Ms. Ève Pécelet: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Gatineau very much for her work. I know that, like me, she is very concerned about this bill. Her question allows me to elaborate on a specific point because it is really quite hard to talk about such a complex bill in just 10 minutes.

For example, the Treasury Board, which is somewhat responsible for regulations, currently does not have any guidelines for incorporation by reference. In other words, material is currently being incorporated by reference, but there are no criteria or standards to guide that practice. There is nothing guiding regulators when they are adopting regulations.

Unfortunately, the problem is that some regulations will never be reviewed by Parliament. That is what happened with some regulations that were adopted by other legislatures or parliaments outside Canada. Then there is the matter of bilingualism and accessibility because, for now, there are no standards. It is quite problematic. As I said, it is rather complicated because incorporation by reference can be static or open. According to the Standing Joint Committee on Scrutiny of Regulations, open incorporation by reference should never be used for material from outside Canada. This bill currently allows that.

There are serious problems in terms of how these regulations will be reviewed. Will parliamentarians be made aware of these issues? Will they be able to examine these regulations? We are not sure. In my opinion, passing such an important bill that will have an impact on all Canadians is something that deserves a much closer look.

● (1250)

Mr. Robert Goguen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today, I would like to talk about an important aspect of Bill S-2, the incorporation by reference in regulations act. In particular, I would like to address how incorporation by reference in regulations can assist regulators in designing regulatory schemes that ensure access to the expertise of the leading standards development bodies in Canada and throughout the world.

As we know, Bill S-2 would amend the Statutory Instruments Act to make it clear in law when the technique of incorporation by reference can be used in federal regulation. Incorporation by reference allows material to be referenced and then incorporated into the regulation without being reproduced word for word. There are two types of incorporation by reference: ambulatory and static.

When incorporation by reference is ambulatory, the reference material forms part of the regulation as it is amended from time to time. When this material is incorporated on a static basis, then only the version as it exists on that particular day is incorporated, unless the regulation is amended.

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There are many advantages to incorporation by reference. For example, it reduces needless duplication or repetition of material such as provincial legislation when the federal and provincial legislative regimes need to be harmonized. It can be an effective way of working with other jurisdictions.

Lastly, incorporation by reference is an effective tool that gives the government access to a broad range of expertise developed in Canada and around the world in a variety of fields that have an impact on our economy and our daily lives. This last advantage is something I want to talk about in the House today.

When the legislator grants the power to make regulations, parliamentarians expect the regulator to be able to respond to a variety of complex, evolving issues associated with the areas in which the regulations are developed.

The fields now requiring regulation are complex: electric vehicles, cloud computing, leading edge medical devices and nanotechnology are just a few examples.

Federal regulators must be in a position to effectively and efficiently respond to requests for regulation in complex sectors. To that end, incorporation by reference makes it possible to quickly and effectively meet demand in these constantly evolving sectors.

By enacting this law, the legislator will give regulators the explicit legal authority to incorporate by reference any national and international standards developed by expert bodies. Although standards are not the only type of document for which incorporation by reference would be authorized under this bill, they merit special attention.

There are many kinds of standards that are already incorporated by reference in the federal regulations, including standards written by the International Organization for Standardization and other recognized international standards organizations. A recent review of existing references in federal regulations revealed almost 400 references to these standards established by expert bodies.

Canada is one of the countries at the forefront of standards development. There are hundreds of standards developed in Canada as part of the national standards system in Canada and then incorporated into federal and provincial regulations, such as standards developed by organizations such as the Canadian General Standards Board, and that which is most likely the most recognized name, the Canadian Standards Association.

Standards developed by these organizations have already become key to the way that sectors are regulated in Canada. There are over 275 different standards produced by the Canadian Standards Association alone that are referenced in federal regulations. Added together, there are already more than 400 references in federal regulations to various types of standards, both internationally developed and developed as part of our national standards system. These are important components of our current regulatory programs.

This legislation seeks to confirm that regulators can continue to rely on these standards in implementing their regulatory initiatives in an effective manner by allowing ambulatory incorporation by reference of such documents. The incorporation of standards by reference allows the government to draw on national and interna-

tional expertise. It allows government to effectively rely on the work being done by external expert bodies, to which it has often contributed based on its own expertise.

● (1255)

In many cases, effective, responsive regulation demands that when changes are made to these standards, regulators must respond immediately. Ambulatory incorporation by reference is the most effective way to achieve this.

When a standard is incorporated in the regulation on an ambulatory basis, it means that when a standard body updates a standard to respond to a new technology, new approaches or new innovations in the area, the changes are automatically incorporated into the regulation. The regulatory text does not have to be amended.

Why is it essential to incorporate by reference standards as they are amended from time to time? There are three good reasons: expertise, responsiveness and efficiency.

First, the ability to adopt standards as part of federal regulations when it is appropriate allows the government to access technical expertise right across Canada and right around the world.

Second, the ambulatory incorporation of these standards ensures that when changes are made by these expert bodies, federal regulators are immediately responsive, which is a significant advantage of modern regulation.

Third, reliance on standards development organizations of this nature allows for the efficient use of government resources. It would neither be expected nor efficient for the government to attempt to develop and house the wide range of expertise already found in these committees that develop these standards.

To conclude, enactment of this legislation is a necessary step to securing access to valuable technical expertise developed here in Canada and around the world. I therefore invite all members to support this important bill.

Ms. Ève Pécelet (La Pointe-de-l'Île, NDP): Mr. Speaker, according to the report by the Standing Joint Committee on Scrutiny of Regulations, ambulatory incorporation by reference, which includes all post-regulation amendments to administrative documents generated internally by the federal government, should not be permitted in federal government regulations.

Why? Because, unfortunately, that means the many regulations and future amendments will not be subject to parliamentary scrutiny. Why, then, does the government want to go ahead and make a change that would allow ambulatory incorporation by reference of international documents instead of just going with static reference, which does not include future changes? That way, if ever the government wanted to amend the law, the proposal would be examined by parliamentarians or the Standing Joint Committee on Scrutiny of Regulations.

Mr. Robert Goguen: Mr. Speaker, the federal government is jealously guarding its power to decide what each parliamentarian gets to examine.

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However, when it comes to techniques for developing expertise, the organizations themselves are the ones developing the expertise. By using their expertise and dynamically adopting frequent changes to standards, Canada and Canadians benefit from their expertise, and standards become standard in law as they do in everyday life.

Mr. Sean Casey (Charlottetown, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to ask a question that came up in testimony before the committee.

[*English*]

There were two witnesses at committee who raised a specific concern, which is one that we have, about the level of trust we have with respect to the current government in terms of oversight bodies and that the statute would allow it to do indirectly what it cannot do directly.

A couple of witnesses had an excellent suggestion with respect to this, which was that there be guidelines developed through Treasury Board for departments and bureaucrats when exercising their power of incorporation by reference. This was raised by Karen Proud and by John Walter, the CEO of the Standards Council of Canada. Some sort of guidelines to put some oversight on the powers of incorporation by reference would go a long way to making people feel a little more comfortable with these powers the government is about to give itself. Is that something that the government is considering?

• (1300)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Robert Goguen: Mr. Speaker, I do not know whether that was considered in the development of this bill. However, we are trying to develop standards for expertise.

[*English*]

When we think about different levels of expertise, certainly many parliamentarians from different roles of life bring with them a level of expertise that is not common to all of us. However, in this case, when it comes to dynamic incorporation, we are dealing with issues of specialty, like shipping and marine safety, energy efficiency, hazardous products, motor vehicle safety, and electric cars.

These are all technological developments that the common person, the common parliamentarian, cannot basically be on top of, and specific organizations have this expertise. This is why we would draw from their strength to bring into mainstream Canadian life the technology that is incorporated by reference into the laws that govern us all.

Mr. Sean Casey (Charlottetown, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak to Bill S-2, the incorporation by reference in regulations act.

Liberals will not be supporting the bill. I want to be clear that we do not seek to invalidate incorporation by reference in regulations, a technique that has been long in use and that is useful on a case-by-case basis. However, the government cannot be trusted to act responsibly with these expanded powers. We have seen time and time again the government's abuse of oversight mechanisms. I think specifically of its use of omnibus legislation and its bad-faith approach to the Department of Justice's constitutional review process, including the use of private members' bills to avoid that process.

A general power to incorporate by reference could embolden the government to do indirectly what it cannot do directly. For that reason, expanding the government's power to delegate lawmaking to foreign or private entities will not serve the public interest.

Liberals will not expand the Conservatives' power to privatize and export the power to make Canadian law.

[*Translation*]

There is also a chance that this bill could prioritize the English version of Canadian laws by allowing changes to be made to the English text without updating the French version.

[*English*]

To be clear, we agree that regulating by reference will undoubtedly continue to expand. Globalization, standardization, and technical and scientific progress make the tool necessary. However, a regulation-making authority should have prior authorization from Parliament in its enabling statute to use incorporation by open reference.

Bill S-2 is a highly technical bill. Before elaborating on why Liberals will not be supporting it, let us go over the contents of the bill. Bill S-2 would amend the Statutory Instruments Act to provide an express general power to incorporate by reference in regulations. To incorporate by reference is to give a secondary document legal force by referencing it in regulations, such as a set of technical standards developed by the Standards Council of Canada.

Incorporation by reference has long been in use, and it is already expressly authorized in more than 60 federal acts. However, its legal status outside of these acts is uncertain. Bill S-2 aims to clarify that incorporation by reference is a valid technique of general application. Bill S-2 would also provide that any secondary documents referenced must be accessible and that liability or administrative sanctions could not apply if a document was not accessible. In addition, Bill S-2 would retroactively validate any incorporation by reference that was made before its coming into force.

In effect, incorporation by reference sub-delegates the details of regulation to a designated entity, which may be private or foreign. It creates efficiencies in the context of globalization, standardization, and rapid technical and scientific developments. It is important to appreciate that regulations incorporated by reference may not exceed the regulatory powers granted by statute. In addition, regulations made by reference remain subject to review and possible revocation by the Standing Joint Committee for the Scrutiny of Regulations.

There are two varieties of incorporation by reference. They are incorporation by closed or static reference and incorporation by open or dynamic or ambulatory reference. Incorporation by closed reference cites a secondary document as it existed on a particular date. Incorporation by open reference automatically allows regulations to change as secondary documents are amended. This latter technique delegates the details of regulation to whomever has the ongoing power to amend the secondary document. Bill S-2 would expressly allow both open and closed incorporation by reference.

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Why are these changes a bad thing? Bill S-2 would reduce the oversight of federal regulations by allowing the sub-delegation of the regulatory power that is already delegated by Parliament to the Governor in Council and other persons. The current government cannot be trusted to use this power responsibly. Time and again, we have seen its willingness to abuse oversight mechanisms, restrict democratic debate, and violate Canadians' constitutional rights.

For example, the government's use of omnibus legislation has degraded the committee review process and hidden important legal changes from public scrutiny. Most recently, I can think of the unconstitutional amendments to the Supreme Court Act being hidden in a budget implementation bill. Yes, changes to the Supreme Court Act were in a budget bill. When those changes failed, we all remember how the Prime Minister and the Minister of Justice wrongfully criticized the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court for trying to save them some embarrassment.

With omnibus legislation, I also think of Bill C-13 and the way the government linked urgent and necessary cyberbullying legislation with immunity for telecommunications companies for warrantless disclosure. Again, the Supreme Court came to the rescue with the Spencer decision, which allowed us to support that cynically packaged piece of legislation.

In opposing Bill S-2's reduction of regulatory oversight, we also think of the government's disregard for the Department of Justice's constitutional review procedure. As the House is aware, Department of Justice lawyer Edgar Schmidt revealed to Canadians that the government proceeds with legislation even if it has a 5% chance or less of being charter compliant. It is the government's own faint hope clause, so to speak.

Is this a government that needs less oversight or more oversight? The revelation of the government's outright contempt for the charter was not surprising, given how often legislation and executive actions have been ruled unconstitutional by the courts. Let us review some of the greatest hits.

• (1305)

[*Translation*]

In 2011, the Supreme Court of Canada prevented the member for Parry Sound—Muskoka, who was health minister at the time, from closing a safe injection site, which would have caused an increase in the number of fatal overdoses and the spread of communicable diseases.

Last year the Federal Court prevented the government from making cuts to health care services for refugees. Also last year, right here in Ottawa, Justice David Paciocco of the Ontario Court of Justice found that the decision to impose a \$900 victim surcharge on a 26-year-old impoverished Inuit offender who was an addict amounted to cruel and unusual punishment.

Some British Columbia courts and the Ontario Court of Appeal have also struck down the mandatory minimum sentences brought in by the government. This is all in addition to the negative responses to referrals related to the unilateral Senate reform and the appointment of federal judges to represent Quebec on the Supreme Court.

[*English*]

We have also seen the Conservative government's willingness to veil government legislation as private members' bills to avoid constitutional review. There are numerous examples of tough-on-crime, presumably government-driven legislation that masqueraded as private member's bills. All of these bills contained significant changes to the Criminal Code, and regardless of their merits, they should have passed through the Department of Justice's charter compliance review process.

This is not a government that Canadians can trust to protect and promote their rights and interests. This is a government tainted by scandals of public betrayal, from election fraud with robocalls to tampering with the Duffy audit, to a \$90,000 payment to Duffy from the Prime Minister's chief of staff, to the Prime Minister defaming the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. Canadians should not trust the current Conservative government.

As I have said, the danger with Bill S-2 is that the government would be emboldened to do indirectly what it cannot do directly, and any oversight would be retrospective rather than forward looking. That is why we will not support the expansion of the current government's power to delegate law-making powers to foreign and private entities.

In addition, Bill S-2 would put the average person at a disadvantage, since there is no guarantee that documents incorporated by reference would be meaningfully accessible. In particular, an incorporated document would not have to be registered in the *Canada Gazette* and might even be protected by copyright. It would also be increasingly difficult for people to know whether the version of the incorporated document they have is up to date, and in some cases, they would have to pay for access to copyright-protected documents. The bill would weaken the right of those governed by the law to know the contents of the law. We will not support the Conservative government's privatization of Canadian law.

We heard at committee that it may be possible for international bodies to amend Canadian law without our having a representative at the table. We heard that Canadian laws would not be centrally available to the public and that Canadians would sometimes have to pay to access Canadian law. Moreover, if Bill S-2 passed, the government would be generally empowered to decide which foreign and private entities could make law, and which laws Canadians should pay to see.

Time and again, the government has not been forthright with Parliament and the public, and so our position is that a regulation-making authority should have prior authorization from Parliament in its enabling statute to use incorporation by open reference. For that reason, we will not support the bill.

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• (1310)

Mr. Craig Scott (Toronto—Danforth, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for an excellent speech, which set out a lot of the problems with Bill S-2. I particularly like the way in which he drove home at the very end the combined effects of transnationalization and privatization of norm-making; and how, through ambulatory statutory regulation, one more nail in the coffin of parliamentary and democratic sovereignty would be put in place; and that the inability of Parliament to keep track of external norms as they change and enter into our legal system, without Parliament having anything to say about it let alone know about it, is almost frightening.

I may be wrong, but I understand there is yet another retroactivity clause in Bill S-2 that would basically clean up the use of these kinds of clauses in the past by saying that any previous use would be governed by Bill S-2 and therefore would not be a problem. Am I correct in that, and does the member have any comment on that?

Mr. Sean Casey: Mr. Speaker, I am sure it will come as no surprise to the member for Toronto—Danforth that he is indeed correct. Any lawyer knows that one needs to know the answer to the question before posing the question.

What the statute proposes to do is make incorporation by reference a principle of general application. It would also retroactively validate all those documents that have been incorporated by reference by regulation. That, of course, is a concern.

The government would say that this is simply codifying the existing practice, but quite frankly, for the reasons I enunciated earlier, that is not quite good enough. There ought to be better oversight in place.

One of the big problems with oversight is that where a regulation-making authority has control and custody of the process, only static incorporation by reference is available. However, where it does not, ambulatory incorporation by reference is available. Ambulatory incorporation by reference means that there can be changes made without parliamentary oversight as the documents are amended from time to time. My concern is that if the government puts people on the panel who are able to avail themselves of ambulatory incorporation by reference, they can then do indirectly what they cannot do directly.

We heard at committee that this is very common. There are Canadian government officials and bureaucrats on these international tribunals who are able to amend these documents in this way.

• (1315)

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Anne-Marie Day (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the hon. member.

Clause 18.3 states:

18.3 (1) The regulation-making authority shall ensure that a document, index, rate or number that is incorporated by reference is accessible.

However, “accessibility” is not really defined.

Does the bill specify how the regulation-making authority should ensure the accessibility of the document? With respect to official

languages, for example, or sharing it through the media or online, does the bill indicate how much all that will cost?

Mr. Sean Casey: Mr. Speaker, that is a good question.

That is something we discussed in committee. It is true that the word “accessible” is not defined. We asked the witnesses that question. Some practices in the international community have changed in order to publish documents affected in that way. There is no definition in this case, but we could adopt some of the international practices.

The hon. member is absolutely right. In order to be certain, this concept needs to be defined in the bill and currently it is not.

[*English*]

Mrs. Joy Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure today to speak to this House about Bill S-2, the incorporation by reference in regulations act.

Bill S-2 has been studied by the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights and has been reported, without amendment, back to this House. Before that, the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs reported, also without amendment, to this House for consideration.

This bill deals with the regulatory drafting technique. Essentially, the bill is about when federal regulators can or cannot use the technique of incorporation by reference. The technique of incorporation by reference is currently used in a wide range of federal regulations. Indeed, it is difficult to think of a regulated area in which incorporation by reference is not used to some degree.

Bill S-2 is about securing the government's access to a drafting technique that has already become essential to the way government regulates. It is also about leading the way internationally in the modernization of regulations. More particularly, Bill S-2 responds to concerns expressed by the Standing Joint Committee for the Scrutiny of Regulations about when incorporation by reference can be used. This bill would create the legal clarification needed so that regulators and the committee could leave the uncertainty behind.

Incorporation by reference has already become an essential tool that is widely relied upon to achieve the objectives of the government. Both committees have heard that it is also an effective way to achieve many of the current goals of the “Cabinet Directive on Regulatory Management”, cabinet's instructions on how to ensure effective and responsive regulations. For example, regulations that use this technique are effective in facilitating intergovernmental co-operation and harmonization, a key objective of the Regulatory Cooperation Council established by the Prime Minister and President Obama. By incorporating the legislation of other jurisdictions with which harmonization is desired, or by incorporating standards developed internationally, regulations can minimize duplication, an important objective of the Red Tape Reduction Commission. The result of Bill S-2 would be that regulators would have the option of using this drafting technique in regulations aimed at achieving these objectives.

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Incorporation by reference is also an important tool for the government to help Canada comply with its international obligations. Referencing material that is internationally accepted, rather than attempting to reproduce the same rules in the regulations, also reduces technical differences that place barriers to trade and is in fact something Canada is required to do under the World Trade Organization's Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade.

Incorporation by reference is also an effective way to take advantage of the expertise of standards writing bodies in Canada. Canada has a national standards system that is recognized all over the world. Incorporation of standards, whether developed in Canada or internationally, allows the best science and the most accepted approach in areas that affect people on a day-to-day basis to be used in regulations. Indeed, reliance on this expertise is essential to ensuring access to technical knowledge across the country and across the world.

Testimony by witnesses from the Standards Council of Canada before the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights and the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs made it clear how Canada already relies extensively on international and national standards. Ensuring that regulators continue to have the ability to use ambulatory incorporation by reference, meaning the ability to incorporate by reference a document as it is amended from time to time, rather than just its fixed or static version, in their regulations means that Canadians can be assured that they are protected by the most up-to-date technology.

Incorporation by reference allows for the expertise of the Canadian national standards system and the international standards system to form a meaningful part of the regulatory toolbox.

• (1320)

Another important aspect of Bill S-2 is that it allows for the incorporation by reference of rates and indices, such as the consumer price index or the Bank of Canada rate, important elements in many regulations.

For these reasons and more, ambulatory incorporation by reference is an important instrument available to regulators when they are designing their regulatory initiatives.

However, Bill S-2 also strikes an important balance in respect of what may be incorporated by reference by limiting the type of document that can be incorporated when it is produced by the regulation maker. Also, only the versions of such a document as it exists on a particular day can be incorporated when the document is produced by the regulation maker only. This is an important safeguard against circumvention of the regulatory process.

Although there was some testimony at the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights that suggested that the bill should go further to allow all types of documents to be incorporated by reference, including documents produced by the regulation maker, we believe that Bill S-2 strikes the right balance, and where more is needed, Parliament can and has authorized incorporation by reference of that material as well.

Parliament's ability to control the delegation of regulation-making powers continues, as does the oversight of the Standing Joint Committee for the Scrutiny of Regulations. We expect that the

standing joint committee will continue its work in respect of the scrutiny of regulations that use incorporation by reference. The standing joint committee will indeed play an important role in ensuring that the use of this technique continues to be exercised in the way Parliament has authorized.

One of the most important aspects of the bill relates to accessibility. Bill S-2 will not only provide a solid legal basis for the use of this regulatory drafting technique but will also expressly impose in legislation an obligation on all regulators to ensure that the documents they incorporate are accessible. While this has always been something the common law required, this bill clearly enshrines this obligation in legislation.

There is no doubt that accessibility should be part of the bill. It is essential that documents that are incorporated by reference are accessible by those who are required to comply with them. This is an important and significant step forward in this legislation.

The general approach to accessibility found in Bill S-2 will provide flexibility to regulatory bodies to take whatever steps might be necessary to make sure that the diverse types of material from various sources are in fact accessible.

In general, material that is incorporated by reference is already accessible. As a result, in some cases, no further action on the part of the regulation-making authority will be necessary. For example, provincial legislation is already generally accessible. Federal regulations that incorporate provincial legislation will undoubtedly allow the regulator to meet the requirement to ensure that the material is accessible.

Sometimes, accessing the document through the standards organization itself will be appropriate. It will be clear that the proposed legislation will ensure that the regulated community will have access to the incorporated material with a reasonable effort on their part.

It is also important to note that standards organizations, such as the Canadian Standards Association, understand the need to provide access to incorporated standards. By recognizing the changing landscape of the Internet, the bill creates a meaningful obligation on the part of regulators to ensure accessibility while still allowing for innovation, flexibility, and creativity.

Bill S-2 is intended to solidify the government's access to a regulatory drafting technique that is essential to modern and responsive regulation. It also recognizes the corresponding obligations that regulators must meet when using this tool. The bill strikes an important balance, and it reflects the reality of modern regulation while ensuring that appropriate protections are enshrined in law. No person can suffer a penalty or sanction if the relevant material is not accessible by them.

This proposal is consistent with the position that the government has long taken on the question of when regulations can and cannot use the technique of incorporation by reference. It will provide express legislative authority for the use of this technique in the future and will confirm the validity of existing regulations incorporating documents in a manner that is consistent with that authority.

Government Orders

● (1325)

We have many years of successful experience with the use of ambulatory and static incorporation by reference in legislation at the federal level and this knowledge will be useful in providing guidance to the future.

The enactment of this legislation is the logical and necessary next step to securing access in a responsible manner to incorporation by reference in regulations.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Françoise Boivin (Gatineau, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her speech. I have two quick questions for her.

First, clause 18.7 confirms the validity of an incorporation by reference that was made before the day on which that section comes into force. That is a retroactivity clause, suggesting that this is already being done without the consent of this House. What does the hon. member think about that clause and how does she explain it?

Does she have any concerns about compliance with Canada's bilingualism rules for regulations, since a number of witnesses told us that there could be a serious problem in that regard? Does the Conservative government still believe in the importance of bilingualism in Canada?

[*English*]

Mrs. Joy Smith: Mr. Speaker, I want to reassure my colleague and the House that we are a bilingual country. French and English are our official languages, and I have no fear at all that this will be compromised in any way, shape or form under the legislation.

It is very important in this day and age to keep up to speed with what is really happening in the world. The legislation would minimize duplication and inconsistencies, and promote the efficiency and competitiveness that is needed in our current business environment. Also, very clearly, it would reduce the trade barriers that exist now.

It is an answer to a very important question about how to keep up to ensure the regulations are consistent so we can use the regulations in a very meaningful way on a daily basis.

Mr. Sean Casey (Charlottetown, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the committee heard from two witnesses, both who offered the committee and the government the same advice, and that was that Treasury Board should put together guidelines for bureaucrats to use when exercising the power of incorporation by reference. Does the member agree with that advice from the experts at committee?

● (1330)

Mrs. Joy Smith: Mr. Speaker, incorporation by reference is done now, every day, and it is done in a meaningful way. All the legislation would do is define it and put it in such a framework that there are guidelines that can be met and that there is the ability to use incorporation by reference in a meaningful way.

Many incorporations have already used incorporation by reference, as we heard earlier from my colleague, such as shipping and marine, energy, hazardous products, even motor vehicle safety, as well as proceeds of crime and money laundering. All these things are used daily in the different disciplines of both trade and everyday life in the workings of our country and dealing with other countries.

In terms of the incorporation by reference, this streamlines what needs to be done in a meaningful way so we can get things done more accurately. That is what we need. This business of inconsistencies in regulations is something I heard on the ground through business and other corporations. This would streamline that and cause the inconsistencies to be fewer.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Françoise Boivin (Gatineau, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Bill S-2 is probably not the most accessible bill for the community and the people who are watching at home. From the beginning, I have been calling this bill the sleeper of this legislature.

For one thing, it has not garnered much attention, which is worrisome, and for another, it originated in the Senate. I believe that we are already starting off on the wrong foot when a bill that will have such a major impact on our future practices comes from the Senate.

That being said, this will likely be one of my last speeches in the House as the justice critic for the official opposition, given the justice agenda from now until the end of this Parliament on June 23. I would therefore like to thank the members of the Standing Committee on Justice, particularly those from the New Democratic Party and my colleague from La Pointe-de-l'Île, the sponsor for the recommendation we made to our colleagues regarding Bill S-2. She did an excellent job, given that work on this bill was not the easiest way to jump into her role as deputy critic. I would like to congratulate and thank her.

In recent years, the justice agenda has been rather onerous. Since you were once the justice critic for the official opposition, Mr. Speaker, you know what I am talking about. I would also like to thank the leader of the NDP for putting his trust in me. That is why I took the analysis of each bill very seriously and why I have often spoken out against the government's attempts to short-circuit democratic debates and in-depth examinations of bills. The decisions that we make in the area of justice can have even more significant implications for the people we represent.

Bill S-2 is a fine example because it did not attract too much attention. I was interviewed once about Bill S-2, and it was by *Blacklock's Reporter*, which took the time to analyze this bill and saw the same problems we did.

I find it even more important to point out that, when elected in 2011, I was appointed the co-chair of the Standing Joint Committee on Scrutiny of Regulations by our then leader, the great Jack Layton. I have to admit that at first I wondered about the committee's mandate. However, I understood just how important the committee was.

Government Orders

I also saw first-hand the systematic resistance of some departments, which take an eternity to answer the questions posed by the Standing Joint Committee on Scrutiny of Regulations. That was what had the greatest impact on my position on Bill S-2. Sometimes they were basic questions, mainly about incorrect language usage or contradictions between the French and English texts, which creates confusion and can lead to legal disputes. I truly appreciated what I call my internship with the Standing Joint Committee on Scrutiny of Regulations, because it taught me the importance of regulations.

As some members mentioned, we sometimes forget that the Minister of Justice must certify that any government bill, whether from the Senate or the government, complies with the Constitution and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

•(1335)

The same should be true for regulations. My colleague who spoke before me spoke about the importance of modernization. I agree with her. There are 30,000 pages of regulations every year. It is painstaking work to sort through all of that. However, members of the Standing Joint Committee on Scrutiny of Regulations and officials—whom I want to commend today for the difficult job they do—examine these issues and ensure that the regulations are correct, compliant and accessible, for the benefit of our constituents and for all Canadians across the country. People need to know what is going on and what could be expected of them. I agree that we need to find a way to modernize this.

However, modernizing means something else to this government. This may ultimately be where the Conservatives pay the price for their sins, if I can put it that way. Members on the official opposition benches are deeply distrustful of this government. Why? Because this government has been secretive. It has tried all kinds of ways to circumvent democratic debate. It does not accept disagreement with its opinions. It practically sees any question from the opposition as a form of treason. In short, it prevents us from doing the job we were elected to do. The Conservatives should not be surprised that we do not want to give them a way to speed things up or to put these issues in the hands of people we cannot control or oversee to ensure they are doing their job properly.

When a public servant like Mr. Schmidt goes to the Federal Court against his employer, the Department of Justice, to say that he was told to cut corners and ignore the Constitution and the charter, that worries me. Now the government wants the power to regulate by reference, which is the simplest way. There is also a retroactivity clause, as my colleague from Toronto—Danforth mentioned earlier. In committee, we were basically told that it was already being done—as if the fact that something previously prohibited is being done should justify the fact that they are rushing into this approach.

Currently, if regulation by reference happens, it is authorized or should have been authorized by the enabling legislation. We learned that that was not always the case. That is why the government put clause 18.7 in the Senate bill. That clause includes a retroactivity provision. That reminds me of what was in Bill C-59 about destroying information in registries.

What people do not see is that regulations can go very far. Let us look at each kind of bill: government bills, private members' bills and Senate bills. A power is always given to the appropriate minister,

the authority to adopt regulations. The minister himself can delegate the power to take action to a senior official. In short, if we also decide to allow them to adopt regulations that come from other countries—which would come to us in a language that is not ours and where bilingualism will surely be short-circuited—one might have some serious concerns about this bill.

What I am saying to my colleagues in the House is that there is no urgency here. Bill S-2 deserves to be studied further and should be considered with greater openness. It would be nice if the government could look at the comments and listen to and consider the criticisms instead of simply slamming the door and saying that this bill is the only way.

I encourage my colleagues to take a short strategic pause to look carefully at Bill S-2, given that it could have enormous ramifications that will be rather serious in some cases.

•(1340)

[*English*]

Mr. Dan Albas (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I was quite happy to work with my hon. colleague when she was the co-chair of the scrutiny of regulations committee.

In relation to this incorporation by reference bill, it is important that it be noted that the government has put forward a bill that actually specifies when a dynamic incorporation by reference or static incorporation by reference should be used. It basically gives parameters for when it can and cannot be used.

I have also heard the criticism that regulations would not be produced and that there might be challenges with official languages. Nothing could be further from the truth. Any regulation that is passed under federal power has to be in both French and English.

Last, I would point out to the member that the government is trying to create a framework for where it is appropriate and where it is not. It is to empower legislators, like ourselves, so that we know when certain incorporations by reference could be used for the benefit of people. For example, there are cases where standards may change. We are the ones who decide which standards should be used. However, we do not want to be constantly behind the times when it comes to the safety of Canadians.

Does the member not realize that there needs to be some shift in this area in order to protect safety and to set parameters for government to use this tool in a limited way?

[*Translation*]

Ms. Françoise Boivin: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for his question.

Points of Order

As I said at the beginning, I agree. I heard my colleague say “keep up to speed”. It is one thing to keep up to speed and it is another to do so with your eyes closed. If I drive my car at high speed, I prefer to do so with my eyes wide open. This government often asks us keep our eyes shut.

For example, the government refuses to define the terms used in certain rules in the bill. In addition, we tried to amend the bill so that it would provide a better framework for this new way of doing things, which would be faster and could have been a bit clearer.

Ultimately, all our efforts led to great frustration. Even the amendments that were not meant to prevent things from moving forward and those that sought to create an approach that is somewhat more open and clear were rejected outright by the Conservative members of the committee, as though they were not allowed to accept anything, which is very disturbing.

We should not assume that only safety regulations will be affected. All kinds of regulations could be affected. The Conservatives often boast about signing many foreign treaties. Good for them. I agree that it is good for the economy and positive in many other ways.

However, we must ensure that the regulations of the country we trade with, which we are going to adopt as our own, meet certain basic criteria that exist only in Canada, such as bilingualism and other rules.

• (1345)

Mr. Sean Casey (Charlottetown, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her speech.

[*English*]

There are a couple of questions that I have already posed on which I would like the member's opinion.

The first is that we had two witnesses at committee. One was the president of Consumer Health Products Canada and the other was the CEO of the Standards Council of Canada. They both called for bureaucrats to have some guidelines promulgated by Treasury Board that would govern their powers and abilities to incorporate by reference.

The second is with respect to something I tried to explain in response to a question by the member for Toronto—Danforth. This statute sets up two categories, static incorporation by reference and ambulatory incorporation by reference. Static incorporation by reference is available only when the document in question is within the power of the regulation-making authority and ambulatory is available when it is not. In my view, the problem with that is that the government can do indirectly what it cannot do directly by having involvement in those bodies that control the content of documents to be incorporated in an ambulatory fashion.

Does the member have an opinion on that?

[*Translation*]

Ms. Françoise Boivin: Mr. Speaker, as for the second question, I agree with my colleague that it is quite worrisome.

As for the guidelines that should be provided by the Treasury Board, I also agree that these were good suggestions that were made.

Again, the government simply turned a deaf ear to these suggestions and that is what is so worrisome when we are dealing with a bill that will have so many consequences.

We cannot trust a government that is not transparent and does not share the information that it has. In that case, we would be hard-pressed to tell it that we will expand its regulatory powers further.

* * *

[*English*]

POINTS OF ORDER

BILL C-59—SELECTION OF REPORT STAGE AMENDMENTS

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, as you will know from a letter that was delivered to your office yesterday, I seek the opportunity to rise on a point of order to speak to the pending decision that you will be making on the appropriate nature of the amendments that I have tabled in relation to report stage for the omnibus budget bill, Bill C-59.

The order to which I refer is Standing Order 76.1(5), which of course empowers the Speaker to select or combine amendments as he or she thinks fit. In the Annotated Standing Orders, there is additional guidance that the “Speaker will normally select only motions that were not or could not be presented in committee”. It also states, “For greater certainty, the purpose of this Standing Order is, primarily, to provide Members who were not members of the committee with an opportunity to have the House consider specific amendments they wish to propose.”

I will not take much of your time or that of the assembled members in reviewing all the events that led to the concern that I am now expressing. However, I am sure members will recall, and certainly you will, Mr. Speaker, that in exercising my right as the member of Parliament for Saanich—Gulf Islands, recognizing that the rules, as they exist to this point today, if you seek guidance from our rules of parliamentary procedure, allow a member such as myself, a member of a recognized party with fewer than 12 members, or an independent member of Parliament, the opportunity at report stage to do something that members belonging to the larger parties no longer have, which is to put forward amendments that are substantive at report stage.

The reason for this rule came from, I suppose we would have to call it the evolution of rules in this place, which has a consistent trend line. The evolution of rules has trended toward larger parties suppressing the rights of smaller parties, and in this particular instance, of a large majority party actually attempting to suppress the rights of an individual member.

This was done through a series of decisions. The hon. government House leader tried at one point in late 2012 to put forward a novel notion, and I was specifically cited in the government House leader's complaint, that all the amendments by the member of Parliament for Saanich—Gulf Islands should be lumped together, that the Speaker should pull one at random, put it to a test vote, and if that fails, none of the rest of my amendments should be put forward at report stage.

Government Orders

In your ruling on December 12, 2012, you put that notion quickly to rest in pointing out that that would rather defeat the purpose of legislative review. It would seem to suggest that might makes right and why bother to study any amendments at all, or even to put legislation through scrutiny.

In making that ruling, Mr. Speaker, you made specific note of two previous Speakers' rulings on this matter. Speaker Milliken, whom you cited with authority from March 29, 2007, pointed out "neither the political realities of the moment nor the sheer force of numbers should force us to set aside the values inherent in the parliamentary conventions and procedures by which we govern our deliberations." Further, you cited former Speaker John Fraser from October 10, 1989, when he said, "We are a parliamentary democracy, not a so-called executive democracy, nor a so-called administrative democracy."

In making that ruling, the clear guidance was in the following words:

Accordingly, unless and until new satisfactory ways of considering the motions of all members to amend bills in committee are found, the Chair intends to continue to protect the rights of independent members to propose amendments at report stage.

That is your role, Mr. Speaker. At page 307 of *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, second edition, we find this clear statement of the duty of the Speaker:

It is the responsibility of the Speaker to act as the guardian of the rights and privileges of Members and of the House as an institution.

In making that finding, Mr. Speaker, you said, "Unless and until new satisfactory ways" have been found. I believe it must have been concocted in the Prime Minister's Office because by the following fall, identical motions appeared in all of the committees that study legislation, and each identical motion operated under the fiction that it came forward from a Conservative member of that committee to create the new rubric under which I am now complying, which says that my amendments must be tabled as those of all other members of parties under 12 members or independents, within 48 hours before the committee moves on to clause-by-clause stage.

• (1350)

I have been operating under that. At every stage I tend to remind the chairs of committees before whom I present amendments that they are deemed to have been presented. I am given generally about 60 seconds per amendment to explain the purpose of the amendment.

As unsatisfactory as that process is, in the case of these amendments, this is the crux of the case I put to you, Mr. Speaker, to please show flexibility. I know the committees are in charge of their own process, but in this case I am asking you to rule in relation to report stage.

An opportunity that cannot be used is surely no opportunity at all, satisfactory or otherwise. In this case, on June 2 at 9 a.m. all my amendments were due on omnibus budget Bill C-59. Subsequent to that deadline, 10 more outside witnesses appeared, as well as the Privacy Commissioner and the minister himself. Brand new, novel issues were raised by those witnesses. My amendments attempt to deal with new issues that were raised after the deadline by which I had to submit my amendments.

Unlike other members of a committee, I have no ability, nor does any other member in my situation, to put forward new amendments to deal with the new information. In other words, the ability of every member of Parliament in this place to do their work requires being able to weigh in substantively, and I hope helpfully, on amendments at report stage.

In this instance, Mr. Speaker, I am asking you to please consider in your discretion the rubric under which I am working. Under these individual motions, passed by all these different committees, which in some cases have meant that I literally race from committee to committee to submit my amendments in time and to speak to them because committee meetings are often concurrent, in the case of Bill C-59, yet again another omnibus budget bill, there was no reasonable opportunity to submit the amendments that I have included.

I have not included any amendments that had an opportunity before committee, although they were rejected. I have put forward only amendments that were not possible to have been imagined, constructed or drafted, because the witnesses who raised the issues testified before the committee after the deadline for the submission of my amendments.

• (1355)

The Deputy Speaker: I assure the member that her points will be taken into account in the ruling.

The hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader is rising on a point of order.

Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will be very brief. I just want to inform the Chair and my colleague from Saanich—Gulf Islands, since I was not aware of the point of order prior to her standing in this place and I was somewhat tardy getting into the House to listen to her entire argument, the government will be reserving its comments until we have had a chance to see her entire point in transcript form and will reserve comments and make a due and considered response at our first opportunity.

The Deputy Speaker: I thank the member for that.

Resuming debate. The hon. member for Toronto—Danforth will have three minutes before we move to members' statements.

* * *

INCORPORATION BY REFERENCE IN REGULATIONS ACT

The House resumed consideration of S-2, An Act to amend the Statutory Instruments Act and to make consequential amendments to the Statutory Instruments Regulations, as reported (without amendment) from the committee and of the motion in group no. 1.

Mr. Craig Scott (Toronto—Danforth, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I will be correspondingly brief in my speech.

I have spoken on Bill S-2 before. I join my colleagues from Gatineau and Charlottetown in indicating that this bill is a sleeper. It would have major implications for the health of our democracy, and it deserves to receive a lot more attention in the media than it has.

Statements by Members

The ability of governments to use ambulatory incorporation by reference to smuggle in over time rule changes processed by outside agencies, transnational and private agencies, or even mixed agencies on which governments sit, and the possibility of that would be greatly enhanced by this piece of legislation. Ultimately, it is a piece of legislation that would continue a whole variety of actions by the government over the last four years as a majority and almost ten years in government that seriously undermine our democracy.

I would suggest that, rather than go in this direction, we have to think seriously about how to beef up the current joint committee on the scrutiny of regulations in the Senate and the House of Commons. We should possibly consider the need for an officer of Parliament. I would suggest that a commissioner for statutory and international instruments is probably something that needs to be discussed. It would be an officer who would make sure that the House is not just on top of static incorporation by reference, but incorporation by reference of external documents as they occur. It would then make sure, in the reporting fashion, that the House knows that something has changed that may be of consequence but that the House has had no say in until that point in time.

I indicate that such a commissioner, for example, would look at both statutory instruments, regulations and their like, and international instruments, treaties and their like, because in the globalizing legal environment in which the government is operating, it is those two features, executive action and transnational action, that are increasingly joining hands and taking away governing space from publicly elected legislators.

The bottom line is that this bill needs safeguards. Some four amendments were brought forward by the official opposition in committee. All of them were rejected, as usual, by the government. If we took the problems that the official opposition had and still has with the bill seriously, we would be looking at how to enhance the oversight and review functions of this body over the regulation-making authorities, not undermining it, as Bill S-2 would.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member will have seven minutes to complete his speech when we return to this bill for further debate.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*English*]

TAXATION

Mr. Ted Falk (Provencher, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today in support of hard-working Canadian families who form the cornerstone of our society. As a basic unit of any successful nation, families drive our economy, build our communities and provide our children with moral, social and financial stability. I firmly believe that when the family unit is healthy, when families prosper, all Canadians prosper. I stand here today in support of our government's commitment to help families.

In our most recent budget, we introduced a number of initiatives that will help millions of Canadian families, including those who live in southeastern Manitoba. Since forming government, we have cut taxes over 160 times. This will result in a typical two-earner Canadian family receiving tax relief and increased benefits of up to

\$6,600 this year. Some examples of these tax credits include the family tax cut, the universal child care benefit and the children's fitness credit.

I have received many supportive comments on our government's low-tax initiative from families all across my riding of Provencher. They are encouraging us to work hard and continue to deliver results for families.

* * *

• (1400)

WEST NIPISSING VOLUNTEERS

Mr. Claude Gravelle (Nickel Belt, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise in tribute to the volunteers who make our communities strong and unique. I particularly want to acknowledge the hard work of the individuals who do this type of great work in and around West Nipissing. It is volunteers that make seniors suppers a success and showcase the compassionate and caring nature of our communities.

[*Translation*]

It really takes a small army of volunteers to organize events such as the River Country & Bluegrass Gathering, the River & Sky Camping and Music Festival, the St. Charles Fishing Derby, the West Nipissing Rock and Rib Fest, the Sturgeon Falls Music Festival and the St-Jean-Baptiste Day celebrations all around the region.

[*English*]

These events allow visitors a chance to see our unique and engaging culture, which blossoms in the summer months.

I also want to pay special tribute to super-volunteer Charlie Lang, who organizes so many of these events, including the famous Sturgeon Falls Fiddle Festival. I am sure all members will join me in saluting Charlie and all the volunteers who keep our communities thriving.

* * *

WORLD WAR II VETERANS

Mr. Mark Strahl (Chilliwack—Fraser Canyon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, last month, it was my great privilege to travel around my riding of Chilliwack—Fraser Canyon to honour our living World War II veterans with a victory pin and certificate issued by the Prime Minister and the Minister of Veterans Affairs to commemorate the 75th anniversary of Canada's entry into the war.

I held events at the Pemberton, Lillooet, Hope and Chilliwack legions where 25 veterans gathered to receive this honour in the presence of their friends, families and comrades.

As we celebrated these living legends and Canadian heroes, I was reminded of one of my heroes, my late grandfather Bill Strahl, who joined the Royal Canadian Air Force during World War II when he was only 17 years old, a young man, but like thousands of others his age, old enough to know that he needed to join the fight against Nazi tyranny.

Many of the veterans we honoured were just boys and girls when they volunteered to defend this great country and the values we hold dear, but they quickly came of age as our greatest generation.

All gave some, some gave all. Lest we forget.

* * *

ROBERT KENNY

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Beauséjour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, last weekend, New Brunswick lost one of its most respected citizens. Robert Kenny passed away at age 72, having fought a courageous battle against ALS for the past six years. Bob Kenny was a distinguished lawyer and community leader who leaves behind a legacy of generosity and service. In Fredericton, Bob was president of the YMCA, led a committee to build Fredericton's indoor pool and was a devoted baseball coach and player. Always a Red Sox fan, the dugout at Royals Field in Marysville is named in his honour.

Atlantic salmon conservation was another of Bob's passions. Last month, supported by his long-time friend Frank McKenna, the Nature Conservancy named a salmon pool after Bob on the Southwest Miramichi.

I ask colleagues to join me in expressing our sympathies to Bob's wife, Joan, and his daughters Brigitte, Natalie and Mary Ellen.

* * *

DALAI LAMA

Mr. Bernard Trottier (Etobicoke—Lakeshore, CPC): Mr. Speaker, July 6 will mark the 80th birthday of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama. A Nobel Peace Prize laureate and one of just six honorary Canadian citizens, His Holiness has devoted himself to spreading the values of love, peace and compassion.

He describes himself as a simple Buddhist monk, despite being revered all around the world as a champion of human rights. His Holiness preaches a “middle way” approach to conflict resolution based on non-violence, compromise and dialogue. He works tirelessly for the ultimate goal of allowing Tibetans to live freely and peacefully in an autonomous Tibet within the People's Republic of China.

On behalf of the Parliamentary Friends of Tibet, and the Tibetan Canadian community in my riding of Etobicoke—Lakeshore, as well as across the country, I would like to wish His Holiness a happy birthday.

Tashi Delek.

* * *

● (1405)

[*Translation*]

AEROSPACE INDUSTRY

Mr. Alain Giguère (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the aerospace industry is a high tech sector in which Canada has a unique expertise.

The Conservative government, however, does not seem to understand the strategic importance of that industry. Over a thousand jobs have been lost in the aerospace industry this year. Let us not

Statements by Members

forget that the Conservative government made \$500 million in cuts to tax credits for research. The Conservatives botched the airplane and helicopter procurement process. As a result, there were cost overruns and the equipment was not delivered on time. Canadians deserve better.

The NDP has committed to investing in the aerospace industry by creating an innovation tax credit and extending the accelerated capital cost allowance. With regard to government procurement contracts, the NDP will hold an open and transparent bidding process and will work with the aerospace industry to ensure that we keep as many jobs here in Canada as possible. Canadians can count on us to protect these good jobs.

* * *

[*English*]

MEMBER FOR SIMCOE NORTH

Mr. Bruce Stanton (Simcoe North, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today, as we near the end of this 41st Parliament, I pay tribute to the people of my riding of Simcoe North.

From the shoreline of Georgian Bay to the farmlands along the north side of Lake Simcoe, from the thriving city of Barrie to the cusp of cottage country in Muskoka-Parry Sound, my riding is blessed with generous and enterprising people and communities that reach back to the earliest of recorded history in our nation.

I consider it the greatest of honours to represent this region of Ontario, the place of my birth and my family since 1874.

[*Translation*]

I would like to commend my constituents for the pride they have in their communities, their history and their culture.

[*English*]

It is obvious in every festival, every work of art and every savvy innovation from our business community. To my constituents, supporters and critics alike, one would do well by their example. They make me proud each and every day.

* * *

CANADIAN ARMED FORCES

Mr. Lawrence Toet (Elmwood—Transcona, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to acknowledge and thank the Royal Canadian Legion Zone 64 and Transcona Branch No. 7 for hosting their annual decoration day services in recognition of those who have served and those who continue to serve in our Canadian Armed Forces. Events like these ones serve as powerful reminders of the sacrifices made by our veterans, sacrifices they made to assure not only our freedom here in Canada but also the freedom of many other countries in the world.

Being the son of immigrants from the Netherlands who came to Canada after being liberated by Canadian Forces, I am forever indebted to Canada's veterans who defended Holland's peace and security.

Statements by Members

As Canadians, we were very proud to join the Dutch people as they celebrated the 70th anniversary of their liberation earlier this spring. I was tremendously honoured to meet their Majesties King Willem-Alexander and Queen Máxima of the Kingdom of the Netherlands last month in recognition of this important milestone.

I wish to recognize Canada's men and women in uniform, past and present, for all they have done in serving our country.

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[Translation]

CHICOUTIMI—LE FJORD

Mr. Dany Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, NDP): Mr. Speaker, this is my last statement in the House as a member in this 41st Parliament, and I want to take this opportunity to express how proud I am of the work that has been accomplished over the past four years.

Members of Parliament are an essential connection between the regions and Ottawa. I am honoured to have represented the people of Chicoutimi—Le Fjord. They are the ones who taught me that it is important to work together, united, in defending our common interests, whether they be customs at the Bagotville airport, bullying prevention among our young people, protecting our postal services, crucial funding for our military base or the future of the forestry industry.

That is how we have worked to defend the interests of our region, Saguenay—Lac-St-Jean, for four years. Is this approach not in our very nature? Is it not tied to our roots and to the land we all worked together to conquer and develop?

Over the summer I will continue to be visible in the communities and available to the people of Chicoutimi—Le Fjord and to serve the public with the objective of promoting the Saguenay—Lac-St-Jean region.

Thank you once again for your confidence, your support and your encouragement. Let us work together to elect a New Democrat government this fall.

* * *

[English]

TAXATION

Mr. Dave MacKenzie (Oxford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on Friday the Liberal leader revealed that he would use, “alternative sources of capital, such as pension funds” to pay for his irresponsible promises. The seniors in Oxford reject the Liberal leader's plot to endanger their retirement security to fund his spending schemes.

On behalf of every senior and future retiree in Canada, our Conservative government says “hands off their pensions”. We created the tax-free savings account and introduced pension income splitting that is benefiting over two million seniors and pensioners.

Canadian seniors and future retirees are better off under the leadership of our Prime Minister. Now is not the time for risky schemes and untested leadership.

● (1410)

[Translation]

WORKERS AND THE MIDDLE CLASS

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, while thousands of good jobs are disappearing and people have record levels of debt, the NDP will always be on the side of workers and middle-class families. We have solutions: make life more affordable and create good green jobs in an economy focused on renewable energy.

We are there for the 99%, those working every day to make ends meet, those looking for work and those who want to live comfortably in their later years. We come from the same world and we have the same dreams to change it.

[English]

While thousands of good jobs are lost every month and people are in debt like never before, the NDP will always be on the side of the workers and the families of the middle class. We are proposing common-sense solutions that will help families with better health care, child care and green jobs for the economy of tomorrow. We are in Parliament for the 99% who work every day to make ends meet. We are from the same world and we have the same dreams to change it.

* * *

RUSSIA

Ms. Joyce Bateman (Winnipeg South Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, at the G7 meetings, world leaders agreed to continue supporting the isolation of Russian president Vladimir Putin through economic sanctions. All members of the G7 agree with Canada's position, that sanctions cannot be lifted until Putin respects the sovereignty of Ukraine's borders.

I am proud of the fact that our Prime Minister has taken the principled stand that Russia cannot be allowed back into the G7 so long as Vladimir Putin is president.

Canada and this Conservative government stands with Ukraine. Whether it takes 5 months or 50 years, we will never recognize Vladimir Putin's aggressive annexation of Ukrainian territory. There will be no business as usual with Russia as long as it insists on violating international law.

As the Minister of Foreign Affairs has said, if the Russians want to be responsible global citizens, they need to prove it and get out of Ukraine.

* * *

DANIEL WOODALL

Hon. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Liberal caucus, I extend condolences to the family and friends of Constable Daniel Woodall, killed in the line of duty last evening, in Edmonton, Alberta.

Our wishes for a quick recovery are also extended to Sergeant Jason Harley, who was injured during the same incident.

Constable Woodall worked on the hate crimes units of Edmonton Police Services, having transferred from the Manchester police of Great Britain eight years ago.

As Police Chief Knecht stated, “this is a tragedy”. However, their service is heartened by the words of police forces worldwide that share in grief due to a common bond. We, too, in this place share that grief and add our respect for police officers and all they do.

Constable Woodall was 35, and is survived by his wife Claire and two children. I am told he was doing what he loved: policing. However, he also was a passionate soccer supporter, which sounds about right, coming from England.

Again, to Claire, family and colleagues, our heartfelt sympathy.

* * *

CANADA PENSION PLAN

Mrs. Susan Truppe (London North Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Canada Pension Plan Investment Board has an independent mandate that is very clear, which is to invest the best interests of hard-working Canadians who have paid into it. It operates independently from government to invest funds on behalf of its 18 million Canadians who contribute and benefit from it. That helps ensure that the retirement funds Canadians rely upon remain safe and secure.

However, the Liberal leader has admitted he would use “alternative sources of capital, such as pension funds” to pay for his irresponsible spending. It gets worse. The Liberal leader also said, of his spending schemes “It is time for a new revenue source”. Canadians know what that means: another tax hike from the Liberal leader.

On behalf of Canada's hard-working seniors and future retirees, our Conservative government says, “Hands off their pensions”.

* * *

ETHICS

Mr. Peter Julian (Burnaby—New Westminster, NDP): Mr. Speaker, with the Auditor General's report on the Senate expense scandal tabled today, Canadians are finally getting some answers on the Conservative and Liberal corruption that has taken hold in the Senate, and it is not pretty.

[Translation]

The Mike Duffy trial is just the tip of the iceberg. Almost half of the Senate was involved in illegal spending. In his report, the Auditor General has named a group of three senators with considerable control over the Senate: the Speaker of the Senate, Mr. Housakos, who was just appointed by the Prime Minister himself; the leader of the Liberal opposition, James Cowan; and the government leader in the Senate, Claude Carignan. This is appalling.

• (1415)

[English]

The Liberals and the Conservatives are hoping Canadians will look the other way and ignore the rot in the undemocratic and unelected Senate, but Canadians know better.

Oral Questions

This October, Canadians will be able to vote for the change they want and actually get it, in voting for an NDP government on October 19.

* * *

DANIEL WOODALL

Mr. Jim Eglinski (Yellowhead, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is with sadness that I speak today. Yesterday, tragedy struck Edmonton, as Constable Daniel Woodall, a veteran police officer, died of the injuries he suffered in the line of duty. Our thoughts and prayers are with the family of Constable Woodall and his fellow Edmonton police officers during this difficult time.

We wish a good recovery to Sergeant Jason Harley, who also suffered injuries during the intervention.

It is a tragic reminder of the dangers faced by members of our law enforcement community who work selflessly each day to keep us safe in Canada.

The Speaker: It is my understanding that there have been discussions among representatives of all parties in the House and that there is agreement to observe a moment of silence in honour of the fallen police officer in Edmonton, Alberta.

[A moment of silence observed]

ORAL QUESTIONS

[Translation]

ETHICS

Ms. Megan Leslie (Halifax, NDP): Mr. Speaker, trying to cover up Senate scandals has become routine for the Prime Minister's Office: watering down an internal Senate report and a \$90,000 cheque for Senator Duffy. The Auditor General's report on the Senate scandal is even more distressing.

Was the Prime Minister's Office in contact with the senators before the report was released?

[English]

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it was the Senate that actually invited the Auditor General in to examine its expenses. We understand that the report has been tabled and been made public. We expect the Senate to implement the recommendations.

Ms. Megan Leslie (Halifax, NDP): Mr. Speaker, that member and that government refuse to come clean with Canadians about whether the Prime Minister's Office was in touch with any senators before this report was tabled.

Why are Conservatives so afraid to tell the truth? Could it be because eight of the senators who are named in the report were appointed by the Prime Minister? Or could it be because the Prime Minister's hand-picked Senate Speaker was also named in the report? Or maybe it could be because Senate leaders named in the audit still have their very own appeals process?

Oral Questions

The Conservatives have a history of cover-ups. Are they now working with Conservative senators to do damage control?

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, again as I just said, it was the Senate that invited in the Auditor General to examine its expenses. I understand that the Auditor General has put in place a number of recommendations and we hope the Senate will follow those recommendations.

At the same time, what is highlighted is that when people deliberately abuse taxpayer resources, Canadians have a right to expect that money to be repaid and if individuals have done it deliberately, they face the full extent of the law.

I certainly hope the NDP members will reflect on that. I know they owe \$2.7 million. I hope they will reflect on that and will consider repaying the taxpayers the \$2.7 million that they owe them.

Ms. Megan Leslie (Halifax, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Canadians deserve better than a scandal-plagued self-policing Senate and that member's embarrassing non-answers. The Auditor General is calling for transformative change and independent Senate oversight.

After coming here to reform the Senate, now the Conservatives are defending the status quo and Senate corruption. Do they agree with the Senate Speaker that those senators "should be thanked by the population" for their actions, or do they agree with us and the Auditor General that transformative change is needed now?

• (1420)

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we learned last night that it was a priority of the NDP to hold a constitutional conference to open up the Constitution and to hold a referendum with respect to the next steps on the Senate. That is not something we will do. We will continue to focus on jobs and economic growth because that is the priority of Canadians.

At the same time, what is very clear is that the NDP owes \$2.7 million. There is only one taxpayer and whether it is a senator or whether it is a member of Parliament, there are 68 members of the NDP caucus who owe \$2.7 million. I believe that is three times as much as the Auditor General identified in the Senate report. I hope the New Democrats will pay it back.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, welcome to Absurdistan.

The Conservatives would have us believe that the Prime Minister personally appointed Senator Housakos to the speakership of the Senate without ever asking him a single question about his expenses or how he planned to handle the breaking scandal. Frankly, the Conservatives are once again taking us for fools.

Could they have the decency to be a tiny bit transparent and tell us what contact there was between the Prime Minister's Office and Senator Housakos before the report was released?

[*English*]

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Senator Housakos was a bipartisan appointment on the recommen-

ation of the leader of the Liberals and the leader of the government in the Senate. At the same time, what this report identifies and what all of us should understand is that there is only one taxpayer. There is only one taxpayer and whether it is a senator or it is a member of Parliament, when people deliberately mislead the Canadian people, when they owe them money, they should pay it back.

Now we understand there are some senators who owe some funds, but there are also 68 members of the NDP caucus. I hope they will reflect on this and pay the money back.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the people deserve the truth, and they deserve answers from their government.

The Auditor General's report made it clear that the Senate is corrupt. It is clearly too far gone for us to help. We need changes right away for sure, but we also need an independent oversight body.

Until we abolish the Senate, which we will, will the government finally work with us to set up an independent oversight body and get the truth? Or will the parliamentary secretary continue to cling to his feeble attacks with no regard for transparency?

[*English*]

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my understanding is that the Auditor General has made some recommendations, and we expect that the Senate will follow those recommendations.

At the same time, we know that it is a priority of the NDP to hold a referendum with respect to the Constitution. It is ironic, since the member opposite has written 29 separate cheques to a separatist party. This is the NDP that wants to open up the Constitution and have a referendum, with that particular separatist member as its lead.

I think not. We will continue to focus on jobs and economic growth and trying to get back the \$2.7 million that they owe the Canadian taxpayer.

* * *

[*Translation*]

PENSIONS

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Beauséjour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of State for Finance said that strengthening the Canada pension plan is like using a bazooka; the Minister of Employment said that the CPP is at odds with job creation; the Prime Minister wanted Alberta to withdraw from the CPP; and the former foreign affairs minister described it as white collar crime.

Instead of insulting this program, which has helped so many Canadians, why will the Conservatives not work with the provinces to develop a real, credible plan to strengthen and expand the CPP, which is incredibly important to all Canadians?

Oral Questions

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals have confirmed that they want to impose a new \$1,000 tax on every worker who earns \$60,000 a year. Small and medium-sized businesses, which employ these workers, will also have to pay this \$1,000 tax for each employee. Business owners are telling us that this will kill jobs and hurt Canadian families.

We oppose the new tax proposed by the Liberals.

[*English*]

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Wascana, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, just repeating a falsehood does not make it true.

Most Canadians are seriously troubled about not having enough to live on in their retirement. Some three-quarters in the private sector do not have a company pension. Typical 35-year-olds today are saving only half of what their parents did. Among those in their 50s, two-thirds have less than \$100,000 set aside and one-third has nothing at all.

Canadians want a comprehensive solution. Will the government take the advice of the late Jim Flaherty and begin a modest, phased in, fully funded expansion of the Canada pension plan?

•(1425)

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal Party has confirmed that it wants to impose Kathleen Wynne's proposal for a new payroll tax on Canadians. According to the Wynne Liberal government, this would be about \$1,000 in additional taxes for every single worker earning \$60,000 a year.

Worse yet, the small business employing that worker would have to match that new tax. The Canadian Federation of Independent Business says that businesses would lay people off and cut wages, and some would even close their doors.

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Wascana, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance himself confirmed last week that CPP premiums are not payroll taxes. They do not belong to the government, he said. They always belong to the individual pensioner, he said. The CPP Investment Board gets impressive results, he said.

The finance minister must agree with the late Jim Flaherty, who reported:

...strong support for the Canada Pension Plan and the central role that it plays in our government-supported retirement income system.

Why not work with the provinces on a strong, comprehensive CPP?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we already have that, but that is not what the Liberals are proposing. They are proposing a new \$1,000 payroll tax on every single worker in Canada. They want to take the Kathleen Wynne plan, which again, is \$1,000 in new taxes for the average worker earning \$60,000 a year. Then, they say they will invest that in so-called infrastructure programs.

We do not want the Canadian people to have their pension plan raided to pay for Liberal pork-barrel politics and pay higher job-killing taxes.

* * *

[*Translation*]

ETHICS

Ms. Ève Pécelet (La Pointe-de-l'Île, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister's Office did everything in its power to protect senators and cover up the expense scandal every step of the way. The Senate became a treasure trove for Conservative Party fundraisers. At the very beginning, when we were talking about Mike Duffy's place of residence in 2013, the Prime Minister stood up for him. The member for Nepean—Carleton said that Nigel Wright did the honourable thing by giving Mr. Duffy a cheque.

Who in the Prime Minister's Office was in contact with the senators about the Auditor General's report?

[*English*]

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as members know, the Auditor General has released his report. Just today it was tabled in the Senate. It was the Senate that called in the Auditor General to review its expenses, and we expect that it will implement the recommendations of the Auditor General.

At the same time, what is clear is that deliberate misuse of taxpayer dollars is completely unacceptable. There is one taxpayer and, whether it is a member of Parliament or a Senator, Canadians expect their money to be used wisely. There are 68 members of the NDP caucus who deliberately misused taxpayers' dollars to the tune of \$2.7 million. That is three times the amount the Auditor General identified in the Senate, and they should pay that money back.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Ève Pécelet (La Pointe-de-l'Île, NDP): Mr. Speaker, what the member is refusing to say is that, when the scandal broke, the Prime Minister came to Mike Duffy's defence. He defended Pamela Wallin, and he said that he had complete confidence in Nigel Wright before going back on his word. Now, the Speaker of the Senate is saying that he has done nothing wrong, even though he plans to repay his expenses, and he is asking Canadians to thank him for that. Well done. That is a first-rate apology.

Will the Prime Minister finally keep the promise that he made to Canadians or is he going to continue to defend the indefensible in the Senate?

[*English*]

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we obviously expect that the Senate will implement the recommendations of the Auditor General.

Oral Questions

However, the member of Parliament opposite who just asked the question owes the Canadian taxpayer \$27,000. Members of the NDP think it is funny to owe the taxpayers \$2.7 million. The Canadian taxpayers do not think it is funny because they work too hard for the money they send to us. They expect it to be used in a responsible fashion, and when it is not, they expect it to be repaid. Therefore, the NDP members could do the right thing. They should look at the Auditor General's report, do the right thing for taxpayers, and pay back the millions of dollars—

• (1430)

The Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Alfred-Pellan. [Translation]

Ms. Rosane Doré Lefebvre (Alfred-Pellan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives tried to lead us to believe that Nigel Wright acted alone, until the RCMP found otherwise. They also tried to lead us to believe that there was no agreement with Mike Duffy, until the RCMP found otherwise. It is not surprising that people do not believe what the government says. The member for Nepean—Carleton said that they were going to maximize accountability and minimize costs.

What does the government plan to do to really clean up the Senate?

[English]

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we know what the NDP agenda is with respect to the Senate. The New Democrats said yesterday that they want to hold a referendum and open up the Constitution. They said it was their priority to open up the Constitution, hold negotiations, and ultimately have a referendum. That is not the priority of Canadians. The priority of Canadians is that we continue to focus on jobs and economic growth. That is what we will continue to do.

At the same time, Canadians want their money to be used wisely. There are 68 members of that caucus who owe Canadians close to \$3 million, and I hope they will repay the Canadian taxpayers the money they owe them.

[Translation]

Ms. Rosane Doré Lefebvre (Alfred-Pellan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Auditor General is an independent arbitrator. He gave us facts, not his opinions. It has never been more clear: it is time to do away with this outdated institution. The Auditor General recommends a serious housecleaning to resolve the problems with the expense claim system in the Senate.

Will the government finally support the NDP's proposal to stop the Senate spending spree and put an end to partisanship in the upper chamber once and for all?

[English]

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have put a number of reforms on the table. It is now up to the Council of the Federation to take a look at those reforms. What we will not do, of course, is reopen the Constitution and set Canada on this course, which would culminate in a referendum. This is what the

NDP has suggested it would do. That is not what we will do. We will continue to focus on jobs and economic growth.

At the same time, the Auditor General has come forward with some recommendations. We hope the Senate will follow those recommendations, and we hope the New Democrats will do the right thing for taxpayers, and refund the \$2.7 million they owe them.

Ms. Irene Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Mr. Speaker, they will say anything.

The Auditor General has issued a dire warning about Senate spending. There are 30 senators implicated, and a whole system of oversight has been declared a failure. After two years of digging through the expenses of current and former senators, Canadians certainly do not need a cooked-up appeals process designed to get senators off the hook. Do the government members not understand that the Auditor General is an independent third-party arbiter? Is it not clear that he is supplying a finding of fact, not opinions, as they do?

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we welcome the Auditor General's report, and we expect that the Senate will follow the recommendations of the report.

However, the height of arrogance is coming from the NDP right now. There are 68 members of the NDP who owe \$2.7 million to the Canadian taxpayer. They are being taken to court to repay that \$2.7 million, and they have refused to do it.

They should do the right thing: repay the taxpayers the \$2.7 million they owe them. We will continue to focus on jobs and economic growth.

Ms. Irene Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is crystal clear today that the status quo in the Senate is not acceptable. It cannot go on.

There are simple steps that do not involve the Constitution that could be taken today to bring in reform, but the government and its Liberal friends steadfastly refuse to take any action.

Will the Conservatives either agree to make changes to the Senate or else explain to Canadians why they think it is okay for senators to spend thousands of dollars flying first class across the country on the taxpayers' dime to raise money for the Conservative Party of Canada?

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as I have said, we will not open up the Constitution and engage in constitutional battles, which would culminate in a referendum, as the NDP is proposing.

The member could help me, if she would have the member for Louis-Hébert repay the \$31,000 he owes, the member for Beauport—Limoilou repay the \$31,000 he owes, the member for Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles pay the \$35,000 she owes, the member for Scarborough Southwest repay the \$141,567 he owes, the member for Louis-Saint-Laurent pay back—

• (1435)

The Speaker: The hon. member for Timmins—James Bay.

Oral Questions

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we go from fiction to fact. The Auditor General of Canada has shown a damning exposé of the Senate.

We are learning that they were flying first class to do corporate business and personal pet projects. The Auditor General has once again flagged that we have to end this issue of self-policing.

This report belongs at the feet of the Prime Minister. He promised Canadians reform, and instead his staff delivered cover-ups, whitewash, and a bribe.

Why has the Prime Minister gone to ground when Canadians are looking to him to show some leadership in dealing with this corrupt institution?

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday we had speaker after speaker from the NDP, and not one of them admitted it. Not until the very end, when they were asked how they would actually reform the Senate, did they actually admit they would have a constitutional conference and they would ultimately have a referendum.

That is not the priority of Canadians. We know there is not unanimous support to modify the Senate. What we are going to continue to do is focus on jobs and economic growth.

In the meantime, I am going to see if I could get the member for LaSalle—Émard to pay back the \$27,866 she owes, and the member for Rivière-des-Mille-Îles to pay back the \$29,845. The member for Brossard—La Prairie could help us out by repaying the—

The Speaker: Order. The hon. member for Timmins—James Bay.

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives really have lost their way. They hide behind that poisonous sideshow, which is really just to run cover for their insider friends.

What happened to the Conservative Party? It is the Prime Minister's appointed senators who are defying hard-working Canadians who pay their way and play by the rules.

The senators are saying that they are not going to listen to the audit, that they will look at the findings. I am sorry, but the Auditor General's report is not an opinion. This is a forensic audit.

Why is the government standing in solidarity with the corruption in the Senate, rather than standing with the Canadian taxpayers?

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is very clear that when Canadian taxpayers' money is abused, they expect actions to be taken. That is what we have been fighting for since we were elected in 2006.

The member does not seem to understand that there is only one taxpayer. Maybe the member and the caucus should look at the people in the gallery who send their money here and expect it to be used wisely, and explain to them why they refuse to pay back the \$2.7 million.

Why does the member for Chicoutimi—Le Fjord refuse to pay back the \$28,152? Why does the member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine not pay back the \$169,000—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order, order. The hon. member for Timmins—James Bay.

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I think that rant explains the story of the demise of the Conservative-Reform agenda. Remember a Prime Minister who came to Ottawa riding a white horse? Instead he will be leaving flogging a dead horse, taking Duffy and Wallin and the member for Oak Ridges—Markham with him. What changed?

Remember that Reform agenda? It was the member for Nepean—Carleton who said they would maximize accountability and minimize the cost. Instead they have maximized partisan abuse by their crony insider friends, and they have no willingness to stand up to the disgrace that is the Senate, because the Prime Minister appointed them.

Why will they not be accountable to the Canadian public?

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there is only one taxpayer, and it does not matter whether it is senators or members of Parliament; when they abuse the taxpayers, they should pay that money back. That is why I encourage the member for Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot to repay the \$30,023. The member for Outremont, the Leader of the Opposition, owes \$400,000 to the Canadian taxpayer.

Standing up for the taxpayer is what we have done since day one, and we will continue to do it. Whether it is a senator or a member of Parliament, they should pay back the \$2.7 million they owe.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order. The hon. member for York West.

* * *

● (1440)

PENSIONS

Hon. Judy Sgro (York West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Conservatives have always hated the Canada pension plan. They voted against it and its creation in 1965—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order, order. We only sing on Wednesdays, and there is only one song to sing.

The hon. member for York West now has the floor.

Hon. Judy Sgro: Mr. Speaker, Conservatives have always hated the Canada pension plan. They voted against its creation in 1965 and have voted against improving it every time since, but no Conservative hates it more than the current Prime Minister. He actively campaigned to eliminate it entirely and demanded that Alberta opt out of it, while his closest adviser referred to it as a Ponzi scheme.

As the Prime Minister raises the age of retirement and slashes numerous benefits, how can Canadians possibly trust the Prime Minister to safeguard the Canada pension plan?

Oral Questions

Hon. Kevin Sorenson (Minister of State (Finance), CPC): Mr. Speaker, that allegation is absolutely nonsense. Since the day we were elected, our government has consistently lowered taxes and created new voluntary options for Canadians to save, like the tax-free savings account, but the Liberal leader revealed that he will fund infrastructure projects with “alternative sources of capital, such as pension funds”, and he is going to do that while forcing Canadians to take a \$1,000 pay cut.

On behalf of all retirees and those soon to be retirees, I would respectfully say to the Liberal leader, “keep your hands off our pension funds”.

* * *

TAXATION

Mr. Frank Valeriote (Guelph, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals' fairness for the middle-class plan is more generous and better targeted than the current Conservative plan. It will simplify the complex system of child benefit payments into one bigger tax-free monthly payment for families that most need help and will reduce their income by 7%. The minister does not want to talk about the Liberal plan, because he knows that more Canadian families will benefit than under the system he is defending.

Why are Conservatives fighting our Liberal plan, knowing that they are keeping money away from struggling middle-class families who need the help the most?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the worst thing one could do for those families is hit them with a \$1,000 payroll tax for every single worker. For a couple with both spouses earning \$60,000 a year, the Liberal payroll tax would cost \$2,000, and then the small business that employs that couple would also have to match that tax increase. That would kill jobs, according to the Canadian Federation of Independent Business.

Now the Liberal leader has revealed that he would use the money as a source of revenue to fund infrastructure projects. Canadians are telling the Liberal Party, “keep your hands off our pensions”.

[Translation]

Mr. Marc Garneau (Westmount—Ville-Marie, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, compared to the Conservatives' plan, the Liberals' plan would provide a bigger monthly child benefit payment to 9 out of 10 families. The benefit would not be taxable either. Our plan also includes a major tax cut for the middle class.

Our plan contrasts sharply with the Conservatives' policy, which further benefits a small percentage of Canadians who are already faring quite well.

Why does the government not change its priorities and focus on Canadians who are most in need?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals admit that they want to get rid of the universal child care benefit; they want to get rid of income splitting, also called the family tax cut; and they want to get rid of the tax-free savings account.

Even after all these tax increases and all these budget cuts for families, the Liberals have a \$2 billion shortfall and they admit it. When the Liberals have a shortfall, they just raise taxes for families.

We oppose the Liberal taxes.

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EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Mr. Robert Aubin (Trois-Rivières, NDP): Mr. Speaker, dozens of lawyers, professors, trade unionists and community workers are condemning the culture of secrecy around the Social Security Tribunal of Canada.

Of the 10,000 rulings made by the tribunal since 2013, only 148 have been made public. When Canadians take their case to the Social Security Tribunal of Canada, they are entitled to all the jurisprudence in order to be as prepared as possible.

Will the Conservatives make public all the tribunal's decisions, and if so, when?

• (1445)

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the tribunal was created in order to provide an appeal process for all Canadians who are not satisfied with the department's decisions. There are obviously certain privacy concerns with respect to the appellants.

However, we are ensuring that Canadians have a means to appeal when they are not satisfied with the decision. That is a fair way to ensure that they have access to the benefits to which they are entitled.

[English]

Mr. Robert Chisholm (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, NDP): Mr. Speaker, as the economy stumbles, EI claims are increasing. Unfortunately, after Liberal and Conservative cuts to the program, access to EI benefits is at a record low. Fewer than four in 10 unemployed Canadians receive any benefits at all, yet the Conservatives are raiding the EI surpluses to give tax handouts to the wealthy, while the Liberals want to raid the fund for corporate tax cuts.

When will the Liberals and the Conservatives learn to get their hands off the money meant for unemployed Canadians?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, quite the contrary, we are reducing employment insurance payroll taxes for both small businesses and the people who work for them. We will see the payroll taxes drop by 21% in just two years as a result of decisions the government has made and because of the strong employment record of our economy.

The Liberals and the NDP propose a 45-day work year. That is, people would work 45 days and then collect EI for the rest of the year. Of course, in addition to causing chaos in the labour market, it would also drive up billions of dollars in extra payroll taxes that would kill yet more jobs.

Oral Questions

[Translation]

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill, NDP): Mr. Speaker, thousands of residential school survivors have issued a clear call for reconciliation and action. Now is the time for the government to show some leadership. The Prime Minister will meet with the Pope on Thursday when he visits the Vatican.

As a first step, will the Prime Minister take this opportunity to request an official apology to residential school survivors for the role the Catholic Church played?

Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we want to thank all of the survivors for their courage and, of course, for sharing their experience with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada and all Canadians.

When the Prime Minister made a historic apology on behalf of all Canadians in 2008, the government recognized that the policy of assimilation at residential schools caused great harm and that the schools had no place in Canada.

I have personally written to the provinces, the territories, the Canadian Federation of Municipalities and the Vatican to inform them of the report and the recommendations from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.

[English]

Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill, NDP): Mr. Speaker, sadly, what we did not hear there was a commitment to reconciliation, and that is what survivors of residential schools are looking for.

While we are there, it is pretty difficult to believe that the Conservatives are committed to reconciliation when the way they treat someone who is doing nothing more than fighting for fairness for aboriginal children is to respond by humiliating and ostracizing them.

The Human Rights Tribunal found that David McArthur retaliated against Cindy Blackstock, but instead of condemning his actions, the government promoted him.

Will the minister recognize, in the House, that the actions of David McArthur have no place in a democracy, and will the minister apologize for its appalling attitude toward Cindy Blackstock?

Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government remains committed to the health, the safety, and the well-being of first nations children throughout the country.

Since 2006, our government has increased child and family services on reserve by over 40%, and we are taking action, in collaboration with all the partners, to ensure that children and families have the support they need to lead healthy and safe lives.

As to the specific case raised by the hon. member, we are reviewing the decision to determine next steps.

● (1450)

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mr. David Sweet (Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Westdale, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the terrorist death cult ISIS has made it clear that it targets by name Canada and Canadians.

Canada and Canada's brave Canadian Forces did not sit on the sidelines 71 years ago, and we are not sitting on the sidelines today. Can the Minister of Foreign Affairs update this House on Canada's mission as part of the coalition to degrade and ultimately defeat ISIS?

Hon. Rob Nicholson (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, ISIS has declared war on Canada, and that is why Canada is not sitting on the sidelines. I am pleased to inform this House that the Royal Canadian Air Force has now surpassed 100 air strikes against ISIS, including strikes near Baiji and Mosul in this past week. Furthermore, the RCAF has flown over 1,000 sorties. We are providing world-class battlefield surveillance, refuelling support, and precision air strikes against the enemy.

As always, we, along with all our allies, thank the men and women of the Canadian Armed Forces for the work that they do.

* * *

EMPLOYMENT

Ms. Peggy Nash (Parkdale—High Park, NDP): Mr. Speaker, under the Conservatives, weak job growth has not come close to keeping pace with population growth.

Blacks has just announced that nearly 500 more jobs will be lost, and yet another closure in the retail sector adds more than 1.3 million to the number of Canadians already unemployed. Many of these workers will not qualify under the Conservative cuts to EI, leaving them without support while they look for new jobs.

Why are the Conservatives blowing money on tax breaks for the wealthy few instead of helping the workers who need it most?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Telus, which acquired Blacks in 2009, said, "Technological innovations have changed the way Canadians take and share photographs with fewer of us using retail photo outlets".

The NDP's solution to that would be to raise taxes on companies like Telus, which employ millions of Canadians across the country. They would raise taxes on those who create jobs and on those who work.

We do exactly the opposite. We are lowering taxes on job creators, including and especially small businesses, and we are putting more money in the pockets of families so that they can spend and invest in their communities.

*Oral Questions***HEALTH**

Mr. Murray Rankin (Victoria, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Canadians pay among the highest prices in the OECD for prescription drugs, leaving one in ten Canadians unable to fill prescriptions.

Doctors, nurses, pharmacists, health experts, and seniors organizations have all called for the creation of a national drug plan to make prescription drugs more affordable. The provinces have said they are willing to talk, but the federal government will not even come to the table.

Why are the Conservatives showing such a shameful lack of leadership in addressing the high cost of drugs for Canadians?

Hon. Rona Ambrose (Minister of Health, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have repeatedly said to Canadians and to my provincial counterparts that they are getting ripped off when it comes to the cost of drugs.

They negotiate their plans separately instead of together, and I continuously encourage them to get together and invite us to the table to look at a national drug purchasing plan, including, and foremost, to talk about bulk purchasing.

We can save Canadians billions of dollars if we do this together, and I am at the table with them.

* * *

[*Translation*]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. François Choquette (Drummond, NDP): Mr. Speaker, 16 communities along the St. Lawrence River are taking action to ban microbeads.

Found in a variety of cosmetics and toothpastes, these plastic microparticles are contaminating the St. Lawrence River. The NDP has shown leadership on the issue by successfully seeking unanimous consent of the House to have microbeads placed on Canada's list of toxic substances. However, we have heard nothing since then.

What are the Conservatives waiting for before they act on our motion and protect our environment?

[*English*]

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Environment Canada has initiated a scientific review to assess the effect of microbeads on the environment. This review builds on the work we have done to reduce the risk of harmful chemicals.

Since 2006, we have taken action on more than 2,700 substances under the chemicals management plan, and we are on track to assess 4,300 substances by 2020. We are also putting the issue of microbeads on the agenda of this summer's meetings of the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment.

• (1455)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Hélène LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Montreal is one of the 16 communities along the St. Lawrence standing together to ban microbeads. However, it is up to the federal government to approve personal care products. The minister has yet

to act on the NDP motion passed in the House to ban microbeads from these products.

Given the urgent need to act, when will the government take action and protect our waterways by banning microbeads?

[*English*]

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (Minister of the Environment, Minister of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency and Minister for the Arctic Council, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as I stated, Environment Canada has initiated a scientific review to assess the effects of microbeads on the environment. Scientists are reviewing the issue of microbeads. This review builds on the work that we have done on the risk of harmful chemicals in our environment. We will also be including the microbead issue on the agenda this month in Manitoba's meetings of the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment. Now that is action.

* * *

CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

Hon. John McCallum (Markham—Unionville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, throughout their decade of Conservative failure, processing times for families have moved steadily up, with a sharp jump after the budget cuts of 2011. We see family members who cannot get into the country for important events such as marriages, funerals or the birth of a loved one. Families are left separated by the Conservative government's gross incompetence.

Will the Conservatives finally take responsibility for this mess that they, and only they, have created?

Hon. Chris Alexander (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that is absolutely nonsense. The number of visitor visas has never been higher. Citizenship applications are being processed within about a year. Iraq and Syrian refugees are being processed within record times. Sponsored spouses are receiving their work permits within months. Under the express entry, economic immigrants are being processed within weeks or months.

None of that happened under the Liberals. All of that has been opposed by the Liberals, because they are wedded to backlogs, to political influence and to abuse in the immigration system.

That member and the Liberal Party of Canada have become the anti-immigration party.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration is so wrong. He is absolutely silly and knows nothing in terms of what he is talking about.

The delays that the minister has caused are cruel, and it is getting worse. These delays are negatively affecting families, not only in Canada but also abroad. Constituencies and the people we are trying to serve continue to have to wait as the minister's incompetence in increasing delays is causing problems.

When will the minister going to fix the problem that he created?

Oral Questions

Hon. Chris Alexander (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, CPC): Mr. Speaker, if I understand correctly, the hon. member thinks it is silly to reform the immigration system. It is silly to have doubled the number of foreign students in Canada. It is silly to have given over a million visitor visas to people wanting to visit Canada for legitimate reasons from around the world, most of them 10-year, multiple entry visas. That never existed under the Liberal Party of Canada.

These reforms were opposed every step of the way by the Liberal Party of Canada. The Liberal Party of Canada is against large-scale immigration and good service for immigrants and visitors to Canada. It is clear now that it is willful—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Surrey North.

* * *

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Jasbir Sandhu (Surrey North, NDP): Mr. Speaker, last night there was yet another shooting in Surrey near a busy restaurant patio. People are terrified and parents are afraid to let their children play outside. My community needs to know that the federal government is doing everything it can to stop the violence.

However, the Conservatives are not even providing answers to their questions. Therefore, will the minister finally please tell us the timeline for the proposed 100 RCMP officers?

Hon. Steven Blaney (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our thoughts are with those who were impacted by what took place last night in Surrey. Certainly, this is strong motivation to keep on and push forward with the measures we put forward. I would invite the member opposite to support those initiatives.

Those 100 boots on the ground are being deployed. It is an operational matter. However, in the meantime, the member can support our tough on crime agenda. He can also support the budget where we are investing in prevention.

We are standing up for the people of Surrey, and I invite the member to support our initiatives.

• (1500)

Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims (Newton—North Delta, NDP): Mr. Speaker, this is about the safety of my community, not about partisan political gains. Standing up for Surrey means providing answers and a clear timeline.

Surrey desperately needs help now to make its streets safer. We have been waiting too long, and with each shooting, families are becoming more and more afraid.

Why can the minister not give our community the news it is waiting for? When are the new officers arriving in Surrey?

[Translation]

Hon. Steven Blaney (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the answer is very clear: as soon as officers are available, they are put on the ground. We are working hand in hand with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

What is outrageous is when I see, day after day, week after week, members stand up and not actually do anything to protect their communities, although they are ready to make a lot of noise.

On this side of the House, we are taking real action for the community of Surrey and for all communities facing security challenges. I wish to congratulate our members who stand up to support budget measures, prevention and more boots on the ground—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Saskatoon—Humboldt.

* * *

[English]

TAXATION

Mr. Brad Trost (Saskatoon—Humboldt, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our Conservative government stands for the Canadian middle class, not against it. We want to keep taxes low.

Could the Minister of Employment and Social Development please inform the House what our government is doing to give Canadians more opportunity to spend on their priorities?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, to start with, we are opposing the Liberal-NDP plan for a new \$1,000 payroll tax, which they would impose on every single middle-class worker and the small businesses that employ them.

In contrast, we have brought in the family tax cut and benefits. Through income splitting, families can shave up to \$2,000. Through the increased universal child care benefit, parents will receive almost \$2,000 for each child under 6 and \$720 for kids aged 6 through 17. The first big payments come out on July 20.

We encourage all Canadians to ensure they are registered so they get the money they deserve.

* * *

PUBLIC SAFETY

Ms. Joyce Murray (Vancouver Quadra, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, massive budget cuts to the Canada Border Services Agency are harming the security of Canadians.

This week, the security screening process failed for an entire flight of international passengers who arrived in Vancouver.

The government talks about security but undermines actual border security with budget cuts and clawbacks to finance tax breaks for the wealthy. How can the Conservatives find \$50 million in border services funding for gazebos in Muskoka, but they will not fund services to protect Canadians at our borders?

Hon. Steven Blaney (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it seems the member has found her question in a Cracker Jack box.

Points of Order

I want to reassure the member that we have increased front-line officers by 26%. We have increased the budget for the CBSA and every step of the way the Liberals opposed it.

Regarding what took place last night, as we know, airline companies have the responsibility to ensure that international travellers are presented to the CBSA for examination. In cases where individuals do not properly report for border processing as a result of errors caused by air carriers, these incidents are reviewed. The CBSA is working closely with the airline.

* * *

VETERANS AFFAIRS

Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Edmonton Sergeant Kevin Nanson survived a bomb blast in Afghanistan. It broke his back, fractured his skull and left him in wheelchair. Then the Department of National Defence hired and paid an incompetent contractor to retrofit a home for him, leaving it uninhabitable.

To add insult to injury, DND will be charging Sergeant Nanson \$2,000 a month for rent on top of his mortgage and clawing back the remainder of his compensation to pay for the uncompleted retrofit.

Why is the government making Sergeant Nanson suffer even more?

Hon. Erin O'Toole (Minister of Veterans Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member and veterans and Canadians who have been inquiring about this case.

Sergeant Nanson served Canada with distinction, and Canada will be there for Sergeant Nanson and his family. The renovations to the home have been approved. While the problems with the contractor are being resolved, we have directed that Sergeant Nanson and his family can remain in military housing at no cost after his release until the contracting is complete.

* * *

• (1505)

PENSIONS

Mr. Joe Daniel (Don Valley East, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government has consistently lowered taxes and created new voluntary options for Canadians to save, like the tax-free savings account.

In contrast, the Liberal leader revealed a risky spending scheme that would force Canadians to take a \$1,000 pay cut. It is clear that the Liberal leader has only one plan for our economy, and that is to raise taxes.

Could the Minister of Finance please tell the House what our government is doing to help Canadians save?

Hon. Joe Oliver (Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we know the Liberal leader's numbers do not add up. In fact, he is more than \$3 billion short and counting. Now he has made yet another reckless spending promise and said that he would need to find alternative sources of capital, such as pension funds. This would undermine the CPP's independence and put pensioners at risk.

Canadians should be concerned. I say, "hands off Canada's pensions".

* * *

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Massimo Pacetti (Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel, Ind.): Mr. Speaker, the scientific evidence is confirmed. That is why on March 24 the House voted unanimously for the government to take immediate measures to address the environmental menace of microbeads. Since then, no measures have been taken. That is hardly immediate.

The good news is that my private member bill, Bill C-684, has the solution, which is to simply ban the manufacture or importation into Canada of any personal care product containing microbeads.

Would the Minister of Environment do the right thing and ban microbeads, as my bill prescribes, before the end of this parliamentary session?

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (Minister of the Environment, Minister of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency and Minister for the Arctic Council, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as I stated earlier, Environment Canada has initiated a scientific review to assess the effects of microbeads to the environment. That review builds on the work that we have done to reduce the risk of harmful chemicals.

This issue will also be included at the meeting of the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment later this month in Manitoba. I look forward to working with my colleagues at the federal-provincial-territorial level to address this issue.

* * *

PRESENCE IN GALLERY

The Speaker: I would like to draw to the attention of hon. members the presence in the gallery of His Excellency Dr. Ólafur R. Grímsson, President of the Republic of Iceland.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: I would also like to draw to the attention of hon. members the presence in the gallery of His Excellency Gebran Bassil, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants of the Republic of Lebanon.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

* * *

POINTS OF ORDER

BILL C-59—SELECTION OF REPORT STAGE AMENDMENTS

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I apologize for having to scramble. My comments will be brief as a result.

Government Orders

The hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands did not provide me with any notice that she would be raising this point of order, so I had to take some time to try to get some record out of the blues, which I did only a few moments ago. I did want to respond to the points she raised which relate to the decision you will make on the admissibility of her amendments, and in particular the application of Standing Order 76.1 and the practices around it.

I think what she is proposing is a dangerous route for the Speaker to go down. She is asking you to make amendments admissible that otherwise would not be on the basis of when certain evidence was heard at the committee.

The difficulty with this proposal is that it would, of course, require the Speaker to become the judge and arbiter of all the evidence that is heard at committees, when it is heard and the details of it. That is not really the Speaker's job. That obviously goes into the realm of what happens at committees. I think it would put the Speaker in a very difficult position, and a very difficult position that would also involve questions of judgment in terms of policy and in terms of values and in terms of issues which go well beyond where a Speaker should go.

Certainly, when it comes to the question of making amendments, there has never, ever been, to my knowledge, a requirement that the amendments that members propose have to be related to evidence that has been presented by witnesses before a committee. There simply has never been any such relationship required. The implication of the obligation the member wishes to place on the Speaker's job is, in fact, to create such a linkage. It has been a significant aspect of a member of Parliament's privileges that members can propose an amendment on any subject that is relevant to the bill in front of them, regardless of whether or not it was supported or presented by a witness appearing at the committee in evidence. I think it would be a dangerous step to go down a path suggesting that there is, there has to be, in some way, some linkage between the two, and that would not be appropriate.

I will point out that there is, under the existing rules and practices with the resolution presented at the committee, absolutely no bar to the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands presenting, on time, amendments identical to those she presented, out of time, for consideration by the committee.

Simply put, if one looks at how this rule is applied in practice, if we look at Standing Order 76.1, one of the notes says, "The Speaker will normally only select motions that were not or could not be presented in committee." It does not say anything about selecting amendments that an MP did not have the idea to present at the time the committee met and considered amendments. It is that "could not be presented".

Wherever the stimulus comes from for an amendment is not at all material, nor should it be material in the decision the Speaker makes on the admissibility of amendments. I think if we start going down that path, it will next be questions of what they read in the newspaper or calls they received, or indeed, input they received from people who intended to be witnesses at the committee and did not appear, or were hoping to appear but were not selected for whatever reason by the committee in its decision on who to hear evidence from. Again, I think that would be a very dangerous step for the Speaker to take.

The fact is the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands did present amendments, did present very many amendments, and has had an opportunity to partake.

Certainly it would be an undue expansion of this rule and of its practice for one to now start allowing this relationship to evidence before committees, and as a result to give some members an opportunity to present proposed amendments after the deadline contemplated and thereby, of course, have knock-on consequences throughout a process of all members in the time of this House.

● (1510)

The Speaker: I thank the hon. government House leader for his intervention on this.

I have taken note of the point of order raised by the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands concerning report stage Motions Nos. 49 and 116 for Bill C-59, an act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on April 21, 2015 and other measures. As I mentioned, I have also taken good note of the intervention made by the hon. Leader of the Government in the House of Commons on this matter.

Given that we are set to begin the debate at report stage of this bill, I will put aside those two amendments and will return with a ruling as soon as possible concerning the specific point of order.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

ECONOMIC ACTION PLAN 2015 ACT, NO. 1

The House proceeded to the consideration of Bill C-59, an act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on April 21, 2015 and other measures, as reported (without amendment) from the committee.

[*English*]

SPEAKER'S RULING

The Speaker: There are 149 motions in amendment standing on the notice paper for the report stage of Bill C-59. All motions, except Motion No. 49 and Motion No. 116, have been examined and the Chair is satisfied that they meet the guidelines expressed in the note to Standing Order 76.1(5) regarding the selection of motions in amendment at report stage.

Motions Nos. 1 to 48, 50 to 115, and 117 to 149 will be grouped for debate and voted upon according to the voting pattern available at the table.

[*Translation*]

I will now put Motions Nos. 1 to 48, 50 to 115 and 117 to 149 to the House.

[*English*]

MOTIONS IN AMENDMENT

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP) moved:

Motion No. 1

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting the long title.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP), seconded by the member for Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet—Bécancour, moved:

Government Orders

Motion No. 2

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting the short title.

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP) moved:

Motion No. 3

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 19.

Motion No. 4

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 29.

Motion No. 5

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 30.

Motion No. 6

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 31.

Motion No. 7

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 32.

Motion No. 8

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 33.

Motion No. 9

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 34.

● (1515)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP), seconded by the member for Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet—Bécancour, moved:

Motion No. 10

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 41.

Motion No. 11

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 42.

Motion No. 12

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 43.

Motion No. 13

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 44.

Motion No. 14

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 45.

Motion No. 15

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 46.

Motion No. 16

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 47.

Motion No. 17

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 48.

Motion No. 18

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 49.

Motion No. 19

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 50.

Motion No. 20

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 51.

Motion No. 21

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 52.

Motion No. 22

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 53.

Motion No. 23

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 54.

Motion No. 24

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 55.

Motion No. 25

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 56.

Motion No. 26

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 57.

Motion No. 27

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 58.

[*English*]

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The hon. House leader for the official opposition is rising on a point of order.

Mr. Peter Julian: Mr. Speaker, I am sorry to interrupt you, but the member for Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet—Bécancour is on his phone and that is not permitted in this House. I have made signs for him to stop his call, but he appears to be ignoring me, and quite frankly, he still is. Members know that the rules in the House mean that a member cannot be talking openly on his or her phone in the House of Commons.

● (1520)

[*Translation*]

The Deputy Speaker: I hope that the member realized that was not acceptable and that he ended his call.

[*English*]

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP), seconded by the member for Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet—Bécancour, moved:

Motion No. 28

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 59.

Motion No. 29

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 60.

Motion No. 30

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 61.

Motion No. 31

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 62.

Motion No. 32

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 63.

Motion No. 33

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 64.

Motion No. 34

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 65.

Motion No. 35

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 66.

Motion No. 36

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 67.

Motion No. 37

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 68.

Motion No. 38

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 69.

Motion No. 39

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 70.

Motion No. 40

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 71.

Motion No. 41

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 72.

Motion No. 42

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 81.

Motion No. 43

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 82.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP) moved:

Motion No. 44

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 83.

Motion No. 45

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 84.

Motion No. 46

Government Orders

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 85.
 Motion No. 47
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 86.
Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP) , seconded by
 the member for Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet—Bécancour, moved:

Motion No. 48
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 87.
 Motion No. 50
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 88.
 Motion No. 51
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 89.
 Motion No. 52
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 90.
 Motion No. 53
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 91.
 Motion No. 54
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 92.
 Motion No. 55
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 93.
 Motion No. 56
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 97.

[*English*]

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP) moved:

Motion No. 57
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 98.
 Motion No. 58
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 99.
 Motion No. 59
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 100.
 Motion No. 60
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 101.
 Motion No. 61
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 102.
 Motion No. 62
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 103.
 Motion No. 63
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 104.
 Motion No. 64
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 105.
 Motion No. 65
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 106.
 Motion No. 66
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 107.
 Motion No. 67
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 108.
 Motion No. 68
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 109.
 Motion No. 69
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 110.
 Motion No. 70
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 111.
 Motion No. 71
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 112.
 Motion No. 72
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 113.
 Motion No. 73
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 114.
 Motion No. 74

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 115.
 Motion No. 75
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 116.
 Motion No. 76
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 117.
 Motion No. 77
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 118.
 Motion No. 78
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 119.
 Motion No. 79
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 120.
 Motion No. 80
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 121.
 Motion No. 81
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 122.
 Motion No. 82
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 123.
 Motion No. 83
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 124.
 Motion No. 84
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 125.
 Motion No. 85
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 126.
 Motion No. 86
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 127.
 Motion No. 87
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 128.
 Motion No. 88
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 129.
 Motion No. 89
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 130.
 Motion No. 90
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 131.
 Motion No. 91
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 132.
 Motion No. 92
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 133.
 Motion No. 93
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 134.
 Motion No. 94
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 135.
 Motion No. 95
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 136.
 Motion No. 96
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 137.
 Motion No. 97
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 138.
 Motion No. 98
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 139.
 Motion No. 99
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 140.
 Motion No. 100
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 141.
 Motion No. 101
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 142.
 Motion No. 102
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 143.
 Motion No. 103
 That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 144.

Government Orders

Motion No. 104

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 145.

Motion No. 105

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 146.

Motion No. 106

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 147.

Motion No. 107

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 148.

Motion No. 108

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 149.

Motion No. 109

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 150.

Motion No. 110

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 151.

Motion No. 111

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 152.

● (1530)

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP), seconded by the member for Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet—Bécancour, moved:

Motion No. 112

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 164.

Motion No. 113

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 165.

Motion No. 114

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 166.

Motion No. 115

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 168.

Motion No. 117

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 169.

Motion No. 118

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 170.

Motion No. 119

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 171.

Motion No. 120

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 172.

Motion No. 121

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 173.

Motion No. 122

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 174.

Motion No. 123

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 175.

Motion No. 124

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 176.

● (1535)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP) moved:

Motion No. 125

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 230.

Motion No. 126

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 231.

Motion No. 127

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 253.

Motion No. 128

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 254.

Motion No. 129

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 255.

Motion No. 130

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 256.

Motion No. 131

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 257.

Motion No. 132

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 258.

Motion No. 133

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 259.

Motion No. 134

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 260.

Motion No. 135

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 261.

Motion No. 136

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 262.

Motion No. 137

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 263.

Motion No. 138

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 264.

Motion No. 139

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 265.

Motion No. 140

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 266.

Motion No. 141

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 267.

Motion No. 142

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 268.

Motion No. 143

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 269.

Motion No. 144

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 270.

Motion No. 145

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 271.

Motion No. 146

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 272.

Motion No. 147

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Clause 273.

● (1540)

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP) seconded by the member for Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet—Bécancour, moved:

Motion No. 148

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Schedule 1.

Motion No. 149

That Bill C-59 be amended by deleting Schedule 2.

[*English*]

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, thank you for going through that prodigious task of reading out the amendments to this omnibus budget bill. The reason there are so many is that it is such a bad piece of legislation. It takes a lot to fix something that is so inherently flawed as this budget bill is.

Government Orders

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for reading out some of the amendments the NDP has brought to this 150-page omnibus bill, which has 270 amendments contained within and a range that is breathtaking. Yet is not surprising with these Conservatives, who have grown somewhat addicted to the idea that all legislation of merit should pass unscrutinized through the House of Commons and should be done under the guillotine of time allocation and the closure of debate. That is a process the Conservatives like to use now, having been in government and having grown in their arrogance and entitlement. It is a process they used to hate when in opposition, and now they have used it almost 100 times, I believe, to shut down debate on almost every piece of legislation that has been in the House.

This bill was also rushed through, yet it touches on some important things. It is worth taking a step back to look at the context in which this budget falls.

We have seen the Canadian economy for the last 16 months experience its slowest growth, outside of a recession, in more than 40 years. Think about that for a moment. The Conservatives have been in power for nine years now, trotting out their old Reaganomics trickle-down theories, and we have seen the results: losses of hundreds of thousands of manufacturing jobs, 1.3 million Canadians out of work, and almost a quarter-million more Canadians out of work than when the Prime Minister took office.

Having experimented with their failed policies, we now have a moment in which we see the results. For 16 months, the growth rate in Canada has been far below that of population growth in Canada. It is the worst record, outside of a recession, any government has seen in more than a generation. These guys are out patting themselves on the back, spending \$750 million on self-promoting ads to tell Canadians how terrific it is, but Canadians know the reality. Canadians who have experienced job losses, Canadians who have experienced the lower quality of jobs, which according to CIBC are the lowest-quality of jobs in Canada in a generation, know the reality. No quarter-billion dollar ad campaign is going to cover up for that.

We have also seen job losses across sectors, not just the more than 400,000 manufacturing jobs in Ontario and Quebec and value-added jobs right across the country, but retail and energy jobs. Just today, Blacks Canada is shutting its stores, following Sony, following Target, following job losses in the energy sector and beyond.

The Conservatives have also refused to act on some things that just seem like no-brainers. New Democrats found a big loophole in the tax system. It is for the folks in the corner offices on Bay Street. It is a CEO-designed loophole for someone who is paid in stock dividends.

Conservatives claim to protect the middle class. I do not know a lot of middle-class Canadians who are paid in stock dividends, but the middle-class Canadians the Conservatives are focused on are given a \$750-million tax break every year. That is \$750 million for those who get paid in stock dividends, because they get taxed at a much lower rate than we mere humans. The folks up in the office towers and penthouse suites get a three-quarter of a billion dollar tax break from the Conservatives each and every year. New Democrats sought to close that tax loophole and transfer the money over to low-income Canadians, and the Conservatives said no.

The government promised to create more than 100,000 child care spaces. We remember that promise. It was similar to the promise the Prime Minister made that he would not appoint anyone to the Senate. Do members remember that? Do members remember the Prime Minister getting up and saying that he would not appoint anyone to that unaccountable, unelected chamber? That is what he called it. Lo and behold, the seeds we sow bear fruit. We see it today with a bunch of senators finally getting caught with their hands in the cookie jar. They are getting Canadian taxpayers to pay for golf trips, hockey games, for fishing, and for getting a staffer to drive a car back to the east coast. Is it not nice to be a senator?

There is also paying for a second home, because Lord knows, a senator making \$140,000 a year and working sometimes three days a week for several hours a day must be exhausted. It must be hard on one's constitution.

All those bagmen, failed Conservative candidates, and failed Liberals that slopped their way over to the Senate finally got caught doing what we know they have been doing for years. Thank God for them the audit only went back so far. We know that if a corrupt institution is built, it will act like a corrupt institution. That is what the Senate is.

● (1545)

If we look back to the original speeches of this country, it was John A. Macdonald, when he was arguing for the creation of the Senate, who said that they needed to create the Senate to protect minorities from the rabble, from the majority here in the House of Commons. What minority was he speaking of? It was the wealthy. His argument was that they needed to protect wealthy Canadians from the rabble, from the rest, from the majority, and thereby needed to create the unelected Senate.

The Prime Minister promised reform, and he only gave us something somehow worse. The New Democrats have been making arguments for generations now to abolish the Senate. Who knew that senators would make an even better case for their own abolition? There they are doing it day in and day out.

What else is in this bill, another massive omnibus bill? The Conservatives do not even talk about them anymore, because they have been such policy failures, but two things they have trotted out include a \$2.2 billion income-splitting scheme that would help out only 15% of Canadian families and would skew toward wealthier Canadian families. It would not help create any child care spaces, breaking yet another Conservative promise made by the current Prime Minister. It would not help out low- and middle-income Canadians or working Canadians at all. What it would do is allow wealthier Canadians to split income and so forth and gain back more tax money. That may help out the friends around the Prime Minister's dining table, but it would not help out Canadians around their dining room tables.

Government Orders

The Conservatives then doubled down and said they would double the TFSA, the tax-free savings account, which at its current \$5,500 cap is only being maxed out by about 11% of Canadians. We asked them for evidence of how it would help Canadians, even if TFSAs to this point have helped Canadians save. They have not at all. What Canadians are doing is transferring money from one retirement vehicle to another. That is fine and fair enough, but now they are doubling it. What effect will that have?

We learned that the top 20% of earners, the top 20% of Canadians, the wealthiest Canadians, will in fact get 180% more benefit than all the rest of us combined. Is that not nice? If people are well off, earning \$200,000 or \$300,000 a year, Conservatives have their interests at heart. They are willing to spend billions of dollars to do it. In fact, doubling of the TFSA would, over time, cost \$30 billion to \$40 billion a year to the treasury. When the Minister of Finance was asked about this, he said that was not for us to worry about; it was for the Prime Minister's imagined granddaughter to worry about. Is that not nice?

That is not the Conservative thinking I know. The conservative people I know in the northwest of British Columbia are conservative in their thinking. They like to pass things on to their kids and grandkids in better shape than they found them. They do not like to leave a big bill behind, as the Conservatives are doing with climate change. The Conservatives are saying that someone else will have to deal with that.

They say that they are going to push forward things to try to buy the next vote, because they are down in the polls and they need help in the election. So what if this thing gets massive over time and costs future generations the ability to pay for health care, roads, sewers, and bridges, which we desperately need.

There is a \$172-billion infrastructure deficit in this country right now. What did the Conservatives trot out to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities last week? It was back-loaded programs: transit later, infrastructure funding later. Right now, the Conservatives need to try to buy their way back into office because of all the scandals and the corruption that has gone on under their watch.

We also see that just in the last few years, Conservatives have cut \$14 billion from program spending. This is funding that was going to vets, to food safety, to rail safety, and to employment insurance, another fund they raided. We remember how the Conservatives used to chastise my Liberal friends down the way for raiding the employment insurance fund to the tune of \$54 billion. The Conservatives must have been paying too much attention.

Finally, there is a little retroactive piece in here. The Conservatives are going back in time and re-interpreting and reimagining the will of Parliament with respect to the elimination of the long gun registry. This is fascinating. The Privacy Commissioner came forward and said that it was perilous. She noted that if the same thing had been imagined by the Liberals while they were in power, we would have never found out what happened in the sponsorship scandal, because what they would have been able to do was retroactively go back and reimagine what Parliament was thinking that day and make what was illegal suddenly legal. They buried this in this bill.

An hon. member: What a concept.

Mr. Nathan Cullen: "What a concept", say the Liberals down the way, Mr. Speaker. If only the Liberals had thought of that we would not have known about all those tens of millions of dollars they stole on behalf of Canadians. The Conservatives probably would not be anywhere close to power, but so be it.

● (1550)

What they want to do is change precedent in Canadian law, and to do this they are burying it in the middle of an omnibus bill.

This does so little for the Canadian economy, and Lord knows, the economy needs some help, but their plan has failed. If the Conservative plan for the Canadian economy was working, well then it would be working, but 1.3 million Canadians out of work today will tell us otherwise. This is not a plan to get this country back on track.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when we look at the government's budget, Canadians recognize many different issues. One is the sense of unfairness. The member made reference to income splitting. The government is proposing to spend literally \$2 billion annually that fewer than 15% of Canadians would actually benefit from.

The Liberals are suggesting that it would be far better to give money to our middle class in a tax break. We are giving a flat percentage across the board to provide a tax break for the middle class.

I am wondering if the member could give some insight into what the NDP would be proposing in terms of tax breaks, if that is something currently in their platform.

Mr. Nathan Cullen: Mr. Speaker, I will say that there is some confusion about the Liberal plan, because it changed three times in the first 72 hours after it was introduced. There is now another new Liberal plan, of sorts, to potentially go after the CPP, the Canada pension plan. It is a little risky, because it is directing the CPP in what to do and not do.

The Liberals used to be in favour of voluntary CPP contributions. The Conservatives were opposed. Now they have switched places. Now the Conservatives are in favour of voluntary contributions, and the Liberals are opposed. Consistency is rewarded occasionally in political life. We will find out.

One issue I was not able to get to in my speech was the section about unpaid interns. We heard from Claire Seaborn, of the Canadian Intern Association, and other groups, like CASA, and folks who were very concerned about protecting unpaid interns from sexual harassment and from unfair work conditions, which right now they are not. Conservatives promised to move on this, and we looked forward to some action to protect what are obviously vulnerable workers. They are taking internships. They would be taking paid jobs, most likely, if they could find them, but in today's economy, under the Conservatives, they cannot.

Government Orders

Allowing for the protection of unpaid interns is important to us, yet we get to the omnibus bill, and it still allows for sexual harassment of unpaid interns and for unfair work hours. We pull back from this and ask what Conservative priorities are. Young Canadians in particular are vulnerable when they take some of these internships. Why, for heaven's sake, would we not protect them under the Labour Code like we do all other workers? Yet again, Conservatives did not find the heart or time to protect the most vulnerable and those who need the help.

Ms. Peggy Nash (Parkdale—High Park, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Skeena—Bulkley Valley for his excellent speech about the Conservative budget. I think he described with great clarity how the economy is doing remarkably poorly right now, how we have the slowest growth in about 40 years, and how young people are on track to do worse than their parents did in this economy.

It is not surprising that the Conservatives do not want people to be looking at the economy, so they trotted out their anti-terrorism bill, that very dangerous Bill C-51, which sadly, was supported by the Liberals and passed in this House by the Conservatives as a kind of distraction so that people would not be focused on this poor economy.

I want to ask a question that directly impacts the city of Toronto, where my constituency is. On Monday, all of our subway systems were shut down in the middle of rush hour for more than an hour. What we are hearing from the Toronto Transit Commission is that we are not even keeping up with the kind of maintenance we need for our existing subway system, not to mention the huge growth in our population and the dramatic need for greater investment in transit in our city.

The Conservatives talk a lot about investing in infrastructure, but I am not seeing any result from this in the city of Toronto. I am wondering if my colleague could comment on the need for infrastructure and what exactly is covered in this budget in terms of infrastructure.

• (1555)

Mr. Nathan Cullen: Mr. Speaker, well, we see how this works. The Toronto Board of Trade has said that traffic congestion is costing the Toronto and Canadian economy billions of dollars, that smart investment is in things like transit.

However, we see how Conservative priorities line up, which is to try to protect their own jobs by moving through income splitting, helping only 15% of Canadians. They actually backdated that program. However, when we get to transit and infrastructure funding, the funding comes two, three years, eight, nine years down the road. It is obviously not a priority. We have to judge the Conservatives on what they actually choose to do, not what they choose to say. What they have chosen to do is leave cities like Toronto, Vancouver and Calgary all desperate for funding.

One of the Conservative MPs from Calgary actually chastised the Calgary mayor saying he should get on with it and start applying for money when Calgary had in fact applied three times. It was rejected twice and is still waiting on the third. It is time to work with the cities, work with the provinces and actually get this moving.

The NDP has a fully costed proposal that was warmly accepted at the FCM just this past weekend. We look forward to engaging with cities as a government to be able to move our economy forward to take up the congestion, get people back to work and our economy back on track.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to speak at report stage. I understand I am speaking to my amendments that were the deletion amendments and that substantive amendments that I put forward still await a ruling.

As I have the floor now, just in brief response to the point made by the government House leader that he was somewhat caught unaware by my point of order, I have checked with my staff on the number of times the government House leader has risen on points of order directed at restricting my rights as a member of Parliament. I have not received any advance notice from the government House leader. Not that I was in any way suggesting tit-for-tat, but I did not realize it was a convention in this place to give the government House leader more notice of my points of order than he has ever given me.

Turning to the substance of Bill C-59, I appreciate the remarks from my friend from Skeena—Bulkley Valley. The substance of the bill needs to be put forward again clearly that this is an omnibus budget bill once again.

[*Translation*]

This is an omnibus budget bill that amends 20 different Canadian laws. These are 20 completely different things.

[*English*]

Therefore, there is no single unified purpose, which is the underlying principle of why we would ever have omnibus legislation in this country. Under this administration, the use of omnibus budget bills is unprecedented in Canadian parliamentary history, as is the use of time allocation. We have never had any other administration ever put forward so much legislation through the form of omnibus budget bills with sections that are unrelated to each other and equally unrelated to the budget.

This one is not as lengthy as others. Certainly, Bill C-38 had over 400 pages and was followed by Bill C-45 at over 400 pages. In earlier times, when the Conservatives were a minority, they brought forward 800 pages of omnibus budget legislation in 2008. I think it was over 900 pages in 2009. In terms of page length, this one is just under 160 pages. It is less lengthy but no less complex than previous omnibus budget bills. As a result, it has had inadequate study. It was pushed through committee and pushed through this place, with time allocation at every stage.

In looking at it in any level of detail, I think it is worth reviewing with other members of this House because we have had so little time to study it, how many different sections of laws are affected by this.

Government Orders

It affects parliamentary precinct security. That is one thing I want to return to because it is a fundamental and very important constitutional question of who is in charge of security in this place.

It changes the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act, PIPEDA.

It makes amendments to the First Nations Fiscal Management Act, a good piece of legislation that we had been waiting for for some time, which really deserves its own care and attention through this place.

It makes changes to the Trust and Loan Companies Act.

It makes changes to the Public Service Labour Relations Act, which are quite egregious in that they pre-empt collective bargaining. I will stop at this point to say that this pre-empts collective bargaining to make changes to sick leave provisions for our very hard-working federal civil servants.

The changes that would occur to the National Energy Board Act would change the maximum duration of licences for the exportation of natural gas issued under the NEB Act.

It goes on and on in terms of the number of distinct and different pieces of legislation, none with a relation to each other, none receiving adequate study.

I will add one anecdote. I presented amendments at committee on a previous omnibus budget bill. It was not until I presented the amendments that the committee realized that there had been no witnesses on that particular section. None of the committee members remembered having read it, so my amendments could not be adequately discussed because nobody really knew about that section of the omnibus bill. There were just too many sections to give it adequate care and attention.

Let me just touch on some of the ones that are concerning.

I certainly was concerned to see the changes to the Copyright Act. These are changes that benefit the music industry, particularly the large U.S. companies, not the songwriters and not the musicians of Canada, by changing the copyright for a song recording from 50 to 70 years.

• (1600)

There are also changes in division 9. I mention these briefly but without describing them. The natural gas exportation licence would be extended to 40 years, up from 25. That is quite a significant change. It was opposed in committee by the witnesses from West Coast Environmental Law. I will just quote from their testimony. They said:

It is quite possible that something thought to be a good idea today may not, in 25 years' time, with the advent of climate change, economic shifts, an increasingly harmed environment, and other potentially unforeseen alterations in the landscape...

be considered a good idea in four years' time. These are significant changes that did not receive enough study.

We heard from the member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley, and I completely agree, about the precarious nature of interns working in the federal civil service. All parties have at various times said that they want to do something to ensure that unpaid internships and

student work within the government are protected properly. The access is going to go in that direction, but as a submission from the Canadian Intern Association made clear, much more needs to be done if these workers are not to be exploited in the system.

Given the time I have at the moment, I will move on to other areas of the bill that really should have had greater study. The biometrics piece is one that came out with witness testimony at the very last minute. It was actually on the morning that we moved to clause-by-clause. We realized how sweeping the changes are in terms of collecting biometric information. They might even apply to people who want to come here as tourists, given the changes that were made in the fall of 2012 in Bill C-45. For people seeking to come here on vacation, if they are not in a country that requires a visa, these potential tourists would also have to apply to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration for permission to come to Canada. The sweeping nature of the changes under biometrics information could apply to tourists, even though I do not believe that that is the government's intent.

Let me just make sure that in the three minutes remaining, I concentrate on the two most egregious changes in Bill C-59.

I mentioned earlier the change in security in the parliamentary precinct. There could not be a more serious issue for those of us assembled in this place. We had the attack and the tragic murder of Nathan Cirillo on October 22, 2014, and what could have been a far more devastating tragedy had the security team of the House of Commons, the RCMP, and the Ottawa Police had not acted as they did and ended that crisis.

The conclusion being reached that we need a unified security team is exactly right. We do need to ensure that the outside grounds and the inside of Parliament are all protected by people who are in one unified system. The large question, and one that has been rushed through this place without adequate study, is which of the security agencies should be in control. It is deeply embedded in parliamentary tradition. The first reference to this that I could find goes back to the year 1500. It is deeply embedded in parliamentary tradition that you, Mr. Speaker, are the person, the entity and the office that protects the security of the members here.

A change to give control to the RCMP, which ultimately reports to the Prime Minister or to the executive part of government, is a fundamental change that is unconstitutional. However, because of the privileges that surround Parliament itself, it is unlikely that we will ever be able to challenge this in a court.

It should not be rushed through this place. It is a fundamental change in the relationship between the Speaker, the members of Parliament who look to the Speaker for the protection of their rights, and the risk of an abuse of that authority to impede access to this place, based on party membership. I am not going to suggest that it exists with any particular prime minister. There is a significant risk that remains for potential future prime ministers if we do not change this.

Government Orders

The last point I want to raise is best expressed in the words of the Information Commissioner of Canada about the changes to undo laws in effect. She said:

These proposed changes would retroactively quash Canadians' right of access and the government's obligations under the *Access to Information Act*. It will effectively erase history.

...[it] is not an attempt to close a loophole; but rather it is an attempt to create a black hole.

• (1605)

Such changes should not be allowed in any democracy. Bill C-59 should therefore be defeated.

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for my friend from Saanich—Gulf Islands.

It is interesting, with these omnibus bills that are notionally attached to the budget, that we spend so much of our time talking about non-budget things, because that is the majority of what sits in the bill. That is also true for this Bill C-59. It has 150 pages and 270 different clauses changing all sorts of laws and rules, the vast majority of which have nothing to do with the Canadian economy.

One would wonder if a government is actually interested in helping out Canadians who are out of work, the 1.3 million-odd Canadians. The youth unemployment rate is 1.5 points higher than it was a year ago, and we have had more than 16 months of terrible growth rates in Canada, never mind the innovation gap. The Prime Minister recently committed to decarbonizing the Canadian economy in 85 years' time.

I am wondering what my friend's assessment is. There has been a global surge in clean tech investments, outpacing investments in carbon energy, globally speaking, and many of the provinces and cities have moved forward in Canada. Yet the lack of leadership, the lack of thoughtfulness about this pressing environmental concern, is only surpassed by the ignorance toward the economic opportunities that exist for Canadians to retrofit their homes, to move to and from work in more environmentally friendly ways, and to go to work at places that are more conscious of our impact on the planet.

My question is of a financial nature, yet wedded within the ecological questions that we all must ask ourselves. The Prime Minister has now committed that he thinks carbon is a problem and he is going to do something about it—or not him, but 85 years from now someone is going to do something about it.

I am wondering about my friend's assessment of Canada's performance to this point in getting onboard that light rail train of opportunity that is expressed by the clean tech sector globally.

Ms. Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, my assessment is that we have missed that train. That train is out of the station.

The member has raised a very important point. Last year, 2014, was the first year ever, in terms of global finance, that the investments in clean tech and renewables outpaced investments in fossil fuels.

This particular administration has misjudged the marketplace and failed to diversify. The “putting your eggs in the bitumen basket” strategy has created the economic uncertainties that the finance minister used as the excuse for delaying his budget.

I do not think we were ever as dependent on bitumen as the propaganda would want us to believe. The oil sands, while important, contribute only 2% to our GDP. Small business in Canada contributes 30%.

While I do applaud the fact that the Prime Minister has finally accepted a communique that uses the word “decarbonization”, I lament the fact that Canada's recalcitrance and objections at the summit in Germany led to the G7 weakening its timetable to get us to where the world needs to be in a post-fossil economy.

• (1610)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am wondering if I could pick up on the leader of the Green Party's comments, in which she talked about how it is that we have, in essence, a legislative agenda being incorporated into a budget document, in good part.

There is a loss of opportunity to provide diligence by having separate pieces of legislation before the House, where they would be properly debated and individual experts would be afforded the opportunity to present at committee stage, so that we could in fact have good, solid legislation. Quite often there is merit for some things in the budget legislation that would be great stand-alone legislation.

Doing things in the manner the government has, it has really deprived Canadians the opportunity to have a good, sound, robust system that would ensure we have good legislation, recognizing of course that all governments of all political stripes at different levels do at times incorporate legislation into budget bills.

Ms. Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, the member for Winnipeg North allows me to point out that, under this Conservative administration, the treatment of legislation through the House amounts to contempt of Parliament. There has been a series of abuses, from the use of omnibus budget bills to time allocation, to converting what used to be a very consensual, non-partisan study of bills in parliamentary committees into a scripted, whipped vote process in which amendments that should be accepted because they represent misunderstandings or typographical errors, even clerical errors, were pushed through, in bills such as Bill C-38. It is, in fact, a contempt of Parliament.

Hon. Kevin Sorenson (Minister of State (Finance), CPC): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to rise in the House and discuss Bill C-59, which would implement certain provisions of economic action plan 2015.

Government Orders

First, let me remind the House and Canadians who are watching that we live in what continue to be challenging times. Around the world, many nations, including some of our friends and allies, struggle to achieve fiscal security. Global growth coming out of the great recession has been lacklustre. Geopolitical uncertainty continues to hobble the recovery. Of course, the dramatic plunge in oil prices has taken its toll. It has taken its toll here and in many other countries around the world.

Still, the news for Canada is, by and large, positive and good. This is thanks to the strong leadership of our Prime Minister and our low-tax balanced budget plan. Just last month, Canada's economy added nearly 59,000 jobs, almost all of them in the private sector and most full-time jobs, which raises the number of jobs created since June 2009 to more than 1.2 million jobs.

As any economist would tell the official opposition, no single labour force survey should be interpreted on its own, given the volatility of the job market. However, I must point out that over the last six months, total employment has averaged gains of 15,200 per month, and over the last year, employment has averaged gains of 16,000 per month.

The facts are clear. Canada's economic action plan is working. Canada has demonstrated the best economic performance among the G7 countries over this recovery period. The IMF, or International Monetary Fund, and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development expect Canada's growth, already ahead of our peers during the recovery, to continue to be solid. Of course, we have a balanced budget. All the while, the government has maintained its priority: putting money back into the pockets of hard-working Canadian families and hard-working businessmen and businesswomen. Therefore, it is not a coincidence that we have returned to a balanced budget while maintaining the lowest tax burden on Canadians in half a century.

That brings me to economic action plan 2015. Now that the budget is balanced, our government can continue to focus on what matters most to Canadians. Those priorities are, one, helping Canadians and communities prosper; two, ensuring the security of Canadians and protecting Canadians from the threat of terrorism at home and abroad; and three, supporting jobs and growth by creating an economic environment that allows businesses to thrive, fostering trade, and making essential investments in world-class advanced research and infrastructure.

Ever since Canadians first elected and trusted our government to place Canada on the path toward growth and prosperity, our approach has been clear and consistent: take as little as possible and give as much as possible. From families with young children to seniors, small businesses, and beyond, we have followed through. We have reduced taxes more than 180 times since 2006 and we have no intention of stopping now.

Bill C-59 goes even further to help families make ends meet with the following measures: implementing the family tax cut, which would allow a high-income spouse to, in effect, transfer up to \$50,000 of taxable income to a spouse in a lower tax bracket, saving tax dollars for that family; increasing the universal child care benefit for children under age 6 and expanding it to children between the

ages of 6 and 17; and increasing the child care expense deduction dollar limits by \$1,000.

• (1615)

This is all good news for Canadian families, but both opposition parties have opposed much of our tax reductions. The Liberal leader has said that he would reverse the family tax cut because it costs the government too much. Whose money does he think this is?

By promising to adopt the Ontario Liberal dramatic payroll tax hike, the Liberal leader also promised he would force money directly off middle-class workers' paycheques, without their consent. A worker earning \$60,000 a year would take a mandatory \$1,000 pay cut with the Liberal plan.

Meanwhile, the NDP wants to raise the price of gas and groceries with a carbon tax. While raising government revenues is its priority, our priority is helping families make ends meet.

Another priority I would like to touch on for a moment is our government's responsibility to ensure safety and security of Canadians and defend the nation's sovereignty. Canadians want to feel safe and secure in their homes. They want to feel safe online. They want to feel safe in their communities.

Our government understands the dangers, and we are determined to respond to those dangers. Today's legislation includes several measures to ensure the continued security of Canadians. First, protecting the integrity of our borders is essential to keeping Canadians safe and secure, while facilitating economic activity.

In economic action plan 2014, we highlighted the importance of biometric immigration screening as an effective means to combat identity fraud and abuse of Canada's immigration system, including helping to identify known criminals before they come to Canada. To further improve the security and integrity of Canada's immigration system, economic action plan 2015 proposes to expand the use of biometric screening to verify the identity of all visa-required travellers seeking entrance to Canada. By helping to prevent inadmissible individuals from entering our country, expanding biometric screening would help facilitate legitimate travel to Canada while protecting the safety and security of our Canadian citizens.

Finally, we remain unflagging in our support for jobs and growth. It only makes sense that small businesses the drivers of job creation, receive as much tax relief as we can provide them. After all, they account for 99% of all businesses across our country and they employ half of all the working men and women in the private sector. A business that spends its time focused on its own success, rather than handing over to the government excessive amounts of its profits or complying with onerous and unnecessary red tape, is one that is creating jobs to benefit hard-working Canadians.

Government Orders

Today's legislation continues to break new ground. It would reduce the small business tax rate to 9% by 2019. That is the largest tax rate cut for small businesses in more than 25 years. For example, for a small business with taxable income of \$500,000, as a result of this tax cut and other measures that we have brought forward since 2006 in previous legislation, the amount of federal tax paid would be nearly 50% lower than since we were elected in 2006. That is nearly a 50% reduction in taxes that these small businesses could use to create jobs and reinvest in their businesses, in innovation, or in research, or perhaps even hire extra staff for extra positions.

It is very unfortunate that the Liberal leader opposed our newest small business tax cut. We know the NDP does as well. The changes we have made would help enhance the ability of small businesses across Canada to retain earnings, grow their businesses, and create jobs.

To sum up, in an uncertain world, Canada's economic action plan is working. It is creating jobs and it is keeping the economy growing. Now is not the time for risky schemes and untested leadership. By staying the course and sticking to the proven leadership that we have with our Prime Minister, Canada remains on track to a very bright future.

• (1620)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Matthew Dubé (Chambly—Borduas, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I will start by quickly setting the record straight after my colleague claimed that we are against lowering taxes for small businesses. In fact, the NDP proposed such measures even before the government presented its budget.

However, I want to focus on unpaid internships and on protecting the young people who work in federally regulated workplaces. We introduced a bill that the government opposed, but that would have improved conditions by preventing sexual harassment or unreasonable work shifts, which, in a very high profile case, even led to a death. In the Standing Committee on Finance, the minister's colleagues voted against including concrete measures in the budget, even though they had committed to bringing in these protections.

Could he explain why the government does not want to include concrete measure to protect interns and young workers in this omnibus budget bill, especially since the bill contains all kinds of things that have nothing to do with the budget?

[*English*]

Hon. Kevin Sorenson: Mr. Speaker, the member had a number of questions.

It takes more than standing in Parliament and saying that we are for small business, that we will cut small business tax. The NDP members can make all the claims they want. We have never seen them vote in support of a tax decrease. We have never seen them support a free trade agreement, maybe one with Korea. We have never seen a record that backs up what they say.

Our government recognizes that small businesses are the drivers of our economy and represent half of the employment in the private sector. We took that small business tax rate from 12% to 11%. This budget makes the further commitment to move it from 11% to 9%. There are a number of other measures in the budget such as the

accelerated capital cost allowance for small business, for manufacturing, so they can invest back into their businesses to provide jobs for young and old.

• (1625)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, one of the things know from the Conservatives is that reality really does not matter. They have no problem, whether it is in question period or in giving their speeches, to make statements that are not only bizarre but just are not true.

We just heard that in a number of the statements from the member. When he talked about the child benefit, he said that the Liberals would get rid of it, take it away from Canadians. The reality is that leader of the Liberal Party and the Liberal caucus have been very clear that we will not take it away. In fact, the Liberal Canada child benefit plan is better than the Conservative plan. There would be more money going to the children of Canada.

How does the member reconcile truth from the non-reality of the statements he has put on record?

Hon. Kevin Sorenson: Mr. Speaker, again, we have had the Liberal leader make a pledge that he would cut income splitting and the family tax cut. He had a different plan for the universal child care benefit. Then all of a sudden the economists started looking at the Liberal plan. They saw his promises, but they saw a \$2 billion mistake, a Liberal leader's oopsy, or as the member for Scarborough—Guildwood said, a bozo moment. However, it would be \$2 billion lack of funds.

Every family with children under the age of 18 would benefit from our tax breaks, and they know it. The vast majority of benefits go to low and middle-income Canadians, and they get it. A typical family will save \$6,600 with the Conservative plan. We are reducing taxes on the middle class and providing benefits directly to families.

However, we know the Liberals would take that away. We know they would make promises that do not add up. We know they have a leader who believes that budgets magically balance themselves. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Hon. Scott Brison (Kings—Hants, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives have added over \$120 billion to the national debt. They inherited the best fiscal situation of any incoming government in the history of Canada, a \$13-billion surplus. They actually spent through that and, through a combination of their tax and fiscal policy, put Canada into deficit even before the global financial crisis in the fall of 2008, and then went on to rack up record levels of national debt in Canada, including the largest deficits in Canadian history.

That is the fact on the Conservative's shoddy record of fiscal mismanagement.

Government Orders

I am rising today to speak to the government's budget bill, C-59. For years, the Conservatives have crossed the line in what is acceptable in a functioning democracy as a government in the of respect for Parliament. It is not only how they have now normalized the use of massive omnibus bills, they regularly shut down debate in the House, they prorogue Parliament multiple times, they use committees as branch plants of minister's offices, but this legislation would go further than we have ever seen before. This legislation contains something so egregious it is shocking, even for the Conservative government.

The government, in this legislation, is actually trying to end an OPP investigation into the illegal destruction of documents. It would do this by retroactively making acts which were illegal at the time legal. It would effectively stop an OPP, or police, investigation into the RCMP, the very people we rely upon to uphold the law. The government has refused to say who in the government, whether it was the Minister of Public Safety, ordered the RCMP to break the law. With Bill C-59, Canadians may never find out.

Imagine retroactively making what was illegal at the time legal and allowing for the destruction of evidence associated with the wrongdoing. This is absolutely shocking.

I want to be clear. I believe the RCMP was given no choice by the government. It was given its marching orders. The legislation in this budget bill is actually being used by the Conservative government to try to cover up its crime.

In April 2012, the Ending the Long-gun Registry Act came into force. It called for the destruction of certain records in the long gun registry. However, it was flawed in that it made no mention of the Access to Information Act. That omission meant that the records could not be destroyed until after any pre-existing access to information cases were closed.

In April 2012, the Information Commissioner wrote to the Minister of Public Safety, in his role as the head of the RCMP, and reminded him of this legal commitment. On May 2, 2012, the public safety minister acknowledged the commissioner's letter and promised that the RCMP would abide by the access to information law in this matter.

This is the point at which the Conservative government could have gone back to Parliament to fix the legislation. It could have respected the law and our democratic institutions and sought Parliament's permission. Instead, somebody in the Conservative government ordered the RCMP to destroy the records and, as such, break the law. In October 2012, the RCMP did just that, destroying the records.

The Information Commissioner conducted an investigation and concluded that the RCMP destroyed the records knowing they were the subject of a request under the Access to Information Act. That is against the law.

In late March of this year, she referred the matter to the Attorney General. How did the government react? Instead of immediately referring the matter to an outside police organization for action, the reaction of the Conservatives was to cover up the crime.

● (1630)

The Conservatives' solution was this legislation, a budget bill. Imagine a budget bill being used to effectively and retroactively change the law to make the crime legal, erasing any liability for the people involved. The government has since referred the matter to the Ontario Provincial Police for an independent investigation into the matter. However, it will be hard for it to investigate when this law one past erases all liability for everyone involved and permits the government to effectively oversee the destruction of evidence of previous wrongdoing. Canadians deserve to know what happened and who broke the law.

At committee, I introduced amendments to allow the OPP's investigation to continue. My amendments would have delayed the elimination of liability and stopped the destruction of evidence. Records would have been protected from destruction "if there are reasonable grounds to believe that they could afford evidence of an act or omission that constitutes an offence under an Act of Parliament.". These amendments were not about trying to save the long gun registry, they were about protecting only those records that provided evidence of an illegal act. The Conservatives quietly voted against the amendments and downplayed the whole affair. In their words, Bill C-59 simply closes a bureaucratic loophole.

I agree with the Information Commissioner when she says, "Bill C-59 is not an attempt to close a loophole; but rather it is an attempt to create a black hole". The Information Commissioner has recently gone to the Federal Court to file a preservation order to stop the Conservative government from destroying evidence of wrongdoing. Members should let that sink in for a moment and think of the seriousness of what is going on here. An officer of Parliament has gone to court to stop the government from trying to cover up an illegal act.

I would like to go from this abuse of power and blatant corruption by the Conservative government in this budget implementation act to discussing some other measures in the bill that should also be considered offensive in terms of a functioning democracy.

There are measures in the bill which are almost certainly unconstitutional, such as Division 20, which is connected to the government's sick leave and disability programs. The government is using these measures to play politics and to deliberately pick a fight with the unions in the lead-up to an election. The Conservatives are circumventing the collective bargaining process in an attempt to unilaterally impose their will on government workers. They are trying to pretend that workers do not have legal rights. The government's behaviour is poisoning the well and will make it harder for future governments to achieve labour agreements and peace with labour unions in Canada.

Government Orders

We have also heard some very serious concerns about Division 3, which includes measures to extend privilege to patent or trade-mark agents and their clients. In the words of the Federation of Law Societies of Canada, it “raises complex issues and would have significant implications not only for the patent and trade-marks system, but also for the legal profession, other professions, and for the administration of justice.”

The government is using omnibus legislation to bundle together hundreds of unrelated measures into a single bill. Many of these changes have nothing to do with the budget and do not belong in a budget bill. However, the Conservatives do not care about respecting Parliament. Instead of introducing proper legislation that allows for meaningful input from the public, the Conservatives combine an overwhelming amount of unrelated changes in legislation into a single bill. They do this in order to limit debate and scrutiny, and ram the changes through Parliament.

There are some measures in the bill which are actually related to the budget, such as the increase to the TFSA limits and income splitting, two measures that are disproportionately good for the wealthy but do not do enough for the middle class.

The Liberal plan for the middle class would cut the taxes for middle-class families. The Liberal plan for the middle class would introduce a new Canada child benefit that would provide middle-class families in Canada making \$90,000 per year with two children a real break. They would get \$2,500 more than they are getting from the Conservatives right now. Families making \$45,000 per year with two children would be \$4,000 better off than they are right now. Single parents would benefit from the Liberal leader's plan for a Canada child benefit. We would do more for the families that need the help the most. We would be able to afford to do that by doing a little less for the families that do not need the help. We do it in the context of respecting Parliament and the laws that govern our country. That is what a Liberal government would do to restore fairness and respect for the rule of law to our country.

• (1635)

Mrs. Carol Hughes (Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapuskasing, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we can talk about the Liberal plans. We know what Liberal governments have done in the past and we know what Conservative governments have done in the past, and more and more working families are being left further behind.

The Liberal tax plan would give absolutely nothing to two-thirds of Canadians while giving the most benefit to wealthy people earning up to \$200,000. It sounds a lot like the income-splitting scheme we have debated in this bill. We also have to look at the fact that under the Liberal tax plan somebody who makes \$45,000 per year would get a total of \$4.49, while someone making \$150,000 would get \$670. Can the member tell me how fair that really is?

Hon. Scott Brison: Mr. Speaker, I would gladly take some time to provide the hon. member with a technical briefing of the Liberal plan for fairness, and I will help her somewhat because I am a generous person. The reality is a family making \$45,000 per year with two children would be \$4,000 better off every year over the Conservative plan with the Canada child benefit. That is huge.

In fact, some commentators have actually referred to this Liberal Canada child benefit as the closest thing we have seen to a

guaranteed annual income for children. In fact, it would start at \$6,400 per child, which is actually more generous than the Canada 2000 campaign has called for. One of the authors of our plan is Sherri Torjman who is at the Caledon Institute of Social Policy. We worked with Sherri Torjman. She is a member of my leader's economic advisory council. We have worked with some of the most progressive minds in Canadian social and economic policy to design a plan that is really good for middle-class families and those Canadians working hard to join the middle class.

We are very proud of our plan, and I think Canadians will see that it is a fair plan and it is a good plan for growth as well.

• (1640)

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my friend from Kings—Hants, particularly for taking some time to walk through with some degree of detail the extraordinary legislative alchemy that magicians across the aisle propose to do. They propose to magic away laws that are currently in place for access to information, which would be removed even with, as the member pointed out, the full notice from the Information Commissioner to the former public safety minister, Vic Toews, warning him of what was going to occur and receiving from him an undertaking that the RCMP “...will abide by the right of access described in section 4 of the Act and its obligations in that regard”.

What are we to make of such an outrageous and flagrant violation, not just of our laws but of the principle that anything a minister says is worth the paper it is written on?

Hon. Scott Brison: Mr. Speaker, I am not speaking just as a legislator. As a citizen, I find this disillusioning. The Conservatives have created sort of a new normal when it comes to these things, where the media in fact are not being as rigorous as they ought to be on this. It is a government that, effectively through an abuse of power, is changing a law retroactively to make legal that which was illegal at the time and destroying information and data, contrary to an officer of Parliament saying they should not be doing that.

I say this for all members of the House, regardless of party, and members of the governing party who sit in this House. Our role individually and collectively as members of Parliament is to scrutinize the activity of government even if we happen to be of the same party. The idea that the current government has created the sense that members of its caucus, whether at committee or in the House, have to basically follow marching orders and cannot question what a government is doing is fundamentally wrong.

Speaker's Ruling

I have been here long enough to remember when committees actually were not branch plants of ministers' offices, when committees actually rendered reports that were unanimous and sometimes disagreed with the governing party. I can tell members that a Liberal government would respect Parliament and we would see committees actually used for what they were intended, and that is to scrutinize legislation, to develop good public policy ideas and to work hard as legislators, untethered from the PMO and from ministers' offices to do their jobs on behalf of Canadians and to hold the government to account.

* * *

POINTS OF ORDER

SELECTION OF REPORT STAGE AMENDMENTS—SPEAKER'S RULING

The Deputy Speaker: Before resuming debate, the Chair wishes to make a ruling on the motion by the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands on a point of order earlier today.

Having delivered a decision on the selection of report stage motions for Bill C-59, an act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on April 21, 2015 and other measures, the Chair would like to address the concerns raised by the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands concerning report stage motions Nos. 49 and 116, standing in her name on the notice paper.

I would like to thank the hon. member for having raised this matter, as well as the hon. Leader of the Government in the House of Commons for his comments.

The member's main point of contention is that her proposed amendments could not have been presented before the deadline adopted by the Standing Committee on Finance because they flow directly from witness testimony that took place after the deadline passed.

As evidenced by first having written a detailed letter and now having raised the matter again in the form of a point of order, the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands clearly feels that she was not provided an opportunity to have certain amendments considered by the committee. She feels this circumstance is exceptional, and on that basis, the House as a whole should decide whether Bill C-59 should be amended in the fashion she is proposing.

●(1645)

[Translation]

In deciding the matter I must be guided by our long-established practice in relation to the Chair's authority to select report stage motions. A note to Standing Order 76.1(5) says:

The Speaker will not normally select for consideration any motion previously ruled out of order in committee [and] will normally only select motions that were not or could not be presented in committee.

At page 783, the authors of *House of Commons Procedure and Practice* set out the general principle with respect to the selection of report stage motions:

As a general principle, the Speaker seeks to forestall debate on the floor of the House which is simply a repetition of the debate in committee. [T]he Speaker will normally only select motions in amendment that could not have been presented in committee.

[English]

Both these excerpts point to an essential truth about report stage: mainly that it is not meant to be another opportunity for detailed consideration of the clauses of the bill. For this reason, the Chair rigorously limits the types of motions that could be considered at report stage. In so doing, the Chair rests on the presumption that a committee's clause-by-clause consideration provides ample opportunity to scrutinize the clauses of the bill and have amendments considered accordingly.

The Chair is not convinced by the argument that the rationale for selection of report stage motions can be rooted so exclusively in anyone's particular testimony and qualify as an exceptional circumstance that the Chair ought to consider.

While the Chair understands the member's specific argument about deadlines with respect to submissions of amendments for Bill C-59, I also know that committees have shown great flexibility in the past, not only about deadlines, but more generally in how they consider amendments in clause-by-clause. In fact, one such example of that flexibility is the very process that committees adopted, allowing members of non-recognized parties to have their amendments considered in committee.

I know the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands is one of the more active members of this place when it comes to clause-by-clause. In this regard it would have helped establish for the Chair the degree to which it truly was impossible to have these amendments considered in committee. If she had pointed to demonstrable attempts to bring before the committee her amendments, her arguments might have been more persuasive.

[Translation]

As such, the Chair cannot agree with the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands and finds that Motions Nos. 49 and 116 should not be selected on the basis of exceptional significance. I would like to thank the hon. member for having raised this matter.

[English]

Resuming debate, the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage.

REPORT STAGE

The House resumed consideration of Bill C-59, An Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on April 21, 2015 and other measures, as reported (without amendment) from the committee.

Mr. Rick Dykstra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am thankful for the opportunity to speak on economic action plan 2015.

First, I want to compliment the Minister of Finance for his budget and for this government's 10th budget since taking office in 2006. It is clear that since that time, we have indeed enjoyed a healthy, robust Canadian economy within the global network that we trade and work with, and we have gone through difficult times, which this government has faced and has put forward budgets that matched the time and need, and matched it responsibly. When we look at the economic action plan 2015, the plan for 2015-16, it is a balanced budget.

Speaker's Ruling

This is the first time a government has come from a situation where, as it wanted to make sure the economy of Canada was strong, went into deficit, but made a promise to ensure that, as the economy restructured, as we strengthened, it would indeed come out of that deficit, bring forward and present a budget that was balanced. Indeed, this budget is that.

I recall the election of 2005-06 when we won government. One of our five critical planks, important pieces of what we would do as a government, was to introduce a universal child care benefit that would see every family receive \$100 a month per child under the age of six.

I recall at that time that the other parties involved in that election that won seats here in the House of Commons spoke vehemently against that plan and that decision. In fact, the Liberal Party is now presenting an interesting option, which it obviously sees as the way Canadian families want to see the universal child care benefit or child care assistance across this country be used, and that is directed to families across this country versus some form of a massive national child care plan.

Therefore, I have seen, at least in the last 10 years, the Liberals learn one thing about this country. In their 13 long years of continuing to promise a national child care program, which it never delivered in those 13 years, it looks like now, after an additional 10 years, some 23 years, they have finally abandoned that dream of a national child care plan and said that the Conservative government is actually onto something: actually giving taxpayers' money back to them—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

• (1650)

The Deputy Speaker: Order. If those members at the back of the chamber want to yell at each other, would they please step out of the chamber? I am having a hard time hearing the parliamentary secretary.

The hon. parliamentary secretary.

Mr. Rick Dykstra: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank you. I know that my words instill discussion, and sometimes pointed discussion, from the Liberal Party over to the Conservative Party.

Let me repeat that, 23 years later, we finally have a Liberal Party that has said that maybe the national child care program is not going to work for them. However, what seems to be working for the Conservatives is actually listening to what families say, asking families to take the money that is theirs—which was paid to the federal government—and giving it back to them to use for their children.

In economic action plan 2015, we have introduced an opportunity for an additional \$60 per month for every child from birth until 6 years of age, to receive \$160 per month. Every child between the ages of 6 and 17 is now eligible for an additional \$60 a month. We are growing a plan based on the fact that we now have additional revenue that has put us into a balanced budget position and has enabled us to tell families that they can have a little bit more of the money back that they paid to the federal government. What is more, they have it specifically to use for the children who are in their care, whom they brought into this world.

It seems to me that even the Liberal Party of Canada said, “Wow, these guys have figured out how to deal with families across this country”. They will try to have some sort of plan—although has a \$2 billion hole in it—that maybe comes at least within striking distance of what the Conservatives are offering.

I will tell members something. Families across this country are seeing something interesting, which is a government trusting families with how they use that money for their children. Even some of the parties in opposition are starting to wonder whether that plan is something they should be endorsing and copying. I guess that is the most sincere form of flattery.

We have also increased by \$1,000 the maximum amounts that can be claimed against child care expense deductions. That is an additional \$1,000 for the purchase of child care. We have now increased it by \$1,000 to allow families to keep some more of the money that they pay. We have also introduced the family tax cut, which is a tax credit of up to \$2,000 for couples with children under the age of 18.

We said in 2011, during the campaign, that we would look to family income splitting. We introduced it in 2006-07 for seniors to split their income so they could keep more of their hard-earned pension dollars to be able to stay in their homes, live within their means, and have a little bit extra on a monthly basis to afford what they needed. We have taken that to the extent of being able to say that, yes, a form of income splitting is going to be introduced in the 2015 economic action plan. That is a tax credit of up to \$2,000 per family.

We have also increased the child fitness tax credit. It is \$1,000, which was made retroactive to 2014, and the credit is now refundable. Again, that is something that happened in 2006. We offered help to families across this country who were in need of some additional revenue. We offered help to families in need of a tax credit, at least, that allowed them to get their children into programs that would give them the ability to begin fitness, to stay in that vein to ensure that their health is better, to help them stay in shape, and to learn that as a way of life through their older years. Now, we have grown that to ensure that the cost for families to put their children in sports and fitness events is tax deductible.

Back in 2008, we also introduced the tax-free savings account, for the 2009 budget. It was introduced as a \$5,000 amount. Individuals across this country over the age of 18 could deposit some savings into those accounts, and the interest earned on those accounts would never be taxed by the federal government.

• (1655)

We increased that in a subsequent budget, and we made a commitment to double it by the time we had reached the 2015-16 budget. We are now going to pass a budget that includes a maximum of \$10,000 per year that can be contributed to one's tax-free savings account.

Speaker's Ruling

I have heard all of the rhetoric from across the way about who is going to benefit from this program the most. We need to look at how this has been implemented and how it has worked over the last number of years. If we go to page 233 of this budget, we see the tax-free savings account is a popular means of savings 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 tax-free savings account assets at the end of 2013. About half of the TFSA holders had annual incomes of less than \$42,000.

The folk arts multicultural celebration just took place in my community in the last two weeks of May, the longest-running folk arts festival in the country. On three separate occasions, individuals approached me to talk about this specific policy and said, "Rick, you don't know and understand. I'm not someone who earns \$100,000 or \$150,000 a year". All three of them told me they make less than \$60,000 a year and appreciate the fact that they can actually save for themselves and their futures without having to pay tax.

That is a way to help Canadians. It is a way that we have put in our budget. It is a budget that makes sense and a budget that should be supported.

The Deputy Speaker: I would point out to the parliamentary secretary that using one's first name is not parliamentary language.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Chambly—Borduas.

Mr. Matthew Dubé (Chambly—Borduas, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I applaud the government's willingness to try to get more kids active. Obviously, youth inactivity has been a big problem in Canada. A couple of years ago a report card was issued giving us a D, which is far from where we want to be.

On that note, I have a question about the fitness tax credit. The member alluded to people having that extra money, allowing them to sign their kids up for physical activity. I asked an order paper question a couple of months ago and another one, the answer to which should be coming before the end of this sitting, but I would ask the member to give me a little preview of that answer. Does he know how many new people actually signed up for organized sports in their communities—up to this point, I have been unable to get that answer from the government—or is it only benefiting people who had already signed up for physical activity? Is this really doing something to solve the problem of youth inactivity?

• (1700)

Mr. Rick Dykstra: Mr. Speaker, I applaud the member for seeking that number. I am sure when the order paper comes back, it will be shown. I will have a look at it before it gets sent over. I would be happy to get that number for him.

What this speaks to is that, across the country, people who were in a position where they could not necessarily afford to put their children into sports now at least feel and understand that the federal government is there to help them in that process. Let us not forget that, since that time in 2006, we have had programs like the Canadian Tire Jumpstart program so that, when there are situations when children are unable to sign up because of their parents' financial position, there is a way to make it happen. It is part of what was built upon, about getting children engaged and ensuring they have an opportunity to get involved in fitness and play sports. It is

not just necessarily the government's responsibility to do that; it is the responsibility of all of us.

Hon. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member spoke of funding families, but we all know that with the current government a family getting support is dependent on what income bracket the family is in.

I got a letter two days ago and I will quote from that letter. It says:

... [this Prime Minister's] government is abolishing the housing subsidies for low income families effective July 1 2015! This is disgraceful. Landlords of subsidized housing are claiming that they cannot lose the \$200 a month subsidy and continue to offer housing to their current tenants. The families in those homes will be out on the street as they agreed to live in these apartments due to lower affordable rents.

The point is that the government is not helping low-income families. Through Canada Mortgage and Housing, it is cutting housing subsidies effective July 1. My question is this. Why is the government continuing to cut CMHC monies meant to ensure that individuals have a decent place to live while, at the same time, giving a \$2 billion tax break to those who really do not need the money?

Mr. Rick Dykstra: Mr. Speaker, I tried to focus the speech that I gave on the progress we have made from 2006 to 2015, and it is very clear. If there is ever an opportunity, the member should come to my riding in the St. Catharines community and see the investment the federal government has made into social housing, into assisting those who used to pay federal tax but do not have to pay it any more because we have raised the thresholds.

We have played a role in working with the region of Niagara and with regions across this country to ensure that those who need housing and those who cannot quite afford it have the opportunity to start and move in that direction. We have made those opportunities happen. We have continued to invest in housing. This budget invests again in housing. There has not been a budget since we took government that did not invest in social housing. The member knows it, and to say otherwise is a fallacy.

[Translation]

Ms. Ruth Ellen Brosseau (Berthier—Maskinongé, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to speak to the Conservative government's budget, which is an omnibus bill.

After studying the bill very carefully and consulting with my constituents as I went door to door on the weekend in my riding of Berthier—Maskinongé, I can confirm without a doubt that this budget is strictly an election budget. It favours the rich at the expense of the middle class and the poor, and more importantly, it does not meet the pressing needs of the people of my riding.

On top of that, the Conservatives have introduced another omnibus bill, a budget designed to make hundreds of changes with no opportunity for us to examine them. The bill is 150 pages long, has over 270 provisions and amends dozens of laws, including a large part that has nothing to do with the budget.

Speaker's Ruling

Once again, this government is showing its utter contempt for democracy. For these reasons, and many others that I will try to list, I am proud to say that as the NDP member for Berthier—Maskinongé, I oppose this budget.

I would like to talk about employment and investments in the regions. First of all, everywhere I go, the issue that my constituents want to talk about the most is employment. My region is no different than the rest of Quebec, but unfortunately, the Conservatives are offering nothing to spur job creation in the regions.

In fact, that is not entirely true. The Conservatives took our proposal to reduce taxes for small businesses to promote development and indirectly create jobs. The NDP truly believes that SMEs stimulate the local economy.

Other than this measure that they borrowed from our party, the Conservatives have made no investment in the regions of Quebec. On the contrary, they are still making major cuts to the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec.

More than 420,000 Canadians have lost their jobs in the manufacturing sector. The Conservatives stand idly by. Their budget is not really helping the situation. It only fixes past mistakes.

It is flattering to learn that the government is adopting our idea to extend the accelerated capital cost allowance period in the manufacturing sector. However, it is too bad that this measure comes so late, after the damage has been done.

In my region, the unemployment rate is alarming, and the government is doing nothing about it. Furthermore, the budget reaffirms the government's commitment to reducing EI premium rates and its refusal to make it more accessible for the workers who pay into it, but cannot access it when they need it. The government's reform is still just as detrimental, and to top it all off the government has followed in the Liberals' footsteps and raided the employment insurance fund to balance its books. These funds belong to the workers and employers.

Let us talk about the pyrrhotite situation. In the region, approximately 2,000 families have been affected by pyrrhotite. A number of these property owners are grappling with this problem. When I received the budget, I looked for the money set aside for this and the word "pyrrhotite".

Since May 2, 2011, I have been working with the member for Trois-Rivières to raise awareness among MPs about the issue of pyrrhotite. We also asked the federal government to help these victims.

Unfortunately, the government's answer every time was that this was a provincial jurisdiction, even though the federal government had previously intervened in the pyrite crisis in Montreal. The pyrrhotite problem is devastating for our region. This is definitely a social crisis that the government should have taken action on.

Fortunately, it is not too late. Thanks to the NDP, the Conservatives and the Liberal Party will be able to redeem themselves by voting for Motion No. 615, moved by the member for Trois-Rivières.

●(1705)

As the official opposition's deputy agriculture critic, another very important issue for me concerns temporary foreign workers. The problem is not only that the current government fails to take action at the right time during a crisis, but also that it creates even more crises.

For example, because of its reform of the temporary foreign worker program, last fall Quebec's farmers lost \$52 million. The government failed to take any financial action.

In the spring another crisis with this program was looming in the mushroom industry, for example, and once again the government stood idly by and did nothing. The temporary foreign workers program is vitally important to farming. By increasing the maximum number of years from two to four, the government caused a great deal of instability in the vegetable industry, not counting the training costs resulting from these changes.

I am really proud of my fight to make life more affordable for Canadian and Quebec consumers. However, it saddens me that the government is not doing anything to reduce the cost of living, especially when costs continue to rise while good jobs and good wages are not keeping up.

Fortunately, the NDP managed to get the government to support our motion forcing it to take action on pay-to-pay fees. It is important that the government regulate bank fees charged to consumers.

I am also dismayed to not find any measures to improve food security in Canada. In my riding, there are a growing number of people struggling to pay for rent or for groceries, and it is a shame that the Conservatives are not taking action to address this serious problem.

Under their watch, demand for food banks has gone up 25% since 2008. Government assistance and action have been ineffective and have not solved any of the problems. I would have liked to see the gora food strategy such as the one put forward by my colleague from Welland put in place by the government to improve the situation for these people.

I also want to point out that there is nothing in the budget for single-parent families. The government chose instead to proceed with income splitting, a measure that, according to reports by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, the C.D. Howe Institute and the Parliamentary Budget Officer, will benefit only 15% of families. They also indicated that the benefits will flow mainly to the wealthiest households and that such a policy would encourage women, in disproportionate numbers, to leave the labour market or not to enter it in the first place.

Doubling the tax-free savings account contribution limit is another foolish measure that will only help the wealthiest. In addition to the Parliamentary Budget Officer's assessment that increasing the limit will not benefit the public purse, many studies have shown that a very small percentage of households will benefit from this measure. Once again, this measure will benefit only the wealthiest Canadians.

Speaker's Ruling

People in my riding are also concerned about cuts to Radio-Canada, which provides a vital service in the regions. Because of the government's cuts, the Radio-Canada network in Mauricie will have to make do with a 30-minute news broadcast all year long. Radio-Canada needs stable, long-term funding to do its job well.

The government must absolutely restore the health transfers to Quebec and other regions in the country. Its decision to freeze transfer caps is putting a great deal of pressure on the provincial governments. It is the federal government's duty to transfer the money the provinces need to provide people with adequate health care. The population of my riding is aging and health care is an important issue. Again, the government seems to want to balance its budget on the backs of people who truly need help.

In closing, I am extremely disappointed in this election budget. Making a budget is about choices. I would have liked to see more measures to help the middle class and families in my riding.

• (1710)

[English]

Mr. Mike Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the member to clarify a little of her speech.

She talked about our government borrowing the NDP's proposal for accelerated capital cost allowance. I hardly think that is correct when in fact the accelerated capital cost allowance was put in in 2007. We had extended it in a number of ways up until the end of 2015. In the NDP playbook, they were looking at an extension of an additional two years. In budget 2015, we are extending it by 10 years. That is hardly borrowing from the NDP playbook.

I wonder if the member could comment on the importance of giving business a 10-year window on this. As the member would probably know, many manufacturing businesses sometimes take two to three years to actually do the engineering and everything else that is required to make an investment in machinery.

Could the member comment on the fact that maybe 10 years is better for business to be able to make these investment decisions?

• (1715)

[Translation]

Ms. Ruth Ellen Brosseau: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question.

I remember when I first arrived after the election and the first time I worked in the House with my colleagues from the other parties. I found there was a real lack of collaboration and things have only gotten worse.

For example, the government introduced this omnibus bill. We should be focusing our efforts and working together more. When there is a good idea, we should use it and work with all the parties in the House to ensure that there is a healthy environment for creating jobs here in Canada.

We know that SMEs are important businesses, especially in rural areas where they create nearly 80% of the jobs. It is therefore important to have common sense measures to foster the right environment for creating jobs.

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, here we are today debating amendments to the government's budget.

In anticipation of the election which is only months away, political parties are stating their ideas and some of their thoughts. I would like to share some of ours and ask the member to reflect on them and provide comment in regard to the NDP plan.

A Liberal government, for example, would make the tax system fairer and cut the middle-class tax rate by 7%. That would be a \$3 billion tax cut for those who need it the most. The Liberal plan would also provide one bigger, fairer, tax-free monthly cheque to help families with the high cost of raising their kids. We would also ask the wealthiest Canadians to pay a little more so the middle class can pay less. Liberals would cancel the Prime Minister's income-splitting and other tax breaks for the wealthy. We would introduce a new tax bracket for the top 1% on incomes over \$200,000.

I am wondering if the member could share some of her thoughts on these ideas.

Ms. Ruth Ellen Brosseau: Mr. Speaker, that did not sound too much like a question, but more like an ad for the Liberal plan.

I would just like to reflect on something that we have proposed and something which I think a lot of Canadian families have really rallied behind in terms of child care. I am a single mom. I had my son at a young age, and when I went back to school, I put him in day care. It cost me \$55 a day. I was a single mom going back to school and I paid \$55 a day for child care.

In Quebec, we have a system and it works. It is great. However, across the country affordable child care is something that is very important for parents and those getting back into the workforce. It is something that both governments have promised quite a few times but have never been able to succeed in creating child care spaces.

With this upcoming election just a few months away, Canadians will be able to vote and actually get what was promised. They would have affordable child care spots for \$15 a day. I think that is important for a lot of Canadian families.

Ms. Joyce Bateman (Winnipeg South Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is my absolute pleasure to take part in this debate on Bill C-59. It is a bill that I am very proud of and a bill which will make a big difference to my constituents in Winnipeg South Centre.

To begin, Bill C-59 builds on our government's record of support for Canadian families by keeping taxes low and helping families save more and invest more in their children, their families, their future.

Speaker's Ruling

Since 2006, our government has introduced measures to make life much more affordable for families. These measures include: reducing the lowest personal income tax rate and increasing the basic personal amount, so making more income tax-free; cutting the GST from 7% to 6% to 5%; introducing pension income splitting for seniors, which makes a huge difference to so many seniors, and certainly is one thing I hear about in my riding; establishing tax credits to support working low-income individuals and families, public transit users, first time homebuyers. I received a thank you note from someone who had just bought their first house. Especially for families caring for disabled relatives, we have done amazing work in that area.

We have also provided additional support for families with children through the children's art and fitness tax credits, enhancements to the registered education savings plan, and adoption expense tax credits. Most recently, the government has proposed a new family tax cut and enhancements to the universal child care benefit and child care expense deduction.

Canadians of all income levels are benefiting from tax relief introduced by our government with low- and middle-income Canadians receiving proportionally greater relief.

I am going to speak specifically to what economic action plan 2015 has done for families, for seniors and for students.

This year, Canadian families and individuals will receive \$37 billion in tax relief and increased benefits as a result of actions we have taken in government since 2006.

For example, a typical two-earner family of four will receive tax relief and increased benefits of up to \$6,600 annually in 2015 and every year going forward in perpetuity. This is thanks to measures such as the family tax cut, the universal child care benefit, the goods and services tax rate reduction, the children's fitness tax credit and other new credits, especially the broad-based income tax relief, including the reduction in the lowest personal income tax rate.

By reducing taxes year after year and enhancing benefits to Canadians, our government has given families and individuals greater flexibility to make the choices that are right for them. Families are just like pantyhose: one size does not fit all.

Additionally, while we have been busy cutting taxes for families, we have in turn made sure that federal transfers to our provinces and territories, the transfers that help pay for what Canadians cherish so much, education and health care, have continued to grow. In fact, including the Canada health transfer and the Canada social transfer, this year, 2015-16, the amount is going to be almost \$68 billion. This is an all-time high, and all the more impressive, it is at the same time as we brought the budget into balance.

This economic action plan is also very supportive of seniors who are already benefiting from important money-saving measures such as pension income splitting and of course, their TFSAs.

Bill C-59 will introduce new measures that give seniors freedom and more flexibility when it comes to managing their retirement income. For example, our government will be reducing the minimum withdrawal factors for registered retirement income funds. This will make a huge difference for many seniors in my riding of Winnipeg

South Centre and across Canada. By permitting more capital preservation for our seniors, the new factors will help to reduce the risk of outliving one's savings, while ensuring that the tax deferral provided on RRSP and RRIF savings continues to serve a retirement income purpose.

● (1720)

I am also very pleased that our government is introducing the new home accessibility tax credit. This proposed 15% tax credit will apply on up to \$10,000 of eligible home renovation expenditures per year for seniors and for people with disabilities all across Canada. Eligible expenditures will be for improvements that allow a senior or a person who is eligible for the disability tax credit to be more mobile, safe and functional within their homes. We will also be providing up to \$42 million over five years to help establish the Canadian centre for aging and brain health innovation. We have allocated \$37 million annually to extend employment insurance compassionate care benefits from the current six weeks to six months as of January 2016.

Our government continues to invest significant funding in training and education for students. Federal support for post-secondary education amounts to \$10 billion annually and includes financial assistance, such as Canada student loans, Canada student grants, the Canada apprentice loan, and specific programming targeted to first nations and Inuit students. There are also programs designed to enhance skills training among specific groups, including through our youth employment strategy, through our opportunities fund for persons with disabilities, and of course, for aboriginal peoples, through investments of over \$440 million annually.

In addition to ensuring Canadians have the skills they need, we also invest in labour market programming, which helps to bridge the current needs of our labour market with the future evolution of our labour force. In 2014-15, the government transferred \$2.7 billion to support labour market programming, including \$500 million for provinces and territories through the Canada job fund agreements, which include the Canada job grant.

The government has also taken action to support the labour market participation of older Canadians who wish to remain in the workforce by providing \$75 million to renew the targeted initiative for older workers, providing assistance to improve the ability and employability of unemployed workers age 55 to 64.

Private Members' Business

This budget builds on existing measures to help people find jobs and help jobs find people. It commits to working with provinces and territories to facilitate the harmonization of apprenticeship training and certification requirements in targeted Red Seal trades. Some members know that Red Seal trades include mechanics, electricians, carpenters, and even bakers. Our government, since last year, has made it so apprentices in these trades have had access to over \$100 million in interest-free federal loans each year.

Overall, Canada saw a 20% increase in registrations in apprenticeship programs between 2006 and 2012. Based on that success, Bill C-59 will provide \$1 million over five years to Employment and Social Development Canada's Red Seal secretariat to promote the adoption of the Blue Seal certification program across Canada. Blue Seal certification recognizes business training among certified tradespeople. Currently offered in a few provincial jurisdictions, the certification can help increase the chances of business success for entrepreneurial tradespeople.

Finally, our government has fulfilled a long-standing commitment of increasing the annual contribution limits of tax-free savings accounts to \$10,000. This will be helpful to all Canadians, including families, young people and seniors. TFSAs help Canadians save at every stage of life, whether for retirement, starting a business, or buying their very first home. By doubling the TFSA limit, which when we introduced the TFSA in 2009 was \$5,000 annually, we are empowering Canadians to save even more of their own money for their own priorities. We hope that more Canadians will take advantage of the tax-free savings account going forward. Of the nearly 11 million individuals who already have a TFSA, 2.7 million are seniors.

• (1725)

I am extremely proud of our government and the continued commitments it has made to Canadian families, Canadian students and Canadian seniors.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): When the House next returns to debate on this matter, the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre will have a five-minute period for questions and comments with respect to her 10 minutes of remarks this afternoon.

It being 5:30 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's order paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

• (1730)

[English]

HERITAGE LIGHTHOUSE PROTECTION ACT

The House resumed from May 25 consideration of the motion that Bill C-588, an act to amend the Heritage Lighthouse Protection Act (Sambro Island Lighthouse), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Hon. Geoff Regan (Halifax West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased today to stand to speak in favour of Bill C-588 regarding the Sambro Island lighthouse.

I had the pleasure of serving the community of Sambro between 2000 and 2004. In fact, the boundaries of the Halifax West riding were changed in 1997, and that was not a great year for me in other respects because I began what I call my involuntary sabbatical. I was defeated that year, but I was re-elected in 2000 under those same boundaries, so I had the pleasure and honour of serving the Sambro area from 2000 to 2004 when the boundaries were changed again and it was put back into the Halifax riding and taken out of Halifax West.

The Sambro lighthouse is a very iconic structure. It has a great history. It was established as a result of the very first act of the Nova Scotia legislature. That is remarkable, when we think about it. In fact, it was built in 1758. It is hard to believe that we have any lighthouses in North America that were built that long ago, which is why it should not be surprising, perhaps, that it is in fact the oldest operating lighthouse in North America.

I had the pleasure of going there, back in 2013, when I was no longer the MP for that area but still interested in attending public meetings in the Sambro area, along with the current Premier of Nova Scotia, Stephen McNeil, who was then the leader of the Liberal Party. He still is, of course, but he was not premier then. We were there to discuss community support for protecting lighthouses and in particular the Sambro light.

I want to begin by thanking my hon. friend, the member for Halifax, for bringing the bill forward. I think it is a very positive idea, and I am very supportive of any measures that may result in this light being maintained and preserved for the long term because of that incredible history it has and the fact that it is North America's oldest light, a beautiful structure.

I also want to congratulate Brendan Maguire, who is the provincial member, the MLA for Halifax Atlantic. He has done a lot of work on this and had many meetings and made lots of efforts with both levels of government to try to get support for the maintenance and the protection of this lighthouse.

I also want to congratulate Rena Maguire and Susan Paul from the Sambro Island Lighthouse Heritage Society, who have done so much to gather support for the protection of the lighthouse.

In 2013, I tabled a number of petitions signed by more than 5,000 people, calling on the Government of Canada to preserve the lighthouse at Sambro Island, and I was very pleased that the Government of Canada decided to provide \$1.5 million for repairs and upgrades to the lighthouse.

I hope we all recognize that this is an important part of Nova Scotia's heritage and really of Canada's heritage. I think that contribution of \$1.5 million to upgrade it and maintain it is an indication of that importance. That is an important step, and we would like to ensure that it is preserved on a permanent, ongoing basis.

Government Orders

I had the pleasure of visiting the lighthouse. I think it was in September 2013 that I was there. Paddy Gray is a fisherman who fishes out of Sambro, and he was kind enough to take me out on his boat. We actually caught a few fish along the way, but then we visited the island itself and went up to the light. I had my camera and took quite a few pictures. As a matter of fact, I have one of my photographs as the wallpaper on my computer, so I see the lighthouse and the island every day when I look at my computer.

Not long ago I was asked to do a painting, just a little one, a five-by-seven canvas, for a fundraising auction. I do not claim to be a Renoir or Monet, but I enjoyed doing this from one of my photographs.

Mr. David Sweet: I am certain he must be.

Hon. Geoff Regan: Mr. Speaker, I am glad my hon. friend thinks I must be. That is very generous of him. I did enjoy doing that painting from the photograph I had taken, and that is why I chose to paint that picture of the Sambro Island light. I put it on my Facebook page. I do not know how hard it is to find it, but if any member wanted to find it they could probably look there and discover it.

The lighthouse is very much symbolic, as all lighthouses are, of our seafaring heritage. For those of us from Nova Scotia, lighthouses mean a great deal.

• (1735)

However, I learned, certainly when I was minister of fisheries and oceans, how much they meant to people all across the country, in places like Collingwood, Ontario, on Georgian Bay, and throughout the Great Lakes and many of the larger lakes in this country. In places where there is navigation, like the Great Lakes, lighthouses have been an important part of our transportation system. They certainly form an important part of our heritage. They are iconic structures, often beautiful structures, that mean a lot to people in the communities where they are.

Not that long ago, 120 lighthouses in Nova Scotia had been declared surplus by the Conservative government. So far, community groups have only offered to take over 29. It is a big responsibility and a big cost for a community group to take on the ownership and, therefore, the ongoing maintenance of a lighthouse. These are often quite large and old structures. For example, the one in Collingwood had stone on the outside and was kind of rotting on the inside. The nature of the construction meant that it was very challenging to maintain. I suspect that the lighthouse in Sambro is of a similar kind of construction and might also be very challenging.

However, I am proud of the cases where communities have decided to take the plunge and take over a lighthouse. For example, the Terence Bay lighthouse society in my riding of Halifax West was among those groups that submitted a business plan to protect the lighthouse in their community. In fact, \$80,000 was spent to paint the lighthouse in 2008, and that was a very difficult—excuse me; this is actually in relation to Sambro Island, not Terence Bay. On the Sambro Island light, \$80,000 was spent to paint the lighthouse in 2008. The process was extremely difficult because it is on an island and the substantial amount of materials that were needed had to be actually flown in by helicopter.

The Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society has what it calls a “doomsday list” of lighthouses that are in danger of being lost through neglect. That is of great concern to many people in my province. Sambro has been on that list. The Sambro Island lighthouse has already been designated as a federal heritage building and national historic site. I think what the act is proposing to do would follow well along with that designation.

Of all the provinces, Nova Scotia—not surprisingly, considering it is a peninsula and all the coastline it has—has the most lighthouses under petition to become heritage lighthouses. I think it shows the pride that Nova Scotia has for its lighthouses and their history.

In fact, I gather we have 92 lighthouses under petition, of the 348 total lighthouses under petition in all of Canada. That is, nearly one-third of all the lighthouses in Canada that are under petition are in fact in Nova Scotia.

It seems to me that the burden of maintaining these lighthouses should not be placed upon the community, especially when we are talking about heritage lighthouses of national importance, like the Sambro Island light, the oldest operating light in North America. This is an important asset for the broader community, in fact, certainly for my province and for our country. I am pleased that there has been money set aside to maintain it, but let us find ways to ensure that it is kept going, that it is protected for the long term, because it is a beautiful iconic structure. I urge any of my colleagues, if they have a chance to go to Nova Scotia, to go out to Sambro. If they could call me, I am sure I or my colleague and friend from Halifax could arrange for them to take a boat tour out to the island and have a look at that beautiful structure.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Before we go to resuming debate, I see the hon. government House leader rising on a point of order.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

• (1740)

[English]

ECONOMIC ACTION PLAN 2015 ACT, NO. 1

BILL C-59—NOTICE OF TIME ALLOCATION MOTION

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I must advise that an agreement has not been reached under the provisions of Standing Order 78(1) or 78(2) concerning the proceedings at report stage and third reading stage of Bill C-59, an act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on April 21, 2015, and other measures.

Under the provisions of Standing Order 78(3), I give notice that a minister of the Crown will propose at the next sitting a motion to allot a specific number of days or hours for the consideration and disposal of proceedings at those stages.

*Private Members' Business***PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS**

[English]

HERITAGE LIGHTHOUSE PROTECTION ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-588, An Act to amend the Heritage Lighthouse Protection Act (Sambro Island Lighthouse), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Mr. Robert Chisholm (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today and speak in support of Bill C-588, an act to amend the Heritage Lighthouse Protection Act, with regard to the Sambro Island lighthouse.

I want to commend my colleague the member for Halifax for her tenacity in supporting this community and this iconic structure that means so much to not only the people of Sambro and the people of Halifax but also the people across this country if not internationally. As has been said, the structure was built in 1758 by the first act of the oldest legislature, in the province of Nova Scotia.

There have been a lot of people coming and going from Halifax Harbour, whether as part of the Royal Canadian Navy, war brides, or immigrants coming to this great country. It has been suggested by veterans that, when they left the harbour, the Sambro lighthouse was the last thing they saw, and when they returned to Halifax Harbour it was the first thing they saw. As one veteran expressed, it was like lifting a huge load off of their shoulders in making that crossing, seeing the lighthouse and recognizing that Nova Scotia and Canada were a few short hours away.

It is a huge structure made of stone and concrete, standing 24 metres tall, and located on a granite island off the entrance to Halifax Harbour just slightly beyond the community of Sambro. It is a stately structure and has been referred to as Canada's Statue of Liberty.

The other day I was thinking about how my wife's grandfather came to this country in 1928 through Pier 21 and would have seen this structure as the ship he was on approached this wonderful country, which he then made his home and where he raised his family, as did so many.

Why is this important? This bill would place the Sambro Island lighthouse within the Heritage Lighthouse Protection Act. Therefore, it would become a responsibility of Parks Canada to maintain it and save a piece of our natural heritage.

The Heritage Lighthouse Protection Act came into force in 2008. However, for some reason many heritage buildings were missed, this one included. As a result, there was a requirement for the communities to put together a petition to nominate them as historic structures and put together a business plan. It was quite an onerous process. Needless to say it was a difficult one, given the lack of resources. However, there was a lot of work done.

I think an indication of why it is so important for Parks Canada to take over this important structure for the Government of Canada is in recognition of the costs. No community is able to manage the costs of maintaining this important structure. It is on an island; it is 24 metres tall. We received an indication of what it would cost to

maintain it when, in 2008, the Coast Guard repainted the lighthouse. It used a helicopter to ferry supplies, including a large web of scaffolding. The total cost was about \$80,000, which is a huge expense for a small community and so a very difficult process.

● (1745)

However, I give credit to the Sambro Island Lighthouse Preservation Society for being diligent and tenacious on this issue, along with Barry MacDonald of the Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society. I do not know how many hundreds of petitions I tabled in the House, along with my colleagues from Nova Scotia, but they ensured it was in the minds of Nova Scotians and Canadians that something needed to be done about this. I commend all of those volunteers for their efforts in this regard. That is why we are now at this point.

I was happy to congratulate the government when I heard in early May that it had indicated that it would invest \$1.5 million to restore the Sambro Island lighthouse. The minister at the time indicated that it was one of the most iconic structures in the country. It was great news, which would allow long overdue and needed concrete renovations, rehabilitation of the original lantern and gallery, and repainting to take place.

However, this was recognized as a stop-gap measure. Therefore, it was important that the legislation be introduced in the House. My understanding is that government members have indicated their support, and for that I am happy to commend them.

Part of the Parks Canada mandate is to protect the health and wholeness of the commemorative integrity of the national sites it operates. This means preserving the site's cultural resources, communicating its heritage values and national significance and kindling the respect of people whose decisions and actions affect the site. This is why it is so important for this important heritage structure in the history of Nova Scotia and Canada to be properly protected by the federal government.

It is not as if the federal government has not already recognized the heritage value of this structure. In 1937, the Sambro lighthouse was designated a national historic site, and a plaque was placed in the village of Sambro. Then in 1996, the lighthouse received Federal Heritage Buildings Review Office classified status, which is the highest ranking status for Canadian government heritage buildings. In the case of classified federal heritage buildings for which the minister has assigned the highest level of protection, departments are required to consult with the heritage protection legislation before undertaking any action that would affect their heritage structure.

I did not indicate when I began that this is important to me for another reason. I was a member of the legislative assembly for the constituency of Halifax Atlantic between the years 1991 and 2003, and Sambro was part of my constituency. It was a constant reminder of the history that the community had shared with North America. The fact is that Sambro has been an active and productive fishing village for over 500 years, and it continues to thrive to this day based on the collaborative manner in which the people in that community, the fishermen and others, go about harvesting the resource of the ocean in a sustainable fashion.

Private Members' Business

I am very proud to be here with my colleague, the member for Halifax, who sponsored this bill, to speak for a few moments in support of what she has been able to do for this iconic heritage structure, and also as somebody who has had some attachment and has attended many public meetings in the community about what we would do with the Sambro lighthouse.

• (1750)

It is a good day, and I am pleased to support the bill. Again, I commend my colleague, the member for Halifax.

Mr. Colin Carrie (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity today to speak to private member's bill, Bill C-588.

Our government is prepared to support Bill C-588 subject to certain amendments. When we last spoke about the bill in the House on May 25, our government expressed our support for the designation of the Sambro Island lighthouse under the Heritage Lighthouse Protection Act. The Sambro Island lighthouse is an iconic Canadian structure. It speaks to so much of our history, whether it be immigration, commerce, politics or war.

On May 25, we also spoke about the need to find a long-term plan that would ensure the lighthouse could be enjoyed and appreciated for many more generations to come. This objective is foremost in our thoughts and is the subject of the amendments we proposed to Bill C-588.

We know that local support for the lighthouse is very strong. A preliminary business plan has been worked up by the local lighthouse heritage society and this plan could be further developed in the future. Support for the lighthouse is also strong at the regional and provincial levels. The prospects are good that the local society will be able to draw upon that wider support to further develop its business plan proposal.

As the members of the House know, our government recently announced upward of \$1.5 million to do some needed work on the lighthouse, which will ensure this iconic structure is in good condition for years to come. Fisheries and Oceans Canada also has funding in place to assist third parties that are acquiring heritage lighthouses.

I draw attention to these facts to make the point that the Sambro Island lighthouse is on a promising path that will ensure the protection of its heritage character for the benefit and enjoyment of future generations.

Support for the lighthouse exists in the community and at all levels of government. Planned investments in the lighthouse will ensure that it is in good condition for a new owner. Funding is available to facilitate the transfer of the lighthouse. These benefits should be given every opportunity to reach their full potential for the Sambro Island lighthouse. The act has proven to be working for other iconic surplus lighthouses.

For example, the Panmure Head and Point Prim lighthouses in Prince Edward Island are two examples of truly iconic historic lighthouses that are being acquired by local community organizations.

The Point Prim lighthouse is the first lighthouse in the province, and it was built in 1845. This lighthouse marks the entrance to Hillsborough Bay and Charlottetown harbour and is one of only a few brick lighthouses in Canada.

The Panmure Head lighthouse was built in 1853 and is the second lighthouse in the province. It marks the entrance to Georgetown harbour.

Our government's experience with these two lighthouses shows that it is possible for community-based organizations to assume ownership of our older, iconic lighthouses when the right conditions are in place.

In New Brunswick, the Cape Jourmain Lighthouse is another example of one of our older, iconic lighthouses being acquired by a local organization. Built in 1869, this lighthouse is the one that can be seen when crossing the Confederation Bridge from Prince Edward Island.

The Île du Pot à l'Eau-de-Vie and Pilier de Pierre lighthouses in Quebec, built in 1862 and 1843 respectively, are other examples of local groups taking over two of our older lighthouses.

Another example is the Sheringham Point Lighthouse, which has stood on the west coast of Vancouver Island since 1912. Although younger than some of the other examples already mentioned, this lighthouse is an example of a uniquely Canadian design and its designation resulted from carefully developed local partnerships. This white concrete tower guides vessels as they enter the Strait of Juan de Fuca.

At the provincial level, the government of Newfoundland and Labrador has acquired the Point Amour Lighthouse, completed in 1857, and is operated and protected as a provincial historic site.

These are some examples of truly iconic historic lighthouses that have been designated under the Heritage Lighthouse Protection Act, to be managed by new owners in the future.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada is working with third parties on other lighthouses that will no doubt be designated in the future. The dedication demonstrated by community-based organizations and other levels of government to identify and implement long-term visions for historic lighthouses that are important to them should inspire all of us who care about the Sambro Island lighthouse.

• (1755)

Our position is that the Sambro Island lighthouse deserves the same opportunity as the other iconic surplus lighthouses being designated and protected under the Heritage Lighthouse Protection Act. The ultimate goal is to identify a viable, long-term plan for the lighthouse, one that will secure its future for generations to come.

We should keep in mind that the Sambro Island lighthouse currently enjoys the highest level of protection afforded to federal heritage buildings under Treasury Board policy, and the care of a diligent custodian in Fisheries and Oceans Canada, as the recent funding announcement amply demonstrates.

Private Members' Business

Under the Heritage Lighthouse Protection Act, 74 lighthouses have been designated. Among them are some of our country's most iconic lighthouses, including eight national historic sites that will continue to be managed by the federal government. So far, 32 heritage lighthouses that will be managed by new owners have been designated. I have highlighted some of them here today and we know that others will follow when their future owners conclude their agreements to acquire the lighthouses from Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

The Sambro Island lighthouse merits inclusion in the family of heritage lighthouses. However, we need to do more than just designate the lighthouse. We need to continue in our quest to develop and implement a viable plan that would ensure the lighthouse can be enjoyed and appreciated for many more generations to come. This objective is critically important for the future of the lighthouse.

[Translation]

Mr. Robert Goguen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have this opportunity to speak in the House today on this private member's bill, Bill C-588.

[English]

I would like to begin by recognizing the importance lighthouses not only have to our maritime heritage but also, as we have heard and as many members have shared, as part of the fabric of our history as Canadians.

[Translation]

The Heritage Lighthouse Protection Act is an opportunity for Canadians to participate in the conservation and protection of heritage lighthouses. It is intended to promote the conservation of as many lighthouses as possible, so that these sites remain accessible to present and future generations of Canadians.

On May 29, 2015, an important date for the Heritage Lighthouse Protection Act, our government announced that 74 heritage lighthouses had been designated under the act. We know that other historic lighthouses will be considered for designation in the future, once Fisheries and Oceans Canada concludes the necessary negotiations with community groups and other levels of government that have developed and submitted sustainable, long-term plans for the acquisition and conservation of their local lighthouses.

[English]

These positive steps in the preservation of our maritime heritage speak to the success of the act. The Heritage Lighthouse Protection Act should be allowed the opportunity to operate as intended. Identifying a viable, responsible new owner for the Sambro Island lighthouse is both essential to that operation and good for the long-term preservation of the lighthouse.

Putting this objective foremost in our thought also respects the work that has been done by other levels of government and community groups across Canada to develop viable, sustainable plans for the historic lighthouses that are important to them. Their dedication, commitment and success should inspire all of us who care about the Sambro Island lighthouse to dare to dream a bright and confident future for this influential part of our maritime history

[Translation]

In many cases already, local community groups have been able to breathe new life into these lighthouses, converting them to museums, restaurants, lodging or other kinds of tourist attractions. The enactment of the Heritage Lighthouse Protection Act has created a unique opportunity for the government to work in partnership with various community groups, provincial governments and non-profit organizations whose ultimate goal is to maintain and preserve these iconic lighthouses all across this country.

● (1800)

[English]

There have been a number of success stories that have come out of the designation of heritage lighthouses that will be managed by new non-federal owners. We anticipate many more success stories in the future, as more community based organizations and other levels of government conclude their negotiations with Fisheries and Oceans Canada to acquire and protect the lighthouses that are important to them

[Translation]

I would like to take a minute to mention some of the lighthouses designated under the Heritage Lighthouse Protection Act that will be protected and preserved by their new owners from now on. These examples attest to the success of the law to date. The efforts of the people who envisaged a new future for these lighthouses and made it a reality have inspired all of us.

[English]

One example is the Brighton Beach lighthouse, which was successfully designated and transferred to the city of Charlottetown in 2013. This lighthouse is one of the icons of the city, and its transfer to the city has ensured that it will continue to grace the shores of Charlottetown Harbour for many years to come.

Another example is the Neil's Harbour lighthouse in Nova Scotia. A local group has been involved with this lighthouse for many years. The transfer of the lighthouse to the group is a natural evolution of their involvement with the site, and the government has every confidence that the community will be a great custodian for the future.

[Translation]

Similarly, the Île du Pot à l'Eau-de-Vie lighthouse has been managed by a local group for more than a generation. It has now completed the final step towards official ownership. It runs a unique and memorable bed and breakfast.

[English]

Some of the earliest heritage lighthouse designations are for three towers in the town of Southampton in Ontario. Though these are relatively simple structures, they are packed with meaning for the local community. Their acquisition by the municipality has helped to ensure that the town's maritime heritage will be preserved and showcased for the benefit of everyone who visits the town now and in the future.

More recently, three lighthouses in Nova Scotia were acquired by the municipality of Digby. In each case, the municipality is working in partnership with individual lighthouse societies, each with their own vision and plan for the future of their respective lighthouses. The municipality and the groups involved really should be congratulated for thinking and working together to ensure that critical markers of their history and heritage are preserved for the future.

The work that has gone into the Heritage Lighthouse Protection Act by all levels of government, and more importantly, by Canadians, has in each of these examples proven to be meaningful, proven to be necessary, and proven to be successful.

For these reasons, our government supports Bill C-588, subject to amendments, which would rededicate the Government of Canada and all those who care about the Sambro Island lighthouses, to setting the lighthouse on a course that will ensure that it is protected and appreciated for generations to come.

[Translation]

Our government is pleased to be adding the Sambro Island lighthouse to this big family of heritage lighthouses and helping to ensure that future generations will continue to consider Canada as one of the world's great maritime nations.

Our government remains committed to protecting and preserving our heritage lighthouses. The 74 heritage lighthouses already designated under the Heritage Lighthouse Protection Act bear witness to that commitment.

[English]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Resuming debate.

Accordingly, I invite the hon. member for Halifax for her right of reply. The hon. member has up to five minutes.

The hon. member for Halifax.

Ms. Megan Leslie (Halifax, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we are here at the end of two hours of debate on the bill to save the Sambro Island lighthouse. I know that lots of people in Sambro and in Halifax are watching right now. I will let them know that I have this right of reply, where I actually have five minutes to talk about what we heard in the House and sort of sum up, if it is possible.

We heard a lot in the House about the reason it is about this lighthouse. It is not about all lighthouses. It is about the Sambro Island lighthouse.

Here are some reasons why. It is the oldest continuous working lighthouse in the Americas. We heard that the building of the lighthouse was actually commemorated as a historic event in 1937. We heard that it was designated a heritage building in the 1990s. We heard that it is a perfect example of a particular type of architecture when it comes to lighthouses. It is one of the best examples of permanent coastal navigational aids along the coast of Nova Scotia, and it played a tremendous role in the development of our nation. We heard about how it was associated with safe shipping in the early development of Halifax and the province of Nova Scotia.

We also heard some stories attached to the lighthouse, like the fact that this was the last structure seen by the Royal Canadian Navy as it

departed in times of war and of peace. It was the first welcoming light as people came back home. We heard about how this light was a sign of hope for war brides, immigrants, and refugees making their way to Canada through Pier 21.

We have heard all of these facts and figures. We also heard about how this is not a lighthouse at the end of a pier or on land. It is on a rock in the ocean. It is not easy for the community to hire some summer students to throw a coat of paint on it and take care of it. It involves so much more, because it is quite dangerous. We heard about the weather that prevents people from even getting out there, with the fog, the rain, and the wind.

What we have not heard are the voices of the people on the ground who are working to protect the lighthouse and who care about it deeply. I would like to bring some of their voices to the House today.

Nancy Marryatt said, "I am 73 years young. I can remember going in Dad's fishing boat with the family to visit with the Gilkies on a Sunday afternoon. My brother and I would get to go up in the light. It was exciting. I hope the government will continue its support".

M.H. Watson, from Sambro, said, "Surely we can find some love for a piece of our history. Our first lighthouse, America's first lighthouse and the last view our soldiers saw as they sailed off to war".

Sheilah Domenie, a Sambro resident, said, "This island is so special. As they say, if you don't know where you've been, how can you know where you're going?"

Jeanne Henneberry, from Sambro, said, "Help us preserve an historic part [of our past], the Sambro Lighthouse. It reflects the hopes of the community and the country for a 'better world'".

Leslie Harnish, also from Sambro, said, "I'm a descendant of the lighthouse keeper, the Gilkie family that were keepers on the island, and I've always wanted to see the island and the lighthouse preserved".

I am going to sum up with a bit of a long quote from Kathy Brown. She said:

This lighthouse has a long and distinguished history and can be regarded as Canada's most important pre-Confederation building.

For the love of their lighthouses, the people of the Village of Sambro have founded the Sambro Island Lighthouse Preservation Society. They are working hard to raise awareness and money to save this Canadian icon. But this lighthouse is not just their responsibility, it is the responsibility of all of us, wherever we live and of whatever political stripe to make sure that Sambro is properly recognized and preserved.

Since Sambro was not designated immediately in the Heritage Lighthouse Protection Act, this is a chance for you to set aside your political differences to amend this mistake. It is a chance to show that heritage and history are of real importance, not just the subject of fancy TV ads and passing celebrations.

I urge you, as the first step in preserving this heritage building for future generations to show your support for Bill C-588.

I am heartened by the words I have heard spoken in the chamber in support of the bill, spanning party lines as well as geography. I am grateful for the opportunity to contribute in some small way to the protection and preservation of this important piece of our heritage and to find a way for this light to shine on.

Government Orders

• (1805)

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 93, the recorded division stands deferred until Wednesday, June 10, 2015, immediately before the time provided for private members' business.

• (1810)

[Translation]

Pursuant to order made on Wednesday, May 27, the House shall now resolve itself into committee of the whole to consider Motion No. 21 under Government Business.

[English]

I do now leave the chair for the House to go into committee of the whole.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

MEMBERS NOT SEEKING RE-ELECTION TO THE 42ND PARLIAMENT

(House in committee of the whole on Government Business No. 21, Mr. Bruce Stanton in the chair)

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC) moved:

That this committee take note of members not seeking re-election to the 42nd Parliament.

The Assistant Deputy Chair: Order, please. Before we begin this evening's debate, I would like to remind hon. members of how the proceedings will unfold.

[Translation]

Pursuant to order made on Wednesday, May 27, 2015, each member speaking will be allotted 10 minutes for debate. No time will be allotted for questions and comments, and members may share their time with another member. The Chair will receive no quorum calls, dilatory motions or requests for unanimous consent.

[English]

The order also prescribes that tonight's debate will be interrupted after four hours or when no member rises to speak. The debate shall resume at the ordinary hour of daily adjournment on Wednesday, June 10, 2015, and will conclude at midnight or when no other member rises to speak.

Just another reminder to all hon. members. In the course of take note debates, members are welcome and will be recognized from the seat in the chamber they choose.

We will now begin tonight's take note debate.

Mr. Frank Valeriote (Guelph, Lib.): Mr. Chair, there are days in this chamber that feel like seven years, but as my seven years as the member of Parliament for Guelph draw to a close, I feel as though it were only days that I was here. Saying goodbye today seems as unlikely to me as having ever arrived in this place.

I never planned on running for federal office and even tried, unsuccessfully, to find someone else to run instead. When I was approached in 2006, I had a young family, and representing Guelph here in Ottawa was not even on the horizon. However, my father, Mico, a Rotarian, instilled in me at a very young age the importance of service to others, even before self. I could not say no to serving my community, and what a community.

Guelph is recognized throughout the country over as being one of the most informed, caring, and compassionate in Canada. It is a leader in research and innovation through the University of Guelph. It is home to many of Ontario's premier agricultural and agrifood institutions, and has the highest rates of volunteerism from coast to coast.

I remain imbued with the passion and desire to continue to be the voice of the people of Guelph here in Ottawa and to serve them with as much energy as my staff and I have been able to offer. However, that young family from seven years ago is still young and I am not. I need to spend what time I can with my daughter, Olivia, and son, Dominic. It is just as important to them and to me that I be there for their millionth steps as I was for their first ones. Indeed, it is more important. At this precious stage in their lives, I want to be a more constant presence.

I will miss this job, though. I thought that I knew what it meant to have job satisfaction until I stepped into my constituency office. One can never beat the feeling of gratification from having a direct impact on someone's life, be it helping them gain freedom and security through entry into Canada on a permanent basis, or just reuniting a family for a visit who might otherwise never see each other again. Maybe it is arranging for a family member to come to Canada to help her sister care for a child stricken by cancer, or when a woman's dying wish is to become a Canadian citizen, arranging for a citizenship judge to oversee the administration of the oath over the phone, surrounded by her family at a hospice.

Sometimes people can feel powerless as they attempt to navigate the bureaucracy that goes along with claims for employment insurance, obtaining a pension, or receiving disability benefits or tax relief. Being there to guide their bureaucratic journey and bring about a resolution is so important.

Government Orders

I have had the chance to advance significant discussions, too, hosting town halls on important and, often to the chagrin of some of my staff, contentious issues like palliative care, physician-assisted suicide, genetically modified organisms, food safety, elder abuse, the environment, and suicide prevention. I have encouraged many in Guelph to get more engaged and share their opinions on the important issues of the day, regardless their position on the issue.

Incredible opportunities have been offered to me as a member of Parliament. I was able to spend time aboard HMCS *St. John's*, and at Canada Forces Base Wainwright in Alberta, where I integrated with the women and men of the Canadian Forces, watching up close the incredible work they do. I travelled to Rome with the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization and then again later with MPs from all parties for the elevation of Cardinal Collins, who was also born in Guelph.

Recently, as the veterans affairs critic, I had the opportunity to stand before Vimy Ridge and then listen to Canadian students recite *In Flanders Fields* mere feet from where John McCrae cobbled it amid the carnage at Essex Farm Cemetery. I was able to walk row on row through the poppies and consider the tremendous sacrifice of our brave men and women who accepted unlimited liability as they faced colossal odds in the service of Canada.

Along with the Prime Minister, the Minister of National Defence, the Minister of Veterans Affairs, and a delegation of MPs, I visited the Netherlands and spoke with Canadian veterans and Dutch citizens who had been at Wageningen 70 years ago when the Canadian Forces liberated the country. I walked in a parade 3,000 strong in complete silence in Groesbeek to a cemetery on the edge of town where thousands of Canadians are buried.

• (1815)

My party has given me the privilege of advocating on behalf of farmers and producers as critic for agriculture and agrifood, the automotive sector that is so vital to southwestern Ontario, co-chair of the non-partisan parliamentary committee on palliative and compassionate care, and most recently, veterans affairs critic and deputy whip.

I hope that my presence in this House has increased the level of debate as much in passion and substance as it may have in decibels. It was a privilege to be here during such emotional votes as the one on Canada's access to medicines regime, advanced so capably by the Grandmothers for Africa, or during the battle for the Canadian Wheat Board and supply management.

I have learned and grown with each posting, but never have I been more able to empathize with anyone as I have Canada's veterans. The absolute misery I have seen, particularly of those suffering from PTSD, and their caregivers, is beyond comprehension but cannot be beyond our willingness or ability to help relieve.

If I can make one partisan entreaty, and it should not even be partisan, it is that we must do more for our veterans. We owe them a sacred obligation for their service and for their sacrifice. That obligation must be as much a legal one as it is a conceptual one. Words do not suffice anymore. It is not enough to say, "lest we forget" on November 11. These women and men and their families need and deserve real action.

I am proud that I will leave a legacy here having passed a piece of legislation in Bill C-247, an act that will ease the lives of countless Canadians when a loved one passes away. My bill, which will receive royal assent any day now, will make Service Canada the single point of contact with the federal government for notifications when someone passes away. Our hope is that a personal representative of a deceased will need to only tell the Canadian government once of the death of a person, setting in motion all the necessary disclosures with the government to effectively deal with the affairs of the deceased.

That an MP in the third party could pilot a piece of private members' business through the House and the Senate is no small feat. I owe my colleagues in every party a great deal of thanks for seeing the virtue of this piece of legislation and passing it almost unanimously.

I owe a great deal of thanks to Bryon Wilfert, who originally introduced the bill. It was also my privilege to work with the member for Portage—Lisgar in her role as the Minister of State for Social Development to further develop this bill. I thank her for her work in getting the bill through cabinet and the government caucus. That I can point to that law and demonstrate what we have accomplished here as a Parliament for the betterment of all Canadians fills me with pride.

If I can leave with one final thought, I ask that you take the initiative to make this place and our work here more family friendly. Countless Canadians have incredible contributions to make to this place and public discourse, but are rightly concerned about the strains that this place will put on them and their families.

This is a job that is never done. There are no weekends or evenings to retreat to for quality time with loved ones. My marriage was a victim of the toll this takes on a family and relationships with loved ones, and I am by no means alone.

We have an opportunity to consider new ideas, and I urge this chamber and the members returned here after October to do so. I urge them to consider new ideas like alternating sitting weeks so that two weeks are spent here and two weeks are spent back in the riding every month. It is a more efficient use of our time and that of our Ottawa staff, and enables a better routine with our families from whom we will not be separated for long periods of time. I and others felt the difference this last spring when there was a two weeks on and two weeks in the riding interval. It is a problem that must be tackled if we want to help serve Canadians better with members living healthier family lives.

Remote voting should also be considered. We no longer live in a time or place where communication is so difficult that we all must gather here to be heard. Let us modernize and take some of that burden off the families back home.

Government Orders

Finally, I want to thank my staff, without whom this work would not have been possible. Brenda, Lianne, Shanice who ran the Guelph constituency office, and Kim, Matt, Kyle, Ari, Liz, Jeff and Dan who worked in the Ottawa office, all did so with such professionalism and care. They were my front line, who received the concerns of Guelphites and worked tirelessly to make sure they were taken care of.

• (1820)

This has been an incredible opportunity, and I say goodbye knowing that I never had nor will I likely ever have again the opportunity to serve in such a privileged yet humbling, effective and rewarding calling as being the member of Parliament for Guelph, the most beautiful, caring and compassionate city in all of Canada. I will always be grateful.

Mr. Alex Atamanenko (British Columbia Southern Interior, NDP): Mr. Chair, as always, when I get up here, there is a standing ovation.

This has been quite a journey, which started during the summer of 2003 while my wife Ann and I were driving across the Prairies. I remember it clearly. It was at dinner in Medicine Hat when I mentioned to Ann that I was thinking of seeking the NDP nomination in the 2004 election. I remember her response, “I think you are crazy, but I support you”. I believe she regrets those words to this day.

My next step was to check with my friends, Ed and Katrine Conroy. Ed was a former MLA and Katrine is currently our MLA. They said, “Go for it”.

My final blessing came from the president of our local riding association, Lily Popoff, who said, “Would you please run?” Although I lost in 2004, I was successful in 2006.

The privilege of serving as an MP has undoubtedly been the most enriching and rewarding experience of my life. I am extremely fortunate to have known our former leader, Jack Layton, and remember many interesting conversations we had over the years. We even went jogging together during one of my campaigns when he was in Castlegar with Olivia.

I would like to pay tribute to all of my NDP caucus colleagues, both past and present. A number of us remember the days when caucus meetings would take place around a table. I have never worked with such a dedicated and committed group of people. Many have been committed to social justice for decades. I wish all of those who are retiring this year the best of health and happiness as they adjust to what we call a normal life.

• (1825)

[*Translation*]

I must also admit that it has been and continues to be an honour for me to work with them. As members know, 2011 was a time of great change for our party.

I would like to thank all of my new colleagues, particularly my younger colleagues, for their passion and their commitment to building a better Canada.

My friends from Quebec, I really enjoyed the conversations we had at the parliamentary restaurant after the votes. I will truly miss you.

I would especially like to mention our leader. I really appreciate his leadership and especially the fact that he was always available to listen to me and to read the many articles I sent him over these past few years. I am very happy that he is here.

[*English*]

I also want to thank my MP colleagues from all parties who have treated me with respect over the years. I have had the pleasure of getting to know some of them a little more, for example, during trips with the agriculture committee and during my two trips abroad. We do not do enough of that, getting together and socializing with our colleagues.

I would also like to recognize the government front bench. There have been numerous occasions when I have approached ministers directly here in the House as a last resort on behalf of my constituents when all else had failed. They have been very gracious and respectful of my concerns and have taken the time to follow up with their officials. I thank them for this.

I have enjoyed working here in Parliament. There is a very high degree of professionalism everywhere we look. I would first like to thank our interpreters who are always here for us, not only in the House but at each committee and caucus meeting. They are very good at what they do. As a former interpreter, I understand the difficulty and complexity of their work and hope that all members assist them by giving them copies of their speeches well ahead of time.

I would like to wish all of the pages the best in their future endeavours. These dynamic and fluently bilingual university students are a pleasure to be with. I thank them for their service.

If I may use military terminology, I often liken our position as MPs to being on the front line. However, without our support staff, life here would be impossible. I thank all of the staff here in the House and all who make Parliament function smoothly, the clerks, researchers, recorders, postal workers, library staff, and all other support staff.

[*Translation*]

As you know, Mr. Chair, the work that you do here in the House is not easy, particularly when the debates get a bit heated. I would therefore like to sincerely thank you, your colleagues and the other speakers for your patience.

[*English*]

As a former schoolteacher, I know what life can be like when we are in front of an unruly class of energized students.

[*Translation*]

You are very understanding.

*Government Orders**[English]*

Also, in spite of the tragic incident last October, I have always felt safe working here on the Hill. The members of our security staff are very professional and truly amazing in how they are able to recognize each and every one of us by name. I thank them as well as the dedicated RCMP officers for their service.

I have a special place in my heart for all the staff upstairs in our parliamentary restaurant. I will truly miss not being able to go up to the sixth floor after votes and be greeted by what I call true professionals as I partake in the daily evening buffet with my Quebec colleagues. It has been a pleasure spending time in the restaurant with my server friends. I only wish they could be assured of full-time employment even when the House is not in session. It is not a very comfortable position to be in when they lose their job when the House rises. Would it be possible, for example, to keep this great restaurant open to staff and tourists in the summer? It could be a win-win situation. I ask the next government to take a serious look at this possibility.

[Translation]

I would also like to recognize the work of the staff in our whip's office and in our leader's office. They are extremely knowledgeable and professional. I really enjoyed working with them during my time here in Parliament. I hope that they will continue their work after the election, but that this time they will be working for the government.

I also want to thank all those who work in our cafeterias, particularly in the Confederation Building. It was very nice to see them every week.

I want to thank all of the support staff, those who keep our workplace clean and in good repair.

- (1830)

[English]

Finally, all of us are here because of the support we have received in our ridings. My sincere thanks go out to all members and supporters who have made it possible for me to have this honour. It is truly amazing to observe the behind-the-scenes work that goes on during election campaigns. It is quite a humbling experience to see the efforts that go on to elect us to office. Democracy is alive and well.

It has truly been an honour to serve all constituents of British Columbia Southern Interior, regardless of their political affiliation. In fact, after the election, I made it a point to forget who belongs to which party. I would like to single out my provincial and local government colleagues for all their co-operation as we have worked together for the benefit of our constituents. I have always attempted to consult them prior to advancing federal issues on their behalf, or sometimes even wading in on provincial and municipal issues. I wish them all the best as they continue to work on behalf of those they represent.

I would like to take this time to pay tribute to the former mayor of Osoyoos and MLA, John Slater. It was always a pleasure to work with him. He will be missed. May his soul rest in peace.

Sometimes people ask me how I put up with all the nonsense in the House. First, I say that just as in teaching high school, a good night's sleep and a sense of humour certainly help. However, most important of all it is all those committed people who are fighting for social justice right across the country. When I meet with them, it is as if I recharge my batteries. It has truly been an honour to represent their views in Parliament. I have met with citizens concerned about world peace, Canada's involvement in war, protection of the environment, food sovereignty, poverty, Canada Post, smart metres, women's rights, international development and many other issues. It is amazing to see how many people, both in my riding and across the country, are consistently engaged in working to improve the lives of others.

When I was the Agriculture critic for our party, I was in regular contact with many organizations representing farmers as well as those concerned about GMOs, horse slaughter, international trade and food sovereignty. It was always a pleasure to meet with their representatives and to listen to their concerns.

Finally, I would like to recognize my staff, those dynamic women who point me in the right direction and tell me what to say: Jennifer Ratz in Ottawa; Lilly Zekanovic in Oliver; and Margaret Tessman, Gina Petrakos, and Gail Hunnisett in Castlegar. Thanks to their dedication and persistent efforts, my office has been able to assist many constituents over the course of the past nine years. It will be sad not to be able to spend time with these dedicated individuals when I retire.

I would also like to thank others who have worked in my office since I was first elected in 2006. I wish them all the very best in their future endeavours.

A number of people have asked me what I plan to do when I retire. My answer is, nothing. It is my plan to spend time at home with my wife Ann, our two cats and hopefully a new dog. There is wood to chop, flowers to plant and music to play. I guess that is what retirement is all about.

[Translation]

I wish everyone here in Ottawa all the best.

[English]

I thank the people of British Columbia Southern Interior for having given me the honour to serve my country as their representative for the past nine years.

Mr. Rick Norlock (Northumberland—Quinte West, CPC): Mr. Chair, this is a night for “thank yous”, so a lot of my dissertation tonight will be about the people I need to thank for allowing me to be here and for keeping me here.

First, I thank my Lord and Saviour for all the gifts that He has given me, the gifts of family and values.

Speaking of values, I want to thank my mom and dad, Dan and Bernadette Norlock for the values they instilled in me and my five siblings. They are sort of the beginning, and I wish to thank them.

Government Orders

My whole life I have been a person of public office. The first long-term job I had was with the Ontario Provincial Police. I can recall my coach officer telling me, when I thought there were some things that needed to be dealt with in the Ontario Provincial Police, that I had to earn the right to have an opinion. I joined our bargaining unit and we got a lot of things done. That was some 40-plus years ago.

In 1999, and I forget the exact date, I came home from work and was taking off my boots at the door. My wife had warmed supper for the second time. The phone rang and a gentleman by the name of Bert Purvis was on the other end. He suggested that I put my name forward as a candidate with the Canadian Alliance, the political party of the day. I can remember putting my hand over the mouthpiece of the telephone, looking up at my wife, who was standing, warming supper, saying, "Can you imagine?". My dear wife said, "Just say yes". Therefore, it is her fault that I am here today.

We were not successful in the year 2000 and we chose not to run in 2004. However, a couple of people are responsible in a way. A lot of my electoral district association, being party president for many years, working with it, thought that this unworthy person should put his name forward. The member for Leeds—Grenville made that comment to me, subsequent to the 2004 election, I also had the benefit of knowing the member for Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock, who also attended a fundraiser and was supportive. Of course Colin McSweeney gave me some great advice.

However, it is our electoral district association and volunteers who put their faith in us and who helped support us throughout the years during the elections.

I cannot forget, nor will I ever forget, the faith that the good citizens of Northumberland—Quinte West put in me in the 39th, 40th and this our 41st Parliament. My fellow citizens of Northumberland—Quinte West and me have done much together. I look across that great riding and I can see all the things this government, working with other levels of government, has been able to accomplish, and I am proud of that. I will be talking to the citizens of Northumberland—Quinte West, in a different venue, with regard to all that we have achieved together.

We cannot do this job without a team behind us. Throughout the nine-plus years that I have been here, we have had quite a number of staff. In the riding, most of the folks there have been with me for quite some time. With your indulgence, Mr. Speaker, I will mention their names because they are the reason why we kept getting elected: Barb Massey, who was there for us from the beginning; Catherine Cole; Stephanie Campbell; Rob Dodd; James Daniels; Sarah Honey; Erica Meeke; Jake Enright; Tom Rittwage, who is one of my trainers; Graham Howell and his wife Nubia; Mark Elton; and Sonia Garvey who was part of that training team; Daphne Gower; and Sally Harris.

I am sure I must have missed somebody and for that I apologize.

● (1835)

I am going to go out on a limb, and I am going to speak to my friends across the way, as well as myself. I can remember telling the member for Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock at a barbecue, that during a question period, I thought it was awful to heckle and

that I would never do that. I have not been able to live up to his expectations, and for that I apologize to him.

Why do we not have the kind of respect in this place that we should have? It begins with us. We cannot expect others to respect us, unless we respect each other. Question period usually begins with the opposition asking, "Why are you the worst government that ever existed on this planet, on Earth, in this country?" We respond by saying, "We are the best government ever".

That is where I have to congratulate our forefathers, other members of Parliament, and the rules and regulations that govern our behaviour, like using the third person to tone things down. This place often, according to many people, does not run very well. It brings to my mind those words of Sir Winston Churchill when he said this about democracy, "it has been said that democracy is the worst form of Government except all those other forms that have been tried".

I would have to say that about this place. We sometimes look rather slipshod and bad in other people's eyes. But the right thing gets done. Canadians are well served by this Parliament. In the end, Canadians always get the right kind of government, because we are in a democracy. There will be changes, and that is good. Change is good; change is healthy for democracy. I want to reiterate how privileged I have been to be here.

When we get near the end of our time here, we have to recognize, as the first member to speak tonight did, why we are leaving. One of the principle reasons is because of his family. He mentioned that we needed the support of our family. I would not be here without the support of my family, especially my wife who recognized in me something I did not recognize. She knows me better than I know me. I say this for all the husbands and other life partners. If they are smart, they will listen to their wives. In the end, they are right. She sure is.

I want to spend some time with my family. I have been working 40 years, much less than many business people out there and other folks. The reason I am leaving politics is it is time to spend a little time with my sons. The Liberal member of Parliament mentioned a private member's bill. It is true, not many people in our country get to have a private member's bill pass.

I have a passion, and it is hunting and fishing. My private member's bill, and I will always be able to look at it, is the National Hunting, Trapping and Fishing Heritage Day Act for Canada. I am going to enjoy those pursuits.

I thank the great citizens of Northumberland—Quinte West, once again, for putting their faith in me in three Parliaments. I thank my dear wife for putting up with me. I thank her for having me say yes. It has been an honour and a privilege to be in this place. As the late Mr. MacMillan, the town crier in Cobourg ended all of his cries, I will end my speech with, God bless the dominion of Canada and God bless our gracious Queen.

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•(1840)

Mr. Barry Devolin (Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock, CPC): Mr. Chair, I am thankful for the opportunity to rise tonight and talk for a few minutes to my colleagues. As is so often the case when there is an important occasion before us, the first question is, “I wonder what I should wear”. This afternoon, as I was making the decision between a regular suit, which all of the other members in this place are wearing this evening, or my Speaker attire, I decided that I would at least bend the rules, if not break them, by speaking in the chamber dressed like this.

I have had the privilege to serve here for 11 years. When I started, I said to people that I thought ten years was going to be enough, and I was right. About two years ago, I started thinking about other things that I want to do in my life.

I served my first four years here as a regular member of Parliament. I sat on committees, I was a critic when we were in opposition, and I chaired the aboriginal affairs committee at one time, but I have served as one of the chair occupants for the past seven years. None of my colleagues in this place who arrived either in 2008 or 2011 have ever seen me in any role other than sitting in the chair in the place of the Speaker and playing referee, rather than combatant in the debate that takes place here.

I remember that when I became a chair occupant, one of my colleagues asked me why on earth I would want that job. He said, “it is like fighting to get to the NHL and then agreeing to be one of the referees”. I guess that there is some truth to that, but I also think that sitting in that chair takes a particular temperament and it is an important role that this place would not function without. It has been an honour to serve there, both under the hon. Peter Milliken, who was the former speaker, and the current Speaker, the hon. member for Regina—Qu'Appelle.

Like my colleagues from Guelph, British Columbia Southern Interior, and Northumberland—Quinte West, who went before me, I would like to spend a significant amount of my time thanking people.

As it has been said, we all stand here on the basis of the team that we have. I can remember the day, back in the fall of 2003, driving in my car and listening to the radio when the announcement was made that the current Attorney General and the current Prime Minister, as leaders of the Progressive Conservative Party and the Canadian Alliance, had agreed to a potential merger and that there was going to be a new Conservative Party. I can remember thinking that Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock, which is my home, was one of those ridings that had had a split vote for several campaigns. In the last election before 2004, in 2000, those two parties together received 61% of the vote, so there was a sense that with a united Conservative Party there would be an opportunity to elect a member. I was the fifth person to put their name forward to run for the nomination. I absolutely was not the favourite at that time, but I worked hard through that process and was delighted when I was nominated later that fall.

I start there because I want to talk about my staff. I never say the people who worked for me, but they have worked with me for the past several years. I began with Peter Taylor, who is back in Lindsay. Peter helped me in my nomination campaign, the general campaign,

and subsequently worked in my office for about eight years. He is still available to us. When someone is sick or if we need an extra body, he can come in and fill in. Peter is a friend and did a great job in helping me to do my job as the member of Parliament for Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock.

Lisa Rodd is another woman who worked in my constituency office. Lisa also started with me back in 2004, and about three years ago, she left to become a consultant. She is still working with some of the same files, but working from home, where she can spend more time with her family.

Connie Pearsall has been running my Ottawa office since 2006. Many members in this place have two staff members in Ottawa. I run with one staff member, so Connie's job description has several bullets, with the bottom being “various duties as assigned”, which essentially means that anything that needs to get done, she does. I appreciate what she has done for and with me for the last nine years.

•(1845)

In my constituency office in Lindsay, Marnie Hoppenrath has been with me for about six or seven years. She previously worked in a provincial office and has a lot of experience. Kate Porter has also been in my Lindsay office for about five years. As we all know, if we have good front-line staff when someone walks through the door of our constituency office, if the people they meet are friendly and competent and, most important, empathetic, that really gets a relationship off on the right foot.

Like most MPs, I go home on the weekend and someone will come up and shake my hand and say, “Oh, thanks very much for that thing you did for me”. I kind of scramble a little bit and say, “Oh you're very welcome, I was pleased that we could be of service”, when sometimes I am not really sure what the person is talking about because it is actually my staff who have resolved the individual's issue.

Brenda Hymus is another woman who has worked in my office for several years. She is semi-retired and she fills in, in many ways. Andrea Coombs is the most recent addition. She has been with me for about a year and deals with communications materials.

What I find interesting is most of my staff members have been with me for more than five years, including my executive assistant, Jamie Schmale, who actually started in my office back in 2004. In fact, he ran against me in the nomination. I had not met him before, but I remember the first time we met as candidates running against each other. On the way out of the hall, my brother said to me, “If you win this thing, you should hire that guy”. I took that advice, and he has been my executive assistant and run my campaigns. In fact he is now the nominated Conservative candidate for our riding in the next election. I wish him success as he begins this journey.

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I am lucky that my riding is close enough to Ottawa that I get lots of school groups. I know some other members who are from provinces farther away do not have that opportunity and pleasure to welcome school groups, but my riding is three or four hours' drive away. When school groups come here, one of the points I always try to make with them is that public life is an honourable endeavour and that it matters, and it matters what we do; and that public life is broader than just serving in elected office, that there are many ways for people to serve their community, but it does matter.

Heaven knows that we take our share of lumps around this place, and there is lots of criticism in terms of people who make mistakes. It has been said before that 20,000 planes can land safely and that is not news, but if one crashes that leads the evening news. It is kind of the same around this place. I had been here about five years, and when I was walking in the building one day a security guard stopped me and I showed him my ID and he said, "You must be new here". I said, "No, I have been here seven or eight years". He said, "Why don't I recognize you?" I said, "I guess that's because I've never done anything ridiculous". He laughed and I said, "But I'll bet you if I wanted to I could lead the news tonight and it wouldn't be by making an intelligent, rational speech in the House, but by doing something to draw attention". It is the nature of this place that the fireworks get attention and that all the quiet good work that so many members do kind of goes so much unnoticed.

I would like to finish, as my colleagues have done, by thanking my family: my wife, Ursula, and my children, George and Molly. Five years after I was elected, they moved to Ottawa, so for the past five years my family has been here. I agree with what the hon. member for Guelph said, which is that I would encourage future Parliaments to investigate more family-friendly rules. All these votes at 6:30 in the evening could, in many cases, so easily be done following question period. I could not be here and I could not do this job without my family.

For me, unlike for my colleague from British Columbia Southern Interior, with whom I sat on the agriculture committee so many years ago, I am not retiring to go home. In fact, we are moving to South Korea where I will be teaching university, teaching politics, which is something I did a long time before I was elected. As well, my wife and I will be working with the North Korean refugee and defector community in terms of trying to make their lives better and trying to have an influence and work toward a positive resolution of that significant challenge in that part of the world.

Thanks to my family, thanks to my staff, thanks to my colleagues, and thanks to the House for this time this evening.

• (1850)

Mr. Peter Goldring (Edmonton East, CPC): Mr. Speaker, everyone has their story of their journey to and for the House. This one is mine.

My journey began in earnest 20 years ago in partnership with my wife, Lorraine. In the summer of 1995, we were motor homing down through the southern United States when we heard on the radio that Jacques Parizeau's campaign for the upcoming referendum stalled at a 60-40 level, a repeat of René Lévesque's 1980 level. Then all of a sudden under the leadership of Lucien Bouchard, it was catapulted to an amazing 50-50 proposition. I resolved that upon returning to

Edmonton I would book a week-long holiday for Lorraine and me to Quebec City over the referendum voting day to see for ourselves exactly what was happening.

Our work together for Queen and Canadian unity began in Quebec City at the Château Frontenac, where we were based for the week of the Quebec referendum in 1995, as we campaigned for Canada on the "no" side.

At the hotel at day's end, after campaigning on the streets and in the shops, we placed pedestal-mounted Canada and Alberta flags on the rotunda bar at the Château Frontenac. People gathered and staff congregated to hear the discussions. The room occupiers tilted to our deliberations. Bar glasses were supremely polished in our vicinity as the benefits of unity which seemed to prevail, at least with this group.

The evening vote results slowly and painfully came in from behind a barely registered win for the "no" side. This frightful close call for Canadian unity would change our lives forever.

Within two months, we returned to Quebec to Montreal to be granted with a western chapter to organize for the Special Committee for Canadian Unity, which would be based in Edmonton. We also sought out political parties to support. At entirely our own personal cost, we became engaged in national unity in Edmonton. We organized regular committee meetings, canvassed for supporters, became active in the media and operated a Canadian unity booth at the Alberta Legislature which turned out for over 14 years.

We also funded a group of 10 to fly to Montreal for a Special Committee for Canadian Unity dinner at McGill before boarding the unity train to Quebec City to celebrate the one-year anniversary of the bare success of the referendum of 1995. We were well received and Allan Barbe of our group was invited to the stage of the Château Frontenac to sing his wonderful song, *(One) Canada (Uni)*.

The problem with Canadian unity support in western Canada at the time was that the vocal minority were convinced that it was too much trouble to save the unity of our country. This western vocal anti-unity minority were in effect the separatists' best supporters.

Politics followed, and I was called upon in early 1997 to run for the Reform Party nomination in Edmonton East and to win a seat in election 1997 from a sitting Liberal. To this day, I am still a card-carrying and active supporting member of the Special Committee for Canadian Unity in Montreal.

Lorraine, of course, organized fundraisers and meetings from the days of the Special Committee for Canadian Unity following the Quebec referendum through to today, including the assemblies and meetings of the Reform Party, Canadian Alliance and then the Conservative Party. I did my job, searching far and wide throughout Canada, being proactive in news stories which had many times before supported and propelled my issues in politics and unity forward.

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Nomination races, elections, committee chair elections are all about marketing. My many years in business prior to politics are those in which I honed my marketing 101 skills. Before politics, I ran my own business and was required to travel frequently to job sites and to meet with clients, something that prepared me for the travel that is required for a member of Parliament. That work also allowed me to take the time to travel with Lorraine to Quebec City to experience in 1995 the Quebec referendum first-hand.

Early in 1996, I was working in Cochrane, a town just west of Calgary, and having a late night dinner in a restaurant. While I ate, I was using the time to write to parliamentarians in Ottawa, sharing my concerns for national unity. A local man came up to me and noting the paperwork, asked me what I was doing, was I perhaps a school teacher correcting papers.

• (1855)

A discussion followed, during which I divulged my concerns, my wish to get answers, and my desire to find ways to get involved to help Canadian unity efforts. I also explained that, while I had absolutely no previous political party affiliation, I would be contacting parties to offer my help.

The man from Cochrane said that I was wasting my time and that one man could not make a difference. Perhaps in some cases that man from Cochrane would be right; perhaps one man cannot make a difference, but I have never backed down from a challenge, especially not when it involved something about which I am passionate.

Can one man make a difference? He can if that man has a tremendously hard-working wife like Lorraine, if he has family, friends, party, volunteers, and contributors doing their part for Canadian unity, for Edmonton East, for Canada, and internationally.

I am very satisfied with the efforts of my partnership and team over the past 20 years:

I would simply not be here without my wife, Lorraine. Her work is the secret to our success. My daughters, Corinna and Kristina, have given unwavering support and assistance over the past 18 years. My one daughter Corinna asked in the very early times when we were working on Canadian unity issues if we were on a quest, and for that I really had to say yes.

Both my daughters have been involved in artistry for certificates, for unity train graphics, and for T-shirts. The T-shirt in Montreal was a supreme hit. My other daughter Kristina came up with the graphic and slogan for my nomination, which was “Go for Gold, vote Goldring”. What a kid.

My son-in-law Tom provided his help and support. I want to spend much more time with my granddaughters, Katelin, Alexandra, and Eleanor, to watch them grow up.

In my Edmonton office, Annette Sabrowsky gave 18 great years of tremendous work ethics and solid management skills that are so essential for a well-run endeavour; and Lynda Werning gave 7 years, recognized by so many for her excellent work, particularly on the immigration file.

In my Ottawa office, there was Shazmin Ali, with 10 years' outstanding office management in Ottawa, very capable and personable; Lorne Anderson, for 8 years and hundreds of articles, brochures, and reports; Grant Peters, just for the past 8 short months, but he has done tremendous research, writing, and organizational work on 90 meetings in Canada, U.S.A., Ukraine, and Turkey. They are a great staff.

I extend special thanks to supporters, board members, volunteers, contributors, colleagues, and House of Commons support staff.

After 98 years, Edmonton East, a swing riding that has been host to every political party in western Canada, will come to an end as an entity. Some 17 members have served in Edmonton East, with Bill Skoreyko's 21 years leading. Second is my service of 18 years, and then third are 15 others whose terms varied from 3 to 6 years.

My 53% support in the 2011 election is the highest level of support since 1979, when Bill Yurko received 56% more than 30 years ago.

Successes, I have had more than my fair share. Only some of these were merchant navy veterans, 50-year concerns, successful; Hong Kong veterans, 50-year concerns, successful; Christmas in Ortona; Col. John McCrae's medals that were saved; the Kingsclear report, with Karl Toft and RCMP investigation; two books on affordable housing and unity; and on Canadian unity, the highest level of support since the early 1960s, as opposed to the fifty-fifty level when I began in 1997.

Regrets, I have had a few but too few to dwell on.

Five Goldring brothers arrived in Upper Canada in the 1840s. Several became captains of industry. Literally, Captain Richard Goldring skippered the schooner *Maple Leaf* out of Whitby, Ontario, where I went to high school. I am proud, though, to be the first Goldring to serve in elected public office.

Now in the twilight of my life, the time to step aside draws nigh. I will forever treasure this honour to have served our Queen, our country, and the constituents of Edmonton East. I wish all the best and thank the Speaker and everyone here in Ottawa. May God bless.

• (1900)

Mr. Gerald Keddy (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture, to the Minister of National Revenue and for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, CPC): Mr. Chair, it is a real pleasure to rise and speak in the House tonight.

In 10 minutes, it is hard to put across one's entire career in politics, whether a short-lived career or one that has greater longevity. However, for my political career, June 2 marked 18 years. I remember coming to this place 18 years ago as a young parliamentarian, quite frankly green as grass, and walking onto the green floor of the House of Commons, which of course, represents the grassroots.

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It is not just representative of the grassroots of Canada, but it goes back to another era and another time, to the time of the signing of the Magna Carta at Runnymede. King John, of course, was granting greater taxation abilities to the knights and nobility. Because he was the king, he forced the knights and nobility to dismount and stand on the grass, and that is where the expression “grassroots” comes from. It was because they were standing on the grass sod.

We know, in today's terms, that it was a very elite group, certainly the cream of society, whereas in this place, under true democracy, everyone—even myself, a kid growing up in rural Nova Scotia—has an opportunity to come to the House of Commons of Canada. It is a great gift to be passed to other Canadians.

I think back to my nomination speech, and we all went through one. We all got our supporters out and dragged them to a fire hall or town hall somewhere and got them all to vote. I cannot tell members what I said in my nomination speech. I really have very little idea, because I was extremely nervous. However, I do remember quoting Robert Service from *The Shooting of Dan McGrew*, and I think it stood me in good stead for this job. It was probably the only part of my nomination speech that was delivered fairly well. I quoted this part:

When out of the night, which was fifty below, and into the din and the glare,
There stumbled a miner fresh from the creeks, dog-dirty, and loaded for bear.
He looked like a man with a foot in the grave and scarcely the strength of a louse,
Yet he tilted a poke of dust on the bar, and he called for drinks for the house.

I always felt that put me in the right frame of mind to come here, because this is a very adversarial chamber at times, with quite a rowdy crew at times. At times, we could be mistaken for that barroom in that piece of poetry written by Robert Service.

However, in all honesty, there are many times when we work more collaboratively and actually do a good job, and I think everyone comes here with the right intent. Regardless of our political affiliation, people come here for the right reasons. Sometimes they get led astray a little bit, but the majority of us are here for the right reasons, doing a good job on behalf of our constituents and on behalf of the country.

I wrote down “politics can be frustrating, demanding, perplexing, and gratifying”. I think all of my colleagues would recognize those words. However, we are all here because we have partners in life, family, friends, supporters, and all of the volunteers who have been kind and generous of their time, and who allow us to stand in this chamber and discuss the events of the nation.

Certainly, I need to first of all thank my family, my wife Judy, our six kids, my brothers and sisters, and my friends who have been supportive over the years. I know we are not allowed to draw attention to anyone in the gallery, and I have no intention of doing that, but I am pretty sure that my wife Judy, my sister Marsha, my brother-in-law Charlie, my friends Keir and George are probably watching this tonight.

● (1905)

I need to recognize my staff in the riding: Kim who has worked for me as long as I have been a member of Parliament, Jennifer, Shauna, who has now left and is working in New Brunswick, Cathy,

who works in the Barrington office, and Ben, who works in my Ottawa office. They really are the glue that holds us together. As important as the support and love of our families are, members could not do this job, as was mentioned earlier this evening, without the quality, expertise, and professionalism that our staff shows us every single day. That includes former staffers, many of whom have gone on to great careers in political life themselves.

I want to take a moment to talk about the volunteers. All members, whichever side of the House we work on, have got here because of the hard work of dozens, hundreds, and perhaps even thousands of volunteers. Here in Canada, we are a volunteering society. People volunteer at their local legions, churches, and food banks, but it is somehow a dirty word to say that someone volunteers in politics. Quite frankly, shame on us, because those volunteers are the other part of the glue that binds this democracy together. We need to recognize them and thank them for their contribution to the work that goes on, whether it is the Parliament of Canada, the provincial and territorial legislatures, or the municipalities. We could not do this job without them.

I want to thank all of my colleagues. I am not going to name everyone and I do not mean to steal the Minister of Justice's line, but we were elected at the same time, on June 2, 1997, and at that time we were a small band that had come to Ottawa trying to make big changes. It took us a long time to do that, but quite frankly, because we put the two parties together, we are standing here today not just as retiring members of Parliament but retiring members of Parliament in a government that has made real, serious change to this country, for the better.

I want to recognize and thank the Prime Minister for putting his faith in me and allowing me to serve as parliamentary secretary. That is something I will always appreciate. I was able, in that role and capacity, to work on some large files, which I never would have been able to do otherwise.

Private members' business was mentioned earlier. When I first got here, I was looking at reducing or eliminating the capital gains on privately owned woodlots in Canada, and I was able to bring that forward in a private member's bill. The government of the day did not see fit to pass it, but it did bring in the legislation itself and it became law. I also had a private member's bill on fisheries capital gains. We brought that in as an election promise and did it. It has been a huge boost for private woodlots and fisheries.

I also had the great honour of working on the Heritage Lighthouse Preservation Act with folks like Barry MacDonald from Nova Scotia. We were able to preserve forever a number of ancient lighthouses in Nova Scotia, one in particular on Cape Sable Island in my riding. The Minister of Justice and I were able to make the announcement on the other one just outside of my riding, the Sambro Island light. The Sambro Island light is the oldest lighthouse not just in Nova Scotia, Canada, or North America but in the western hemisphere. That is a piece of heritage that we were able to help preserve.

I want to say to all of my colleagues, family, and friends that it has been an honour and a pleasure to serve.

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•(1910)

Hon. Peter MacKay (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, CPC): Mr. Chair, it is a real honour. It is certainly an honour to follow my friend and colleague from South Shore—St. Margaret's but also to be here with all my colleagues and with you, Mr. Chair.

As I rise in this place, perhaps for the final time, I too wanted to share some thoughts and reflections on the last 18 years and the gift it has been to be part of this institution, this formidable place. It is beyond question. The House of Commons and our Parliament of Canada has stood for almost a century and a half, and I suspect that now, as in the future, it will remain a work in progress. Clearly, the physical and political infrastructure and the construction that continues around this place will go on.

As I pass through, I will remember, first and foremost, the people. The majesty and the splendour of these gorgeous buildings and this remarkable chamber leave one breathless. However, so too do the gracious and hard-working people who populate it, the people who work here, the people who keep us safe, transport us, feed us, and keep us moving forward in our daily tasks.

Of course, no one would be here without the people we represent, our constituents. My first words of thanks are to the people of Central Nova. My northern Nova Scotia constituency comprises Pictou, Antigonish, Guysborough, parts of Halifax County and soon parts of Musquodoboit Valley, which I will inherit from my friend from Cumberland—Colchester—Musquodoboit Valley, who I now call the last man standing.

Although the name changed, the people remained the same: strong stock, hard-working, industrious, loyal. They are communities and people I was always proud to represent. I have held their confidence as their member of Parliament for six terms. It is a true honour in every sense of the word.

I listened to the eloquent words of colleagues who have spoken before me, and I share so many of those sentiments. I cherish so much of this shared life, this political life, here in Ottawa and throughout the country.

My fellow parliamentarians, and those in particular of the Conservative Party, my political home, also went through an evolution during my tenure. There has been throughout our history, from John A. Macdonald to our current leader, the Prime Minister, an unbroken continuity in our political bloodline and a commitment to the building and advancing of our Canada. I am proud to have served as a Conservative and am comfortable in the knowledge that we are a strong, united party with strong values, Canadian values, a progressive political party deeply ingrained in the origins and future of our nation in our outlook and orientation.

As was mentioned as well, it is a party that I believe brings about many shared recollections. I am glad to share them with my colleague opposite, the previous justice minister, the member from Mount Royal, who was for me, in many ways, a mentor. I was his critic, and today he is in some ways my critic. However, that criticism is always constructive and respectful and indicative, I think, of the very best of this place when we come together around

important ideas and important notions that move the country forward.

My efforts, first and foremost, have always been to improve the lives of those of my constituents in Central Nova, whether it be through infrastructure, through investments or programs, or through personal support, much of which can only occur through the work of those in our constituency offices. Other members, of course, have made the same observation. I have been so fortunate to have a remarkable team.

Through government portfolios I have held in the last nine years, I hope I have been able to contribute, through bills and debates over the years, as have all who have gone before me. Though some would inevitably be spoken with words of passion and even great emotion, this is a place of ideas and healthy debate first and foremost. Debate should flourish, as it does.

In this place, this formidable institution, our House, I hope I may have left a small impression, not on the physical side, not carved in limestone or in wood, like the words, figures, and symbols found throughout this place, the work of gifted craftspeople and masons from all parts of Canada, but through the decisions and the debates, governance, rules, and regulations we are duty bound to respect but also to amend and modernize over time.

•(1915)

Many previous speakers referenced family, and I, of course, will do the same. There was one small contribution from my days as an opposition House leader. As my friend from South Shore—St. Margaret's mentioned, we came to this place together, young, idealistic, and ready to bring about change. I was a single man, and I argued successfully for the installation of baby change tables in all of the parliamentary precinct washrooms, both male and female, and I used one the other day with my son.

I made that presentation at the Board of Internal Economy, but it was really the brainchild of my good friend, John Holtby, a giant in my eyes, who remains one of the most knowledgeable parliamentary procedural experts in Canada, an author and intellect, an icon and a friend. He is now back growing his garden, and like my grandfather, he loves to watch nature grow, including budding politicians, who he took under his able wing.

It has been my honour and privilege to serve in this House of democracy, and I thank all of those, of all political stripes, past and present, and my colleagues, too many to recall here, I served with. Although we sometimes lined up on different issues on different sides of this place with different parties, we served alongside one another.

Parliamentarians all come with true hearts, clear heads, and an intent to bring positive change. It is a great privilege afforded to all of us by our constituents and is a shared experience, a common goal, to leave this place and the country stronger.

This pursuit is an honourable calling, despite its frailties and its failings, like democracy itself. As the great Sir Winston Churchill said of democracy:

Democracy is the worst form of government, except for all those other forms that have been tried...

Government Orders

I am humbled by this privilege and hope that my record will show that I did my best for my riding, and indeed, for all of Nova Scotia and Canada. My grandmother encouraged me to do so.

Since 2006, the Prime Minister has bestowed on me the privilege of serving as foreign minister, minister of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency responsible for the Atlantic gateway, minister of national defence, and currently Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada. In addition, I have represented Nova Scotia in the federal cabinet and other provinces. I have chaired cabinet committees. I thank the Prime Minister for his confidence and support in all of those positions. I did my best to fulfill our Conservative government's promises to Canadians.

I thank him personally, as well, for the request that I continue in my role as Minister of Justice and Attorney General until the election, and I relish the opportunity to finish with a flourish and to finish out my mandate as the member of Parliament for Central Nova.

In each and every portfolio, I have worked with dedicated public servants who work hard and put in long hours to help implement changes and improve policy and programs. From deputy ministers to those throughout the ranks, I thank them for their service.

As many in this chamber will know, I was honoured to work with the Canadian Armed Forces for some seven years during a war. Those folks, our greatest citizens, who sign up and literally put service to their country first and foremost and put their lives on the line, are truly remarkable. I remain in awe, humbled and inspired by those who serve our country in uniform, and I was honoured to be called their minister.

I have been well served in my time here, from literally day one, by Madeleine and Krista, who I met in a previous occupation in the law, and so many others back home, who I named and spoke of, many of whom have been with me a long time.

I thank all of my staff, who have been exceptional in their loyalty to me, to the government, and to Canada. I thank them for their public service and their dedication. They are a keen, hard-charging team that I have with me to this day, and it makes me lament the fact that I will no longer have the joy of working with them. They are, in my estimation, an all-star team.

Marian, my chief of staff, wore out her knees walking these halls and can match minds with anyone in this place. Her Irish makes it hard to disagree with her once her mind has been made up. There is Marc Charbonneau, who, like many I have known, would literally take a bullet for me, which takes on real meaning given the events of last October. I will miss them, not as employees but as friends and colleagues.

The relentless pace here sometimes make it feel like we are living life in fast forward.

Finally, I would like to thank my family, the undeniable reason I chose to move on from this place. My parents and grandparents made me all that I am and gave me all that I have. They instilled in me good values, a fine example in their lives, and the sacrifices they made for my siblings and I remain my greatest inspiration.

● (1920)

My father was a parliamentarian. He set a high bar. My mother would have been an excellent and compassionate member of this place as well, with a heart that would fill this chamber. She would have been a great debater as well, and I never want to debate my mother. I thank them for their love and support. It has been my lifeblood.

My siblings are my closest and dearest friends. Most of all, I thank my wife, Nazanin, who I met here as a member of Parliament, in fact, in this lobby just behind me. Were it not for politics, I would not have met the love of my life. She remains my compass and my confidante. Her values, kind nature, and disposition are in our son Kian's DNA. Our wonderful, healthy, and curious boy has given my life real meaning. I cannot wait to meet our unborn daughter.

Appropriately, my last words are spoken with passion and love for this place but are only outweighed by my hope for more time with the people I love more.

As I close, I borrow the words of the Scottish bard, Robbie Burns, who said:

Adieu! a heart-warm, fond adieu...
With melting heart, and brimful eye,
I'll mind you still, tho' far awa'.

À bientôt, mes chers collègues, till we meet again.

I quote, as well, the great John Diefenbaker, who said that "parliament is more than procedure—it is the custodian of the nation's freedom".

Time and time again, we have proven that when Canada's collective freedom and security is threatened, it does not matter where we come from or what our political background. When it comes to Canada, we come together for the betterment of our nation and our constituents. That is when this House is at its best.

May this place never be without our truly dedicated citizens, who above all else, stand for the betterment of our nation.

● (1925)

Hon. Gerry Byrne (Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte, Lib.):
Mr. Chair, thank you for hosting us on a very special evening on this just another day at the office, but what an office to be able to come to each and every day.

I want to take some time to reintroduce you, Mr. Chair and colleagues, to my riding, the place that I have served in the House for some 19 years, every since March 25, 1996, following a byelection. Five other of my colleagues were elected that day and we have been very best of friends ever since.

Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte is a treasure place. It is a place that I am so deeply proud to represent, mostly because it is my home. Before I reflect on my riding and all of its incredible people, its scenery and its heart, I also want to reflect on where I started in this place, because where I started is where I will finish.

Government Orders

My first days as a member of Parliament as I walked these hallowed halls were indeed very bittersweet. I started fairly early in a political career. I was the former executive assistant to a federal cabinet minister and went on to become an acting chief of staff to a premier. Then there was a byelection called for March 25, 1996 in Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte. Politics was very much in my blood. I thought about running. I asked many people. I asked the most important person in my life at that time, an important person who is still deeply and dearly in my life today, my dad. I asked him if I should run. He looked at me and said “You can do whatever you want. Just know I’ll be with you”. I did run. I ran for the nomination and I won. Then I ran in the byelection and I won as well. That was seven or eight elections ago.

It has been an incredible journey, one that has been filled with ups and downs. My first days walking in these halls were indeed bittersweet because my dad, who was my best campaigner, had cancer, but I did not know it and he did not know it. We walked the campaign trail together, successfully winning in March. My greatest joy would be to spend part of my career walking with him in Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte, my riding. He was here, just up above me, as I was sworn in. He passed away on July 27 at 7 p.m., just three short months later.

I would do anything; I would surrender all if I could spend one more day with him. However, if I were to ask him if he could share another day with me, he would tell me “You have to share the next day with the people that are most important to you”.

That became my fundamental philosophy, to understand who I am and who I represent and who is most dear to me. With my dad no longer by my side but always in my heart, I kept his values and I stayed as the member of Parliament seeking reconfirmation of election in 1997, in 2000, 2004, 2006, 2008 and 2011. Finally, after 19 years of serving in this place, I said that maybe a change is due.

Nineteen years of living out of a suitcase is not easy. Nineteen years of representing the people of Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte has been a pleasure. As now with my own family, I knew that a time would come that a change was necessary, and I hope to offer in a different place for a very beautiful place, called Corner Brook, in the near future.

My reflections tonight are on Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte and the people whom I owe so much to. I want to very dearly and sincerely thank Lisa Snow, who came to my office in a moment of chaos and turned it into order, Bonita Costello, who grew and became my executive assistant, Jerome Ward, my principal adviser on all fisheries matters, the very creative Jeanette Mulrooney-French, and Susie Bugden, who helped keep order in the office.

• (1930)

I had tremendous opportunity in my 19 years here. I served as parliamentary secretary to several ministers, and I also served in the federal cabinet of Jean Chrétien as ACOA minister. I will never ever forget those days. As heady as they were, they were filled with great satisfaction and joy. I want to thank Debbie Vickers, Corey Hobbs, Ralph Meachon, Olivia Letemplier, Denise Allain, and several others who helped me in that job.

It goes without saying that we are temporary custodians in this place, but this place does leave an indelible mark upon us. It also has moments of great joy, but also moments of great strain on our families, as we all know. There are two very essential and important people I want to take a special moment to thank.

My wife, Denise Gibbons, is probably one of the sharpest political advisers I could ever have from the sense that she knows how to run a family and she also knows how to run me. She knows exactly what needs to be done.

I come from a very political family, and I guess it was only natural that Denise and I would become a part of each other's lives. My father ran for the NDP in 1958 and 1962. He was a great advocate of natural social justice. He was a great campaigner and supporter of mine. My father-in-law was the president of the PC Party of Newfoundland and Labrador for several years.

When Denise and I were engaged to be married, we went to Monsignor Murphy, and in his dry Irish Catholic wit, noting my father's political allegiance and my father-in-law's political allegiance, he looked at the two of us and said, “I will consent to perform the sanctity of marriage, but we will all here today have to agree that this is very much a mixed marriage.”

That mixed marriage was a partnership that has served me so well. It produced for us a son, Gerry, who I love and adore more than anything. He has become my new rock and one of the reasons that, as much as I love this place, I must leave it. It is time for me to go home.

I want to continue to serve. I want to continue to serve the people of Newfoundland and Labrador, maybe now in a new role, if they will have me, as the MHA for Corner Brook district. Those days will come. Those days will be decided, but they will indeed come, as they always do. What shall be, shall pass.

There are many of us here who have regrets, and understandably so. This is not an easy life. I can honestly look in the mirror and into the eyes of the ones I love and say that I have no regrets because of those who I love. They have stood by me each and every step of the way. Without them I would be nothing. I wish I could be with my father. I cannot. Another day. I have my mom, and she is a great rock of support. She now needs my care a little more. I have my family.

This has been a great family while away for 19 years, but today is the day to say thank you and goodbye. I hope to see everyone again. I hope we can continue to work with each other in other capacities, in other roles. There is a lot of building to do in my province. There is a lot of building to do in Canada. If we continue on with the sense that we are all in this together one way or another, we all are a family, then I think we will all be better off.

Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte is a very special place, and if I could give one explanation of why people would see that to be true, there are sixteen UNESCO world heritage sites in Canada and two of them are in my riding of Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte. It is a reflection of the great natural and human history of the place, but it is also a reflection of the fact that it is where Canada first began, in many respects. It is one of the oldest places settled in all of Canada.

Government Orders

It has been a pleasure to be here. I want to thank my colleagues on the Conservative side, my colleagues in the NDP, and in particular my own colleagues here in the Liberal Party of Canada.

● (1935)

I have had great leadership and I look forward to great leadership from this place coming forward and making Canada a much better place. If I could have played a small role in that over my career as it was, that makes me proud. However, mostly, I am proud about being a friend to each and every member.

God bless. Best of luck to us all and I hope to see everyone soon.

Mr. Randy Kamp (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, CPC): Mr. Chair, I appreciate the opportunity to make a few remarks this evening.

My political story actually began in 1997. I was in transition, what some might call unemployed, and was invited by what is now Service Canada to participate in a course for downsized executives and managers. They told us we should view our situation as being in a canoe, having left the safety of an island where we had lived for many years and we were paddling, sometimes furiously, but we needed to know which of those islands we wanted to head toward. That is where I was in 1997, paddling furiously, but not really knowing where I was going.

To be honest, I do not think it crossed my mind that I should start paddling to that island called politics. However, coincidentally, one day during our lunch break there was a commotion at the hotel next door and it was a rally for Preston Manning, leader of the Reform Party.

In the riding where I lived, called Dewdney—Alouette then, Grant McNally, the young, first-time Reform candidate, won the June 2nd election. A mutual friend told me Grant was looking for someone to run his constituency office, so I applied and within a week or so, I was scheduled for an interview. I cannot say that I remember too much about the interview, I think it went well, except that when I walked out of the office, the other short-listed candidate was there waiting for his interview. He was young, tall, had hair, but I got the job. That young man is now the member of Parliament for Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam and the Minister of Industry. It is interesting to wonder or muse about how life might have changed for both of us if he had gotten the job instead of me.

Seven years later, when the parties merged to form the Conservative Party of Canada, Grant shared the disappointing news that he was not going to seek the nomination for the new party. Few believe me when I say this, but while working as his executive assistant, I had never thought seriously of succeeding him some day. However, with Grant's announced retirement and others declaring their intentions, I thought I should think about it.

My first inclination was not to run. Being an introvert and more reserved than most politicians, I was not sure it was a good fit for me. I wrestled with the decision for several days and nights, but eventually Ruth lost patience with me, which almost never happens, and said, "Don't be such a coward", so I jumped in.

Some listening will know that I was not expected to win the nomination. I was criticized by some for not being ambitious

enough, or as one friend put it, "I want to vote for someone with fire in his belly". I admit that my nomination campaign slogan, "I'm willing to win", was not too inspiring, but Ruth is a formidable woman and ran a strong campaign, and I won.

On June 28, 2004, I won my first election, and for that I want to thank the constituents of Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission who have been increasingly supportive for 11 years.

I have to admit that even for someone as low key as I am, those were heady days.

Just after that first election, Ruth and I were on our regular Friday date night, dining at a food court in a local mall, when a young man approached me. Although he appeared to have a developmental disability, I thought maybe he recognized me from my signs or billboard, the new Member of Parliament. He said, "Mister, your fly is down". I have managed to keep my feet on the ground and my fly up ever since.

I am well aware that I was not elected that first time, or the second, third or fourth time because of my brilliance or good looks. Politics is a team game and I have always had an outstanding team behind me, from the campaign managers and volunteers, to the EDA presidents and boards that have been unfailingly loyal and helpful.

Special thanks needs to go to my close friend and official agent, Mark Bogdanovich, who has supported me since 1997 when I first found myself in the political arena. In many ways we are kindred spirits and his friendship and encouragement have kept me going during those especially challenging times that come to every MP from time to time.

● (1940)

Let me also express my heartfelt thanks to those who have served me in my constituency and Hill offices. My first team of Rebecca Bartle here in Ottawa, and David Russell-Coutts and Dan Cody in Maple Ridge, led by the current member for Chilliwack—Fraser Canyon, became remarkably good at their jobs and, as much as it is possible for me, made the job fun.

It was with that group that I developed our office value statement that is still on our whiteboard today: "We represent our constituents most effectively when we serve them most helpfully".

They all went on to bigger and better things, and that is as it should be, but other capable individuals came on board, including some very good interns and volunteers, and none more capable than my current team that has served with me for several years. Cutis Schoblocher here in Ottawa and in my constituency office, Janis Schoblocher here in Ottawa and in my constituency office, Janis Butcher, Davis Friesen and my executive assistant, Mike Murray. I thank them. It is a rare blessing when we get to work with friends.

Government Orders

Let me also thank the Prime Minister for allowing me to serve as the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans for more than nine years. Although I might have mumbled from time to time that no good deed goes unpunished, I have always considered it a privilege to serve under three humble, down-to-earth ministers: first Loyola Hearn, the member for Fredericton and the member for Egmont twice. All three had the knack of asking me to work on things that interested me and stimulated me, and for that I thank them.

In my parliamentary secretary role, I have worked with intelligent, competent PSAs who, as much as is possible, made me look good, so thanks to Jeff Kennedy, Connor Robinson, Brad Nazar, Blair Kestevan and my current assistant, Paul Beckmann. I look forward to cheering on their future accomplishments that I know will come.

Let me also thank my colleagues from all parties who have treated me with respect, especially in these last few years when I struggled with severe hearing loss. I thank them for their understanding.

I have left until the last those who are first in my life: my family. My parents, in addition to being perhaps a little surprised by my success, have always been very supportive and proud. My mother died about two and a half years ago and I miss her encouragement, but my father at almost 89 is still one of my biggest fans, as I am of him.

I want to thank my children, Mark, Melanie and Adam and their spouses for their love and support throughout this journey. As all my colleagues will know, being in public life affects our families too. When, for example, in a radio interview with CKNW, the host, not realizing her mike was still on, called me a moron. It might have bothered them more than me, but perhaps not, because I think they came to that conclusion on their own during their teen years.

When I was first elected, I had one grandchild, a two-year-old. Now I have 12. Three of them walked with me in a parade on Saturday, so my only regret is leaving this job when they could have become really useful on my campaigns. I have got some grandfathering to catch up on, so that will be one of my highest priorities after October 19.

Then course there's Ruth, my wife of more than 41 years. I first met her in 1971 when we were still in our teens. She was everything I was not: vivacious, energetic, enthusiastic, good-looking and verbal. I was smitten, and still am. She has been, in every sense of the word, my partner during my career in politics. Although it was my name on the ballots and campaign signs and on the office door, those who know us best are well aware of the indispensable role that Ruth has played. I wouldn't be here without her. I look forward to the next 41 years together.

Finally, I want to thank God who has blessed me beyond what I could have imagined, as I have had the privilege of serving the people of Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission and, in that role, in some small way, serving Him too.

• (1945)

Mr. Russ Hiebert (South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale, CPC): Mr. Chair, I appreciate this opportunity to say a few words after the tremendous privilege of representing the good people of

South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale in this place for the past 11 years, and through four Parliaments.

First, I would like to thank the voters, my friends and neighbours who saw fit to send me here to this place, and then send me here again three more times. I am humbled by their trust in me and in our government, and have been proud of the many ways I and my team of office staff have been able to serve our community in this position.

I have always worked hard on their behalf, and since forming government in 2006, I have also been able to deliver on many of the priorities of our community. I have seen many millions of federal dollars spent in our district on projects large and small that have met important needs. I have also taken on some very specific projects and initiatives in Parliament that have benefited my community.

One in particular was the all-party border caucus, which I founded with former Liberal MP Roger Gallaway, and the current NDP MP for Windsor West shortly after arriving here. Those were challenging years for the Canada-U.S. relations. In the shadow of 9/11, security at the border was taking precedence over trade and efficiency, and sometimes even over common sense. Together, with border MPs from all parties, we met with our counterparts in the U.S. Congress and worked with them over the years to find solutions to the challenges of creating a secure and efficient border.

Another highlight for me was in 2006, when I had the honour to be elected by my colleagues to lead the Canadian branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and was subsequently re-elected to serve six more terms. As one of the oldest democracies in the world, Canada offers real leadership to the more recently established nations, particularly in the developing world. The CPA makes a real contribution to developing democratic institutions in its 54-member nations, and I cherished playing a significant role in these efforts.

Serving as the parliamentary secretary first in national defence, then in intergovernmental affairs and western economic diversification was a unique opportunity to contribute to the work of our government. One of the highlights of my term was travelling to Kandahar to see the efforts of our Canadian troops selflessly working to make that struggling nation a better place. While I was there I was also able to deliver the first of a number of wheelchairs to disabled Afghan citizens. The wheelchairs were donated by the Canadian Wheelchair Foundation, a charity located in my district. What an honour it was for me to see the bravery and generosity of Canadians affecting the lives of those in need in a weary, wartorn land.

Government Orders

I have also greatly valued the opportunity I have had to serve on several valuable committees in the House. Among them are finance, national defence, international trade, natural resources, ethics and international human rights. It was my time on the international human rights committee that opened my eyes wider to the very real suffering and persecution that continues in many parts of the world. As such, I am thankful for a Prime Minister and a cabinet that have been bold and uncompromising in facing down evil where it exists around the world. Also, I am thankful for colleagues across party lines who are passionate about these same issues with whom I have been privileged to work.

I also come away from this experience with a greater appreciation of the legislative process. Throughout the beginning of this Parliament, I had the unusual privilege of being drawn number one in private members' business. My bill, Bill C-377, on financial disclosure for labour organizations, was passed through all three readings by my colleagues in this place, and is now at third reading in the other chamber, where I hope it will receive a final vote soon. I want to express my appreciation to so many colleagues, both here and in the Senate, for their tremendous support and encouragement, as Bill C-377 has slowly wound its way through the process.

Our success here is never achieved alone. When I look back, many names and faces come to mind of people who share in the good work that has been accomplished here in the past decade. Therefore, I want to conclude my remarks by offering thanks to just some of the many important people who have helped me along the way.

● (1950)

First of all, I thank my mother, Erna Hiebert, who raised me well and taught me the principles by which I should live my life. Her advice is still very valuable to me, and I have benefited from her support and pride in all that I do.

I also thank my wonderful wife, Andrea, my closest friend, biggest fan, and strongest supporter. We are a team. She softens my rougher edges. She sometimes makes my speeches more lively, and she holds down the fort at home capably and devotedly. We decided to embark on this adventure together. We have shared the ups and downs, and now we are choosing to take on new challenges together. I thank her for walking with me.

Departing politicians frequently cite the need to spend more time with family as one of the reasons that they are leaving public life, and this is certainly true in my case. When we started this political journey, it was just Andrea and me, but soon we were blessed with the birth of a little girl, Kate, who was born on, of all days, Canada Day. She was joined three years later by another special girl, Marie. Finally, remarkable twin brothers Ryan and Kyle joined their older sisters after the 2011 election. I want to thank them for their patience for all of the time that I was away, but I look forward to us spending more time together.

I have been fortunate to have a remarkable team in my offices both here in Ottawa and in British Columbia, helping me serve our community and making me look good. They have been invaluable to me. Thanks to each one of them for their service, friendship, and persistence.

Special thanks to Peter Stock, my political brother, strategic adviser and friend, who has worked with me for all of the past 11 years.

There are also many people who generously gave their time and resources to help me get elected and to maintain me in office. I cannot possibly name them all, but there are some key friends who have given tirelessly for years. Ed and Marlene Penner, Brian and Norma Bowen, and Don and Muriel Hanberg have been stalwart supporters. Mike Martens and Kathy Jary were instrumental not only in starting this journey, but also in surviving when the elections seemed never ending.

I also want to express my appreciation and deep respect for our leader, the Prime Minister, who remains the hardest working of all MPs. I want to thank him for his leadership and for the trust he has placed in me as a member of his team. I also want to thank each of my colleagues for their support, encouragement, and advice.

Politics is a team sport and at the national level it has been a great privilege playing on the Conservative team. I thank my friends.

While I look forward to a new and exciting chapter in my life, it has been an honour to serve in this chamber for the past 11 years. This unique place, the unparalleled experiences, the dear friends we have made along the way, the hard work, the objectives achieved, the remarkable people I have met and worked with from around the world, the opportunities to give back to my community and to my country; for all of this, I am thankful and feel tremendously blessed.

May God continue to keep our land strong, glorious, and free.

● (1955)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Lise St-Denis (Saint-Maurice—Champlain, Lib.): Mr. Chair, I would first like to thank all those who thought to give members who will not be seeking re-election the opportunity to talk about their experiences. Many of those members have been here for a long time, but I have not been here very long. Like about 60 of the other members here, my election came as a complete surprise.

Although I had been volunteering in the political sphere for some time, I never thought that it would bring me to the House of Commons. That is often the attitude that women have with regard to a career in politics. As some of my female colleagues have said, strong arguments are sometimes needed to convince a woman to run for election.

In the party for which I was working, I was the president of the women's commission, and along with two other colleagues, I wrote the bylaws for the Quebec section of the party. I was active and involved, and I never thought about becoming a member of Parliament. However, in the end, parliamentary life turned out to be a rich experience for me in several respects.

It is really something to be able to participate in making decisions for a country, even as a member of the opposition. In my opinion, this was a great privilege. What will I remember about the four years I spent working in the House and in my riding?

Government Orders

In the House of Commons, members develop the ability to analyze the political fact differently from ordinary Canadians. Because of the tools at their disposal, they have more information available on which to base their decisions. Government bills move the country in the direction the government wants it to go, but such decisions cannot be said to be made lightly, even if the differences in the parties' approaches sometimes lead to outcomes that not everyone approves of.

Members also have the right to introduce bills and motions. The order of precedence for doing so is determined by a draw. Unfortunately, Parliament would have to stay in session for a few more months for me to have my turn.

Last week, I attended the debate in the House on a motion that proposed that all members should be allowed to vote freely on all matters of conscience or moral judgment. Even without having defined what was meant by a matter of conscience, something that must be done before we vote on the motion, we talked about whether we should be voting based on what our constituents want, the party line or our personal conscience. That is not an easy problem to solve.

That is the kind of dilemma we sometimes come up against—one where beliefs and ideologies stand in stark contrast and call for research, testimony and thorough analysis to ensure that, in the end, the vote is just and appropriate.

Fridays in the House are special. Most of the members have returned home to their ridings, and the House is getting ready to shut down for the weekend after one final hour of debate on a motion or a private member's bill. That is one of the rare instances when there is time for a more personal debate.

That is what happened last week when we were debating Bill C-643, which called for a national spinal cord injury awareness day. The bill, sponsored by our two MPs in wheelchairs, gave us a rare opportunity to step away from partisan rhetoric and learn more about their lives.

It was on that rare occasion that members set partisanship aside and shared the same human emotions. Such a rare situation, so different from what we see during question period, should be more common.

I would like to add that, in terms of life in the House during the 41st Parliament, debate was often restricted on the pretext that everything had been said.

● (2000)

However, it is often following the analyses of experts in a given field, analyses that are undeniably very important, that a more secondary analysis will bring out certain aspects that were overlooked the first time.

If I could make one wish in that regard, it would be that no debate ever be limited. Freedom of speech is vital to democracy. The diversity of analyses undertaken from various perspectives can only enrich the debate and allow for more enlightened decisions.

The second aspect of the life of an MP is the work we do in our ridings. The first thing my political staffer and I did was hire someone for the constituency office who knew our new work

environment really well. Through her, we got to know the riding, with its 23 municipalities, its 37,000 km², its diverse landscapes, the social and economic diversity of its towns and cities, its difficulties and its unemployment issues. I thank her for that. We built relationships with all the mayors, community groups, organizations, small businesses and MLAs that we met at the various events we attended. We discovered all the physical beauty and human potential that exist in this riding. I learned to love it and defend it wholeheartedly.

Today, I know everything about the riding: the beauty of its scenery in every season, the lives of the Atikamekw people, the dirt roads leading to their villages, the importance of the train in remote regions, the difficulties that forestry workers are having, the factories that are closing, and the communities that are trying to attract tourists as a way of breathing new life into municipalities that have lost their lustre.

We travelled from one end of the riding to the other many times. We supported the festival in St-Tite and the tomcod fishing festival. We also supported the arts, including the wonderful Notre-Dame-de-la-Présentation church, which is home to the works of Ozias Leduc.

It is always a pleasure to meet with my constituents in a variety of different circumstances. I noticed that, whether we live in the city or the country, we are all human beings with feelings who are ultimately trying to make our dreams a reality.

I would be remiss if, before closing, I did not thank all of my staff from the bottom of my heart.

Anne Cleary is an experienced member of my staff in Ottawa who has been working on the Hill for 20 years. She is very organized and always available to help.

Every day, my researcher, Jacqueline Froidefond, gave me a press review of everything that was happening in the riding.

Nicole Duchesne and Mance Vallée had to be independent, since they worked in remote offices and were required to make arrangements on their own and often attend events I was not able to attend.

Jocelyne Rivest and Christine Boisvert shared time at the main office in Grand-Mère. I have heard so many good things about how welcoming they were to constituents.

Lastly, Roger Le Blanc, my political assistant, took on all kinds of duties, namely managing employees, drafting, analyzing bills, and always travelling with me in the riding. I do not know what I would have done without his political insight, his analyses and his good judgment. Thank you for everything, Roger. I will leave here having learned a lot.

● (2005)

[English]

Mr. Rob Anders (Calgary West, CPC): Mr. Chair, I thank the people of Calgary West for the honour of representing them for the years I have been in this place. I am going to roll through a list of people who deserve thanks.

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I thank my parents who taught me to read from a newspaper at the age of three and would let me stay up late watching the TV evening news if I could answer the who, the what, the where, the when, and the why of the stories. Thanks to my grandmother, who baked cookies for my campaigns.

Thanks to the Prime Minister, one of the few parliamentarians who can interpret a 23-variable macroeconomic formula, has cut taxes, and steered our ship of state longer than any other Conservative in my lifetime. My thanks go to Preston Manning, who prophetically said that we come to Ottawa wanting to change Parliament in big ways, but we leave the House of Commons having changed Canadian government in modest ways.

I thank Deborah Grey for inspiring the troops to charge over the hill; and John Reynolds, the alpha male of parliamentarians, who let me have his office in Centre Block.

Thanks to Grant Hill. Like John Hamm, the premier of Nova Scotia, he brought his gentle charm and bedside manner as a country doctor to this place. I thank Stockwell Day for his humour and for making us smile.

None of us can survive in this place without having a board and an association that support us. I have been lucky to have many wonderful people.

They include Stephen and Cynthia Butt, foster parents who have helped raise dozens of little Canadians; Andrew Constantinidis and his daughter Alexandra who was taken door knocking at the age of six with Tony Abbott who is now the Prime Minister of Australia; Colin and Meredith Poole and their entire family; Wilmer and Margaret Doerksen, for cutting short their vacations to help campaign; Gail Pronk for her infectious smile; Bob Tennant, who supported me despite my banging his car with my Chevy Suburban on Crowchild Trail during the first nomination; Bob Caddell and his family's support; the Einarssons for hosting events at their lovely home; the DeRinzy family; Catharine Marshall; the Elliots for their support and efforts over the years; Linda and Don Coward; Chuck Benedict and George Marks, who wanted to run my sign operation out of my old garage after it had been bought by somebody else in the second campaign; Ron Pearpoint, who always appreciated our door-knocking him; John Bleile; and Phil Underwood.

We also have many staff members to thank in this place, who so many times pull us through scrapes and do so much work behind the scenes to make us look much better than we actually are. They include Trevor Cazemeir; Angela Ford; Jennifer Mcfarlane; Dustin van Vugt; Brian McAdam, for his speech writing; Chris Struc; Russ Kuykendall, also good with his writing.

Thanks go to my roommates over the years, who helped in various campaigns. They include my first campaign manager, John O'Neil, as well as John Carpay, Jessica Maga, Nillo Edwards, and Lanny Cardow.

I thank my friends in the House leader's office, Darlene Stone and Colin Thackery.

I thank my friends from school, Stephanie Kusie and Brian Crowder.

I thank my friends in the Prime Minister's Office: Andrea Smotra, Brock Stephenson, Nigel Hannaford, Will Lymer, Hamish Marshall, Ray Novak, Jenni Byrne, Meredith McDonald, Ian Brodie, Patrick Muttart, and Sean Speer.

I thank the other friends of liberty: the National Firearms Association, of which I am a life member, and Ray Laycock, Mack MacDonald, and Trevor Grover; the Gun Owners of Canada and Nathan Cook; the Firearms Institute for Rational Education and Todd Brown and Wade Myall; the University of Calgary Firearms Club and Henry, Delano, and Adam. As well there is the Canadian Taxpayers Federation with Andy Crooks, Michael Binnion, and Sean McKinsley. I thank the National Citizens Coalition, which was my first real job, and David Somerville, Gerry Nicholls, Mark Poole, Elizabeth Robertson, Miriam Alford, Jeff Ball, and Arthur Finkelstein. Thanks go to the Ontario Landowners Association with Russ Hillier, a great campaign manager. Thanks to the Conservative Leadership Foundation for the best training this country has seen with Karma MacGregor, Mark Spiro, and many others.

I thank those who fought the battle on counter-terrorism: John Thompson of the Mackenzie Institute; those in Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, James Cox and the Bewick Family; the Royal Alberta United Services Institute, with Dick Westbury who is the personification of the finest of our British heritage, regaling us with tales of William Pitt the Younger and Lord Mountbatten of Burma; the Governor General's Foot Guards and Will Lymer; the Royal Canadian Air Force with Stan Goddard, Bruce Pultz, and John Melbourne; representing the veterans, Harry James, Travis Smith, Don Leonardo, and Jamie Filstein; and my Jewish friends, the Levant and Bogach families and Barry Bristman.

● (2010)

Over the years, I have reached out to a number of groups that have all been victims of communism, which is something near and dear to my family and our history. There are Ukrainians, like Tony Reznowski, and Tara Katrusiak, now Baran; Hungarians, like Joseph Zamuda; Poles, like Jean Mullen, who is one of those rare volunteers I could give a list to and she would actually phone from home and get it done, and beg for more, bless her, and Artur Pawlowski and his family.

There are the Tibetans who have helped me in my cause: Tenzin Khangsar and his family, the Dorjee family, Chungtak Tsering, Tenzin Lhadon, Tsedon Dhongopa. There are a lot of Tenzins and Tsedens in Tibetan, and the reason for that is that is actually the name of His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

There are those in the Vietnamese community, like Bich, Peter, and Giau; members of the Falun Gong, like Xun, Grace, and Ian; writers at *Epoch Times*, like Lucy; and South Koreans Katie Ahn, David Lee, and Young Choi.

I thank those from the Venezuelan community, like Nhora Romero, who helped to sell 61 memberships, Josue Ramirez, and Daniel Rodriguez, and those in the Albanian community, like the Mino Family.

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From provincial Conservative politics I thank Ted Morton, Rick McIver, Jon Lord, and Stan Schumacher.

I thank those in the Wildrose Alliance: Tim Dyck, Dustin Nau, Shane McAllister, Greg Schell, and David Price.

From the Sir Winston Churchill Society I thank Randy and Val Iversen, Devin Iversen, and Bill Iversen, who helped me hone and work on my debating skills over the years.

From the Progressive Group for Independent Business I thank Craig Chandler and the people he collected over the years.

I thank those who fought in the battle for preventing the moral decay inside western civilization itself: from the Calgary Police, Service, Art Hanger and Maria; and from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, George Jones, who cast his ballot despite his difficulties with cancer.

I thank victims rights advocates, like George Bears and Stu and Marg Garrioch, who asked me to attend the Parole Board with them.

I thank those in the Family Life Centre, like Elizabeth Shaw and Trassa Van Ommen Kloeke; those involved with My Canada, who were making sure that young people got active in politics, evangelical youth Faytene Grusechl and Valerie Josephine Trudel; those with the Canada Family Action Coalition, Curt Storrington and Richard Dur, and those with Campaign Life Coalition, Jack Fonseca, Johanne Brownrigg, and Sharon Rose.

I thank the many Catholic supporters I have had over the years, including Father Leo Boyle, for his Irish mirth; Bishop Fred Henry, for his strength and stands; Father Wojciech Zbigniew Jarzecki; Peter Csillag; Maureen Lawrence, for her insights on the separate board of education; Eva Cain, because she could enter data like the wind; Chris, Debra, and Simon Goldring and their entire family for preserving the Latin mass in Calgary; Nolan Beckie and his family; and Paul Hamnett and his family.

I thank those involved in the Knights of Columbus, like George Wahl and Dan Larabie; my friends inside the Christian Reformed Church, like Margaret Ostenbrink, Hermina Dykxhoorn, Martin Laubser, the Slagter family, and the Coutts family; those in the Latter Day Saints, like Devaughn Fraser, Vance Gough, Emily Ady, David Salmon, who greeted youngsters in politics so warmly at my first Reform Party meetings, Wayne Bourne, for powerfully and wonderfully singing O Canada at our town halls, Randy Thorsteinson, and Kelly Swerid.

I thank those homeschoolers who have helped out over the years, like Tammy Vestrum and Bridget Houston, who with their children stuffed tremendous numbers of envelopes; and supporters of the Ambrose University College, like the Van Seters family and the Striebl family.

I thank my former colleagues in this place, Myron Thompson, Ted White, Darrel Stinson, Lee Morrison, and Ken Epp. I never doubted how they would vote, and they were rocks of men.

Finally, I thank Senator Doug Finley, who was the best soldier for the Conservative cause.

● (2015)

I will wrap up with this:

It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat.

Mr. LaVar Payne (Medicine Hat, CPC): Mr. Chair, for the last seven years it has been a great honour for me and, indeed, a privilege to serve as a member of Parliament for the Medicine Hat constituency. All good things come to an end, and these are the last few weeks of Parliament. I want to take a short time to share with members some of the memories of this place, memories that I will always cherish.

Allow me first to thank my constituents, those who voted for me and those who did not. For all the electors of the Medicine Hat constituency, I offer my profound gratitude and praise for each and every one of them. Being a member of Parliament in Canada is a big job as it requires representing tens of thousands of citizens in the House of Commons.

Over the years, I have done my best and I have always thought about what their wishes would be when it comes time to speak here or to vote on important legislation. I hope they understand that I always acted in the way I thought would be most beneficial for the citizens of the Medicine Hat constituency. After all, if it had not been for them, I would not be here today. I extend my eternal thanks.

I would also like to thank all the members of my EDA board, all the volunteers who helped me get elected on two occasions. I will always remember with great gratitude the employees of the House of Commons, who are among the most professional in the world.

First, with regard to the security service staff here, I have never seen a more professional organization in my several years in the private sector before going into public life. They are the best of the best and always do their utmost to keep us safe. They were tested on October 22. We know they did their very best, preventing any further bloodshed from happening that day and saving an untold number of lives. I thank them from the bottom of my heart and ask that they please keep doing what they are doing.

For the pages who keep this place running every day, I do not know where we would be without their assistance. I have seen many pages come and go and hope my colleagues have made their time in the House an enjoyable one.

For the translators, who do a critical job and have a very high-stress career, I have a lot of respect for them and thank them for all their hard work.

For the technical and support staff who keep the chamber running like a well-oiled machine, keep up the hard work and I thank them.

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I would also like to thank the Speaker, who works hard every day to ensure we are able to have our free and open deliberations in this place and that our rights as duly elected members are always held in the highest regard. He will always have my gratitude.

I know I have been a bit of a heckler at times, but it has been an outstanding privilege. Over the years, I have been fortunate to have excellent staff who have kept me on the straight and narrow. They were always there when I needed them. I want to thank them for all their hard work over the years. It has been a wild ride. Specifically, I would like to thank Trudi, Karen, Sue, Holly, Andrew, Blair and Jeff and the many interns who I have the joy of hosting in my office over the years.

I thank my children, Scott and Carmen, Darcy and Jennifer, Nicole and Jerry and Todd and Brandy for standing by me. I also thank my grandchildren for their support, Conner, Abby, Carter, Mason, Jessica, Chelsea, Megan and Tristan, along with my sister and her husband, Rena and Clayton.

I would be remiss if I did not say that I could never have accomplished so much as I have without the ongoing support of my partner, my dear wife Micheline. She has always believed in me and her encouragement means that the people of Medicine Hat have been served. I thank her.

I want to take a few seconds to highlight a few of the issues that have meant a lot to me and my constituents over the years.

● (2020)

First, there was the Medicine Hat Family Leisure Centre upgrades, which I was proud to deliver on behalf of the Government of Canada through our economic action plan. This was a \$10-million project dedicated to the improvement of an important place in city of Medicine Hat. I am happy I could play a part in that, as well as in all the millions of dollars of funding right across our constituency.

There has been the port of Wild Horse, which is an ongoing concern for the people of the Medicine Hat constituency. There has been some progress on this with pilot projects for extended hours at the port. I have worked hard with my colleagues and interested parties, both here and in the State of Montana, to see that we continue making progress on this file. I am glad we were able to make some progress there. It is incumbent on our officials to continue to advocate for this important crossing in the coming years.

There was the issue of the greater sage grouse.

A number of my constituents worked with my office and with me over the last year and a half or so to bring many of the concerns and issues to the table. We must never forget that these folks are hard-working, everyday Canadians who make an important contribution to our local, regional and national economies. I was honoured to stand up for them and speak out when it was necessary to do so.

CFB Suffield has been an important part of my constituency as the Canadian Forces base that also serves as home to the British Army Training Unit, BATUS. CFB Suffield is an important asset to our military capabilities, and it has been my pleasure to support it over the years as the member of Parliament for Medicine Hat, along with the Defence Research and Development Canada, Suffield Research

Centre. I look forward to continuing to have a relationship with the good people there after my term ends.

There have been countless pieces of legislation that have gone through this House. It was my first election in 2008, and taking part in the democratic process, being able to contribute to our democratic system is one of the most humbling experiences I have ever had.

This is such a special place. How lucky we are as Canadians that we can have a free and open democracy, a system where everybody can play a part, without fear of violence or oppression. I think we often take things for granted, and I hope that we continue to be one of the best parliamentary democratic countries in the world. If we allow the system to erode, we will allow the independent voice of democratically elected members to lose its value, and we will cause this place to lose its value and meaning.

To those members I have interacted with over the years, I thank them for their advice, wise counsel and assistance. We are sort of like a family here. I know that it can become hyper-partisan on the worst days, and I might have been part of that, but I have also seen numerous occasions where we have been united for the good of Canada.

I will never forget how we came together in the wake of the loss of our beloved friend, Jim Flaherty, offering our heartfelt and sincere tributes. We need to see more of this, and I hope in the future, as I watch the proceedings on CPAC, that I will see more of this spirit of collegiality here. We would be better off because of it.

I want to give a word of thanks to my colleagues in the Conservative Party of Canada caucus, both here and in the other place, and to tell them to keep up the hard work, and to keep delivering jobs, growth and prosperity for our nation. I appreciate each and every one of them, and will remember them with great fondness.

Finally, I offer a word of thanks to the Right Hon. Prime Minister. He is a great man who cares deeply about Canada and about its people, and about Canada's status as a world-class nation. I thank him for his advice, wisdom and guidance over the years and for believing in me. It has made me a better, more effective representative for my constituents. Canada needs him. We need him. I wish him all the best in the upcoming federal election.

I thank my colleagues for listening. To those who, like me, are retiring in a short while, I bid them an enjoyable retirement and a relaxing summer. I will miss this place along with my colleagues.

God bless all of them, and may God bless Canada.

● (2025)

Mrs. Joy Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC): Mr. Chair, it is my pleasure tonight to give my farewell speech here in the beautiful Parliament of Canada. These past 11 years have been a very interesting time here in Canada.

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I have to thank first of all my beautiful family. My son Edward actually inspired me to come to Parliament because of his work in the ICE unit, because of his heart for those who could not help themselves, the trafficking victims and the child abuse cases he worked on. As my son, he turned my heart as a mother and subsequently the nation's heart was turned, because in this place I was able to come and represent the survivors of human trafficking. I thank my son Michael, who is a brilliant young man; Janet who is a top supporter of everything that I have done; Natasha, who is absolutely creative and brilliant; Alexandra, of course, who does so much on my foundation and who is truly a wonderfully caring human being; and Jenna. Those are my six children, and there are my grandchildren.

I am eternally grateful to my family for supporting everything I have done since I came to Parliament Hill. Of course, I thank my husband. He has suffered cancer through a large part of my stay here over the 11 years. I thank him for believing in my work and inspiring me to carry on.

Also, I thank my EDA who supported me in everything I have done, especially John Feldsted and Kaz Malkiewicz. John Feldsted was the president of my EDA for three years and continues to do much to further the cause of the political side of what I do.

I thank all the people across the country for their prayers as I did my work to bring laws to this place to combat human trafficking. Those prayers mean a lot because first in my life is my God. He is my strength. Second is my family, and everything else comes underneath that.

There are three people who I have to recognize as well: Brian McConaghy of Ratanak, who is my brother in terms of fighting human trafficking here in Canada and worldwide; Jamie McIntosh, who started International Justice Mission; and Benjamin Perrin, who started The Future Group. It is like the group of three. These people have always been with me through the many years, even before I came to Parliament and certainly during the time that I spent here.

Most of all, I would like to thank the survivors of human trafficking. When I came here I had a vision to stop human trafficking. I had a vision to get laws through to protect the victims of human trafficking. I did put two laws through that made Canadian history, thanks to the grace of God. They are survivors like Timea Nagy, Natasha Falle, Bridget Perrier, Trisha Baptie, just to name a few. They are absolutely amazing young women.

Around this place, to my colleagues in the Conservative caucus and my colleagues across the way, there have been real friendships welded together because of the common good. I believe everyone in the House has the good of the country at heart.

There is a man who sat in our lobby for years, John Holtby. He was such an encouragement to me. He was a brilliant man who cared very deeply about the issues and about my work.

There is a young lady, Kelly Williams, who worked with me, and on me as a matter of fact, when I was chair of the health committee. She did a lot of work around the committees.

Of course, there are the security people, the restaurant people, the pages and all who make Parliament work.

When I stop to look back at why I came here, for me, I came to stop human trafficking in our country. If it was not for the survivors who use their bravery to speak out, if it was not for ministers, like the Minister of Justice, and others, I would never have been able to accomplish what I wanted to accomplish.

When I think about the leaders in this Parliament, I know there have been many who have been very strongly affected by the human trafficking issue here in our country and who stood up in this Parliament to protect the most vulnerable. I thank them for that.

● (2030)

I thank Susan Finlay, my prayer partner. She has been my prayer partner for years, and she has always been with me. In my down times and triumphant times, she was always there.

This Parliament is a place where we change the laws of the land. There are very talented decision makers in this place, and often we do not see the small things that are there. To me, especially, the small things but very important things and people are the people like my staff.

Joel Oosterman, my chief of staff, and his wife Kristy have been with me for a very long time. I love them like family. Marian Jaworski, who runs my constituency office, is just an amazing person. I have to say that those are the people who saw the vision with me and who helped me. Joel is one of the most talented writers I have ever come across. If anyone needs anything, even a kidney, ask Marian. He will find it. He is that kind of staff member. He is just an incredibly honest man who stands above many.

All these people come together for such a time as this, to stop human trafficking here in Canada. God rest her soul, my mother always said that we should leave the world a better place and I hope that, because I have been here, that has occurred.

I have to say that there are many laws we have here, such as Bill C-268, regarding mandatory minimum sentences for traffickers of children age 18 years and under. There is Bill C-310, where we reached the long arm of Canadian law into other countries when Canadian citizens or permanent residents go to traffic or exploit others. We can now bring them back to Canada.

My heart started to really look to leaving this place on December 6, 2014. On that day, we passed Bill C-36, on which I worked with the Minister of Justice. For the first time in Canadian history, the buying of sex is illegal in this country. Now, we are at a point where we can press the button and have a new start. At that point in my career, I knew I had to leave this place.

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I knew I had to do something else, so I am working on my foundation, the Joy Smith Foundation. I will continue to do that, I believe, until the end of time. The foundation is going very well. I have had hundreds of lovely letters from around the country from victims who have said thanks and that the foundation has helped them to restart their lives. What could be better than that?

I have a book coming out before Christmas, called *I Just Didn't Know*. All of the proceeds will be going to my foundation. I really hope the book touches the hearts of Canadians and people across the country who read it, because it has real life stories in it. Brave survivors have agreed to tell their stories, put their pictures in it, and explain how traffickers are able to lure young people.

It is my very great honour to have served and to continue to serve my country in this great place, the Parliament of Canada. It is rare to have the privilege of doing that and it is rare to have met all of the people in my caucus who I call friends and who are astoundingly strong leaders and decision-makers in this country.

I thank God for the opportunity that I had here, and I look forward to rekindling and keeping those friendships along the way as I go on to my other career.

• (2035)

Mr. James Lunney (Nanaimo—Alberni, Ind.): Mr. Chair, it is a great pleasure to rise tonight perhaps for the last time as the House winds down the 41st Parliament. It means a lot to stand among my colleagues here this evening. Some people have given great speeches tonight. A lot of great members are leaving the House. We know there are a lot of great ones sitting with us tonight who will remain here, and others who will come to reinforce the House after the next election.

I want to thank the Speaker and our House leader for the opportunity to speak tonight.

I was first elected to the 37th Parliament and following that November 27, to the 38th, the 39th, the 40th, and now this, the 41st Parliament. At the time, on November 27, there were 17 new members on the Canadian Alliance side, enough to boost our numbers to 66 and achieve official opposition status.

Nanaimo—Alberni is a beautiful part of Vancouver Island. It is covers nearly 9,000 square kilometres. There are 127,000 constituents. It is one of the most beautiful natural settings to live, work or play. Vancouver Island boasts the mildest climate in Canada. We enjoy natural beauty afforded by mountains, oceans, beaches and one of the richest resources and life experience in the human resources of our amazing retirement community, including some members of the House who live as my constituents now. Deb Gray, Randy White, and Brian Peckford, the former premier of Newfoundland, are all constituents in my riding. I expect that for some of the members who are now retiring, there is room as well, at least to come and visit, if they are not planning to stay.

It is an immense honour to represent an electoral district in Canada and to take a place here in the national house of debate. For most of us, there is an enormous team effort involved and therefore a lot of people to thank for our electoral success.

Many Canadians will be unaware of the challenge to relationships that federal politics demands. We have heard a bit tonight from members about the importance of family. I want to recognize the love and support of my wife Helen throughout these 25 years of marriage and 15 in Parliament. She has been a rock. We could not have done what we did without the sacrifices of my wife. We very much appreciate that steadfastness that made it possible for us to do what we had to do to get elected, to stay elected and to serve our community.

As a Christian, I want give thanks to God for directing the life path that is before me and giving me the opportunity to serve my community. Lifelong service and learning is a commitment that has sustained me for more than half a lifetime, and I look forward to taking the life lessons from these amazing 15 years here into the next chapter of my life.

It has been a delight to work with so many great Canadians: the Hon. Stockwell Day, the party leader who took us to official opposition status; the Prime Minister who united the legacy parties along with the hon. member for Central Nova, the Minister of Justice, who spoke brilliantly tonight; the many stellar people who I have worked with in our expanded Conservative caucus; the cabinet; and many across the aisle in other parties. They have all contributed to one of the great chapters of my life. I want to thank each and every one of them.

At home, the legacy party and the CPC members, the Electoral District Association supporters, our campaign teams and workers who pulled together for a common cause are so much appreciated. No electoral success would have been possible without them.

My office staff were foundational to our success. There were many in three offices over 15 years, beginning with Gayle Goodman, who joined me from my chiropractic office; Ann Bell; Jim Chutka; Dave McEachern; Kathy Roycroft; Patti Pearce; Pamela Dransfield; Jean Farnsworth; and Chris Mellin, along with a few short or part-time assistants. However, all have served with the “constituent-first service model”, going the extra mile to find answers in an often challenging, complicated maze of services and expectations. In Ottawa, Anne Anders and Bobby Wollock have been our anchors. I want to thank each and every one for a tremendous team effort.

The one person who stands out above all for special recognition is Paula Peterson. She exemplifies the attributes that I see in so many of my staff members. Paula ran three of our five campaigns. She served as the EDA president for many years. Paula came out of retirement to take on the senior position in my constituency office for the finishing lap. Paula is in demand by persons at all three senior levels of electoral office. Her good nature, organizational skills and political know-how bring out the best in people. She is a lover and a giver, tirelessly serving our community, even when she is not in the spotlight. I thank Paula for her lifetime of service and, with our EDA and our office staff, for a united commitment to making our community and our world a better place.

● (2040)

Health care is a passion for me and I spent my entire post-secondary career in pursuit of understanding human health issues and relieving human suffering. I am grateful to the University of Manitoba and the Canadian Memorial Chiropractic College for the foundation in developing professional and academic skills to serve.

My Motion No. 501 on sustainable health care had its first hour of debate just a couple of weeks ago. It is about employing innovation, effectiveness and cost-effectiveness to achieve sustainable health care. Wellness promotion and disease prevention strategies save immense costs of managing high-needs patients. The motion is scheduled to make it through this session, but with changes in schedule, it may not. If it does not, I hope to have left a path and ideas for others to build on. We have the knowledge today to release billions of dollars back into our economy by examining and promoting low-cost, effective health strategies. Let us not miss the opportunity of behalf of Canadians to do so.

I recently raised alarms about those among us as Canadians who seek to rebrand our nation with a godless image. I leave this place after fifteen years and five elections. I urge members to take note of this serious assault on the foundations of our nation.

Our Charter of Rights and Freedoms acknowledges that Canada was founded on a belief in the supremacy of God. Our parliamentary precinct has scripture inscribed in the stones, on the Peace Tower and throughout the Memorial Chapel, the heart of the Peace Tower.

Famously in the wood over the doors in the fourth floor shadow cabinet room are carved the words, "Fear God" and "Honour the King". Some of us served in opposition and saw that regularly.

Those who are determined to change that piece by piece and stone by stone to recreate Canada in a secular godless image propose to use their influence, their positions of authority, their money and our courts to this end. The recent Supreme Court ruling on prayer at city council in Saguenay has sent repercussions across the country and greatly advanced the godless rebranding exercise. This ruling basically redefines freedom of religion as freedom from religion. Big banks and corporate CEOs have used their money and influence to advocate against a Christian law school at Trinity Western University. Medical licensing authorities have unilaterally expunged doctors' long-standing conscience provisions, forcing costly legal challenges.

The most published and read book in the history of the world is in fact a record of God's dealing with man from the beginning of time.

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It has advice for those who despise God's counsel and oppose his purposes:

The Fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom...

In fact, it says on the Peace Tower:

Where there is no vision, the people perish...

It also says:

Remove not the ancient landmark...

...be not many teachers...

Woe unto those who teach men to err.

Woe unto those that call evil good and good evil.

Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.

The world the godless would build is a world without hope, a world of expanding darkness. It is our godly inheritance that has made Canada the great success it has been. Apart from Him, we have no remedy for sin; we have no moral code to build on except His precepts. Godlessness is and will be accompanied by increasing social disorder, violence, lawlessness and depravity; it is spreading around the world. Colleagues, let us keep the lights on in Canada.

It is not the Christian Right, if such can be found in Canada, that they seek to overthrow. It is the God of heaven and earth, who has been building His kingdom throughout the ages and evermore in our turbulent times.

If we reject His loving kindness and so great a salvation, we will surely meet Him as judge and those who set themselves against His purposes can expect to hasten the encounter. For those who would destroy the foundations of our great nations, I say, fear God. He knows your thoughts, your address and your expiry date. He has invested heavily in Canada and He will defend His investments out of love and compassion for our nation.

May those who love the king take note and engage accordingly and may God keep our land glorious and free.

Mr. Chair, I want to thank you for the opportunity to speak tonight and colleagues for their service to our country, to the Prime Minister, to our party and to Canada. Friends, we know as we leave this place that we do so with a lot of friendships that we will take with us. We never say goodbye to our friends. We expect to stay connected. We will stay engaged in some fashion or another in wanting to see Canada become all that it can be. We wish success to those who remain behind. We will believe, we will pray for them and we will do whatever we can to see Canada remain successful.

Government Orders

• (2045)

I wish those who remain the best success in what they do here, and for those who are moving on, very successful pursuits in what they take on in the future.

I thank my colleagues very much.

The Deputy Chair: Resuming debate, any other members wish to make perhaps a surprise announcement this evening?

There being no further members rising, pursuant to an order made Wednesday, May 27, 2015, I must now interrupt the proceedings. The debate on the motion will resume on Wednesday, June 10, 2015 at the ordinary hour of daily adjournment. The committee will rise and I will leave the chair.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): It being 8:48 p.m., this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 8:48 p.m.)

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