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(HANSARD)

Monday, June 15, 2015

Speaker: The Honourable Andrew Scheer

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, June 15, 2015

The House met at 11 a.m.

Prayers

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

•(1105)
[English]

FREE VOTES

The House resumed from May 28 consideration of the motion.

Mr. LaVar Payne (Medicine Hat, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a great honour for me to rise today in support of my colleague, the hon. member for Souris—Moose Mountain, and his motion that we are debating today.

I think as Canadians we are really very lucky. We have freedom of expression enshrined in our Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and nobody can take that away from each individual Canadian. It grants us the right to speak our mind, the right to discuss issues that we believe are important not only to our constituents, but to Canadians right across this vast, beautiful land we call home.

I believe it is our duty as federal legislators, as federal representatives here in the House of Commons of the Parliament of Canada, to speak out and to speak according to our conscience. This is especially pressing on abortion and end-of-life issues. I find it concerning and highly irritating when I hear somebody suggest that we cannot as federal legislators discuss an issue that is in the federal jurisdiction as it is not politically correct, or that it will offend some segments of society.

Well, it will be no surprise to anybody that I have been a defender of the rights of the unborn and I believe that we must be able to debate this issue freely. I supported previous motions to that effect, and will support any future motions that come before this House. I constantly receive correspondence and phone calls from constituents who are firmly in favour of defending the right to life, and as it is my duty as their federal representative here to represent their interests in Parliament, I am reinforced in my belief that this is the right thing to do.

Another issue that has dominated the national spotlight is that of end-of-life matters. The Supreme Court recently struck down parts of legislation which made assisted suicide illegal in Canada. I know that our government is carefully crafting a legislative response to this

decision, and I pray that the drafters will take into consideration the value of human life when they are making the decisions on what this legislation will look like. Because the end-of-life issue is so pertinent right now, my words will focus mostly on this.

To start, I want to say that I receive many comments from constituents, whether they be spoken, by email or regular mail, by phone or by fax. Most of them urge us to choose a strong, well thought out palliative end-of-life care strategy over the legalization of assisted suicide matters. I support this view, and I believe that every life must be protected.

I think we in this country have one of the best medical care systems in the world. It has its problems, but overall we are very blessed to have the best doctors and some of the best medical science out there available for our use. I believe that we can develop a palliative care regime that cares for our citizens until the end of their natural lives.

I believe that when it comes to matters of conscience such as these, it is critical that the democratically elected members of this House be allowed to vote according to their beliefs and to vote on how the majority of their constituents would have them vote. I realize that support for some issues can be different from community to community, province to province, and in our case, electoral district to electoral district.

It is very unfortunate that certain political parties represented in this House today have basically eliminated the ability of their members to decide how they wish to vote based on conscience issues. When it comes to matters of conscience, in an open, transparent, and democratic society such as ours, it is unthinkable that somebody would tell another that on deeply personal moral issues, one has to vote the way the party leadership tells members to vote, or else. Or else could be suspending said person from the caucus, or simply putting them in the penalty box so to speak.

How can we as legislators in a modern democracy believe that this is somehow all right, that this is the way of doing business? How can we, in our quest to cater to what we think is prevailing public opinion, seek to silence democratically elected members of this place on the very important moral issues of conscience? I find this to be absurd.

Private Members' Business

An opposition member recently said that they consider all votes to be matters of conscience. As I understand it, that is what the member said. Well, I wish that would be reflected when it came time to vote. These votes would not be whipped and these people would not be basically ordered how to vote by their party leadership. We need to all take a collective breath and consider exactly what we will no doubt have to consider sometime in the near future.

End-of-life issues are a very emotional subject matter and tend to evoke strong emotions. I understand this and I am willing to bet there are members from every party here today who have reservations about legalizing physician-assisted suicide.

This motion would encourage that the parties represented here today allow their members to vote freely according to their personal beliefs, according to what their conscience is telling them.

It is like the old Pinocchio jingle, “always let your conscience be your guide”. That is kind of a gentle way of urging my colleagues here today to carefully consider the motion that is in front of them.

• (1110)

I know that we will have some emotional debates here regarding other major issues of conscience.

Motion No. 312 by the member for Kitchener Centre supported the establishment of a parliamentary committee to study when life begins. I was incredibly proud to stand up and support that motion.

However, I am left asking myself how my constituents would want me to vote. Some upcoming questions that we will have to deal with in this place will be questions of conscience. They will also be relevant to what my constituents would have me do as their chosen voice in this place. I think I have always done my best to vote with their best intentions at heart.

Motion No. 312 and others that may have come before the House in the last several Parliaments seek to deal with a very delicate issue. Many people may not realize that there are no laws regulating the right to an abortion in Canada either. Through his motion, the member for Kitchener Centre was essentially trying to get us to start discussing some sort of direction that we as federal legislators should take on this important issue.

It is matters such as the one that Motion No. 312 was trying to deal with that the motion we are discussing today would cover.

Let us face reality here. Simply having no law is something I find unfortunate in a modern democracy. This is something of an issue that I and many of my colleagues here today probably have a problem with. Regardless of where one stands on end-of-life issues, I am sure everyone in the House would agree that we absolutely must have a written law on the books that would regulate it one way or another. Are we to expect that we should simply have no laws covering end-of-life issues? By going down that path we would be opening up a major can of worms, so to speak.

I do not believe that pretending there is no issue here is the right course of action. We cannot allow ourselves to get into the same situation, and that is why the government is working on the next steps. Doing nothing is not an option. It is our responsibility as federal legislators to craft laws that will protect vulnerable people in

our society. We lose a certain amount of institutional credibility by simply turning a blind eye to these very important issues of conscience.

On the Carter case which recently struck down this country's law on assisted suicide, we must tread very lightly as federal legislators. My personal view I have already mentioned, but I believe that this is one of the great moral issues of conscience that our generation is dealing with. The value of human life must not be put in jeopardy by emotional quick decisions. It is important that we take a thoughtful and careful look at how we as a society are going to deal with these important matters. That is why it is so critical to look at the facts and ensure that we are not rushing into any decisions.

Doing nothing is simply not acceptable. Again, our responsibility as federal legislators is to legislate when it comes to the issues affecting the lives of human beings. We are truly blessed with a very important mandate. It is our responsibility to keep Canadians safe from harm. We must also do our utmost to protect the unborn as well as those who are coming to the end of their natural lives. Let us choose to support and comfort those who are nearing the end with everything in our power. Let us look at making changes and improving on our palliative care models so that they are always the absolute best and the most compassionate possible.

We can work together to deliver this with other levels of government and with stakeholder groups. Let us work together to recognize that the value of life is greater than any of our emotional choices as we humans are often compelled to make. This is a critical issue for our attention. I wholeheartedly support this motion, which speaks to the freedom we elected members should have when voting on issues of conscience. I urge all members of the House to vote in favour of the motion.

Mr. Dave Van Kesteren (Chatham-Kent—Essex, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to participate in the debate on private member's Motion No. 590, presented by the member for Souris—Moose Mountain. The motion deals with the most fundamental means of expression for an individual member of Parliament, the choice of how to vote on a particular issue. The motion reads:

That, in the opinion of the House, all Members of Parliament should be allowed to vote freely on all matters of conscience.

The motion speaks to the important representational role that individual members of Parliament play in this institution. Before explaining how it does so, I would first like to turn to examining the motion itself and what it calls on members of this place to support.

If we break down the motion, it actually deals with two important concepts. First is the concept of free votes. While I think it is obvious to us all what the meaning of a free vote is, it is interesting to note how little information there is available to explain the concept and what the practice is with regard to free votes.

In the House of Commons' Glossary of Parliamentary Procedure, a free vote is defined as:

Non-procedural term, meaning a vote during which party discipline is not imposed on individual Members. Votes on Private Members' Business are usually conducted as free votes.

The glossary contrasts the concept of a free vote with that of a party vote. A party vote is defined as:

A division on a question during which Members follow the instructions of their respective Whips so as to reflect the official positions of their parties.

Notably, the Standing Orders do not define or provide any guidelines regarding a free vote in the House of Commons.

The other concept that is related to this motion in addition to the concept of the free vote is what constitutes a matter of conscience. In the context of this motion, it is important to have some grasp of what a matter of conscience is in order to provide some delineation of what types of scenarios might call for a free vote. Again, there is not a definition of what a matter of conscience is in the motion itself or in the Standing Orders. We do know that a free vote is often said to be synonymous with a conscience vote, usually referring to issues which tend to be more contentious and of a personal nature for an individual member. In the past, this has included, depending on the party, matters such as same-sex marriage and capital punishment. These are matters for which individual members often have strong personal convictions. Importantly, they are also issues that tend to raise strong feelings among constituents, who are more likely to pay attention to how their elected member of Parliament represents the prevailing sentiments in the riding in the House of Commons.

To sum up, neither of these two core concepts to Motion No. 590 are strictly defined anywhere. However, clearly these are votes where party discipline is relaxed and members may vote according to their own convictions in their individual roles as elected representatives.

In practice, a decision on whether or not to hold a free vote is decided by each party on a case-by-case basis. Party whips provide instructions to individual members regarding the party's position and whether or not party discipline is to be applied to a particular vote.

While each party has its own criteria for determining whether or not a free vote will occur, suffice to say that there are cases where all parties will want to ensure that members vote as a bloc on certain issues. In our system of responsible government, a decision on whether to enforce party discipline on a vote takes on particular importance in relation to the confidence convention, where a loss of confidence can lead to the dissolution of Parliament.

In cases where confidence is not an issue, should a government be defeated on a vote, it does not amount to an expression of non-confidence in the government. That is why the glossary cited above observes that free votes are mostly seen for private members' business where confidence is generally not an issue.

• (1115)

However, even where it is not a matter of confidence per se, matters of fundamental importance to a party may also require party discipline to be applied in a given case. These are matters that relate to fundamental positions that the party has taken on certain issues where the party's position is seen to be irrevocable and important to achieving the party's policy and legislative objectives. Therefore, there are good reasons why a party should apply party discipline for certain votes in the House of Commons.

First, it can assist and maintain the balance of responsibility and accountability in the House. Consistent with the principles of responsible government, the government should be held accountable for its decisions.

Private Members' Business

Second, it can avoid blurring the lines between government and opposition on matters of fundamental importance to a party, thereby making it more difficult for the electorate to hold a party to account.

Third, it can assist in respecting democratic outcomes by ensuring that the electoral platform Canadians have voted for is effectively implemented by the party that was chosen to form government.

Of course, changing the key supports of party discipline is certainly not what is being proposed by Motion No. 590. The fact that free votes cannot apply in all cases in no way diminishes the importance and the role that they can play in our parliamentary system. Free votes are an important recognition of the role that members of Parliament play in representing their constituents. One of the key roles of members of Parliament is the link that they provide between their constituents and Parliament, both through representing the constituency in Parliament and also in keeping their constituents informed about government policies and legislation.

Most members are affiliated with a particular party when they are elected, which they have chosen to join because they agree with the party's fundamental policies and objectives. As a result, members tend to support their party's position the majority of the time. That is one of the important underpinnings of our electoral system which uses political parties to provide distinct options to Canadians, and it is a key element in contributing to the effectiveness of our parliamentary process. However, that does not diminish the representative role of members, and exercising their right to vote is a key feature of that role.

I mentioned earlier that there are some natural tensions that arise for individual members as these three features of our parliamentary system interact with each other. On the one hand, members have their constituents to answer to, and their constituents may be particularly vigilant when it comes to some of the more contentious issues that are sometimes addressed in Parliament. There is a certain amount of pressure on a member to vote in a fashion that reflects their community's wishes or interests. At the same time, members often have their own personal convictions on certain issues.

On the other hand, members also belong to a party that represents particular ideals which are fundamental to the party's position on the national interest. On matters of conscience, the individual member must reconcile the different roles that he or she plays as a key actor in our parliamentary system. Motion No. 590 recognizes the balance that empowers members of Parliament: free votes for members on matters of conscience.

Before concluding, I would like to note how appropriate it is that Motion No. 590 has brought this issue to the House as a matter of private members' business. Our system for private members' business provides an important opportunity for individual members to bring forward legislation or motions, as is the case with the motion before us today. Private members' business is more likely than ordinary legislation to be the subject of a free vote. It is an important expression of an individual member's role in Parliament, and I commend the member for Souris—Moose Mountain for moving the motion.

Private Members' Business

In conclusion, our government has shown a commitment to providing Canadians with the principled and accountable government that the country deserves. We continue to be open to initiatives that strengthen the role of parliamentarians and improve parliamentary procedures. It is important that we acknowledge all of the important roles that members of Parliament perform in our parliamentary system, including the representational role played by individual members of Parliament in the House of Commons.

• (1120)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): Resuming debate with his five minute right of reply, the hon. member for Souris—Moose Mountain.

Mr. Ed Komarnicki (Souris—Moose Mountain, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for Medicine Hat for his strong personal views, and also the member for Chatham-Kent—Essex, who delicately dined and danced around what is and is not a matter of conscience.

In the previous hour of debate, the member for Louis-Saint-Laurent ended her speech by saying that she believed her NDP colleagues should support the motion. I appreciate that, but she trivializes the debate by saying that in the end, all of us are already free.

She said that the motion could just as easily read, “That in the opinion of the House, all members of Parliament should be allowed to vote freely on all matters of beauty”. What nonsense. I would like to see how her and her colleagues would view a free vote on matters that are truly matters of conscience, namely matters relating to life, more particularly to the termination of life at any time from the point of conception to the point of natural death. She said, “What therefore is the legal definition of a matter of conscience?” She said, “The problem is the abstract notion of conscience”.

Let me address that. Conscience, as a concept, is referred to in the recent Carter case, and intervenors were talking about that. On page 132, the court stated:

In our view, nothing in the declaration of invalidity which we propose to issue would compel physicians to provide assistance in dying. [...] However, we note—as did Beetz J. in addressing the topic of physician participation in abortion in *R. v. Morgentaler*—that a physician's decision to participate in assisted dying is a matter of conscience and, in some cases, of religious belief.... In making this observation, we do not wish to pre-empt the legislative and regulatory response to this judgment. Rather, we underline that the Charter rights of patients and physicians will need to be reconciled.

That is precisely the point when it comes to matters of the charter. Charter rights have to be balanced and reconciled. No one right is absolute.

In the *Morgentaler* case, the court made reference that the freedom of conscience is guaranteed in section 2 of the charter. Wilson B., on page 165, stated:

It should [also] be noted, however, that an emphasis on individual conscience and individual judgment [also] lies at the heart of our democratic political tradition. The ability of each citizen to make free and informed decisions is the absolute prerequisite for the legitimacy, acceptability, and efficacy of our system of self-government.

This should be even more so in Parliament where members vote on matters of conscience. On page 176, she refers to a previous

Supreme Court case and the comments of Justice Dickson, where he stated:

Attempts to compel belief or practice denied the reality of individual conscience and dishonoured the God that had planted it in His creatures. It is from these antecedents that the concepts of freedoms of religion and freedom of conscience became associated, to form, as they do in s. 2(a) of our Charter, the single integrated concept of “freedom of conscience and religion”.

Dickson went on to say:

What unites enunciated freedoms in the American First Amendment, s. 2(a) of the Charter and in the provision of other human rights documents in which they are associated is the notion of the centrality of individual conscience and the inappropriateness of governmental intervention to compel or to constrain its manifestation.

On page 177, he says:

The values that underline our political and philosophic traditions demand that every individual be free to hold and to manifest whatever beliefs and opinions his or her conscience dictates, provided *inter alia* only that such manifestations do not injure his or her neighbours or their parallel rights to hold and manifest beliefs and opinions of their own.

This right must not injure one's neighbour, which could include the unborn. That is precisely the point when it comes to matters of the charter. Charter rights have to be balanced and reconciled. No one right is absolute.

The member for Kings—Hants and the member for Kingston and the Islands talked about all kinds of things except real matters of conscience. Why is that? Why have they not come to the defence of their Liberal leader, the member for Papineau? Could it be because their leader's position is indefensible? In an open letter from seven former Liberal members of Parliament, they stated:

We, the undersigned [...] are concerned about your [recent] pronouncement that people who hold a particular view on a given moral issue, as a matter of conscience, cannot be Liberal candidates for the position of M.P. unless they agree to park their consciences at the entrance to the House of Commons and vote directly opposite to their fundamental beliefs, as directed by you.

This is clearly in reference to the Liberal leader's position that what is commonly referred to as “pro-choice candidates” could only be nominated, or, if elected, would have to vote as the leader directed.

• (1125)

In my view, the actions of the Liberal leader, the member for Papineau, are indefensible. Either one believes in the charter or one does not. His edict violates the charter without the use of the notwithstanding clause and strikes at the heart of this motion, and indeed at the heart of the charter.

Can anyone imagine that the leader of the Liberal Party would sacrifice a right or protection of the charter to be able to enforce his personal views on a particular subject matter? How very wrong that is.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): 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.

Government Orders

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): Pursuant to Standing Order 93, the recorded division stands deferred until Wednesday, June 17, immediately before the time provided for private members' business.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): The House stands suspended until 12 p.m.

(The sitting of the House was suspended at 11:30 a.m.)

SITTING RESUMED

(The House resumed at 12 p.m.)

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

●(1200)

[*English*]

ECONOMIC ACTION PLAN 2015 ACT, NO. 1

Hon. Kevin Sorenson (for the Minister of Finance) moved that Bill C-59, An Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on April 21, 2015 and other measures, be read the third time and passed.

He said: Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to be back here again this week with the opportunity to speak to Bill C-59 after a busy weekend in the riding of Crowfoot, having been in Camrose and Stettler for their art walk, as well as the rodeo and parade, and a number of other events that were held throughout my riding. I know all of us are busy on weekends. A great way to start Monday is debating Bill C-59.

This morning I would like to outline some specific features of the bill that would support families, seniors and rural Canada, as I represent predominantly a rural riding.

Let me begin by reaffirming that under the bold leadership of our Prime Minister, our government's top priority has been creating jobs, and focusing on economic growth and long-term prosperity for Canadians. That is why our government brought forward a number of measures to do that, such as cut taxes for job-creating businesses, invested in research and development, expanded markets for Canadian businesses abroad, committed unprecedented support for job-creating infrastructure, and established the framework for responsible development of our natural resources, despite global economic fragility, geopolitical uncertainty with what was happening in Europe, Ukraine and the Middle East, and also volatile oil prices.

Make no mistake that our economic action plan is working. It is the plan that has steered Canada out of the great recession and created over 1.2 million net new jobs, overwhelmingly in the private

sector, full-time and well-paying jobs. According to KPMG, total business tax costs in Canada are the lowest in the G7 countries and 46% lower than our closest ally and trading partner, the United States. Bloomberg has ranked Canada the second best place in the world to do business.

However, this success does not just happen. It does not occur overnight. It requires tough decisions, sound judgment and a focus on priorities. Supporting small business has been one of those priorities. It is also a central element in the budget that we are debating here today, the economic action plan. The budget implementation act. We have delivered substantial ongoing tax savings to small businesses and their owners. This enables them to take those savings and reinvest in their businesses, which helps create more jobs for those businesses.

We already reduced the small business tax rate from 12% to 11% earlier, and in 2015 we propose to take it from 11% to 9% by 2019. The Canadian Federation of Independent Business has strongly endorsed this measure and agrees with our plan. Many of the small businesses that benefit from our tax relief are from rural Canada.

Our government recognizes the important role that farmers play in our economy and communities. Canadian farmers have always been among the best producers, the best farmers in the entire world. For generations, they have fed Canadians around the globe, while providing jobs and opportunities across Canada. My grandfather moved to Canada in 1905-06 with the hope of homesteading, breaking the land and starting a family farm. That story has been told many times throughout the west and throughout Canada.

As someone who has owned and operated a farming business, I can say first-hand that to ensure these operations succeed, it demands hard work, focus and discipline. A farmer's budget does not simply balance itself. Our government firmly believes Canadian farmers should be strong and profitable, and able to capitalize on market opportunities. We believe Canadian farmers deserve support from their elected officials, not the mistreatment and high taxes that Liberal Party elitists imposed for 13 long years. Those high-tax measures and bloated government policies burden our agricultural sector and set our farmers back.

●(1205)

By contrast, our Conservative government stands with farmers. We are working to provide them access to millions of new customers. Through our free trade agreements, through expanding our customer base, we have an opportunity to get into countries that we have never been in before, and we have lowered tariffs so we can have trade with many of those countries.

Government Orders

Let me remind members that last year we simplified the tax rules relating to the lifetime capital gains exemption and the intergenerational rollover for many Canadian farmers. To accomplish this, our government passed legislation to generally treat the taxpayer's combined farming business the same as perhaps a separate farming business conducted by the same taxpayer. This will ensure consistent treatment for taxpayers who conduct various farming activities.

Economic action plan 2015 would build upon the work we have been doing since 2006 to foster a strong, stable, sustainable and prosperous agriculture sector for all of Canada.

I was pleased to join members of the Saskatchewan farming community and our Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, the member for Battlefords—Lloydminster, to announce new federal supports for agriculture. What we announced was to allow farmers to maintain more of their capital for retirement. Economic action plan 2015 would bring forward the measures to provide funding to increase lifetime capital gains exemption for farmers and fishermen, but certainly for farmers, up to \$1 million.

This was welcomed by the Canadian Cattlemen's Association. It said:

The CCA appreciates another measure of practical importance to producers, particularly those wishing to retire or transition from the industry.

The Canadian Federation of Agriculture also praised this measure. It said:

The Lifetime Capital Gains exemption is an important tool for helping farmers manage the tax burden associated with the transfer of farm assets. The CFA is pleased the increase to \$1 million is effective immediately, as it will assist farmers in their transfer of assets to the next generation by providing greater flexibility for both the retirees and new entrants.

That answers a lot.

Farmers realize they may be living poor, but they have some savings in their farm assets. When they retire, they need those to help them through their retirement so they may have a secure, dignified retirement.

I would like to now turn to parts of the bill which deal with improving the quality of life of Canadians, in particular, the health of Canadians.

There are measures in the bill that would continue our government's proud record of being a champion for persons with disabilities. This is an area where the former finance minister was a very strong advocate. As we shaped economic action plan 2014, I was pleased to witness this commitment by former Minister Flaherty first hand at the budget table. His legacy includes the landmark registered disability savings plan, which helped to ensure the long-term financial security of Canadians with severe disabilities. Since becoming available in 2008, more than 100,000 Canadians have opened a registered disabilities savings plan, and with that has come a great deal of confidence and security.

To ensure this program continues to serve Canadians who need it most, today's bill proposes an extension of the federal temporary measure that allows a qualifying family member to become the plan holder of a registered disability savings plan for an adult individual who might not be able to enter into a contract on his or her own. We are also introducing a new home accessibility tax credit for persons

with disabilities and for seniors. This non-refundable credit will provide tax recognition for the cost of improvements that allow a person who is eligible for the disability tax credit, or is a senior who wants to stay in his or her home to be more mobile, safe and functional within their own home. These measures will assist Canadians who face the daily challenges of living with a disability or who are in their seniors years in leading a much better quality of life.

● (1210)

Let me also highlight how today's legislation builds on our government's support for families and communities across our great country of Canada.

Since Canadians gave us our first mandate in 2006, this government has taken significant action to support and protect Canadian consumers by reducing taxes time and time again, including cutting the GST twice. Keeping taxes low and putting more back into the pockets of hard-working Canadians to spend in the way they decide is essential for jobs and growth.

Today, because of the measures introduced by our government, a typical two-earner family of four will receive up to \$6,600 in tax relief and increased benefits in 2015. Economic action plan 2015 builds on the government's record of support for Canadian families by keeping taxes low and helping them save.

We are focused on helping 100% of families with children with policies like the family tax cut, and increased and expanded benefits through the universal child care benefit. Unfortunately, the opposition parties, both the Liberals and the NDP, would scrap the universal child care benefit and cancel income splitting for families.

Our government is also providing tax support for seniors and persons with disabilities, as well as measures to help students pay for their education.

Whether they want to purchase a new home or a car, start a new business or save for retirement, Canadian families have many reasons to save. That is why our government introduced the groundbreaking tax-free savings account, or TFSA for short. This savings measure is a flexible, registered, general purpose savings vehicle that allows Canadians to earn tax-free investment income. They can watch compounding interest grow in their favour. That gives them a much more secure, dignified retirement.

Canadians get it. Canadians understand. Canadians have embraced the tax-free savings account for their savings needs. It is unfortunate that the members opposite have all but rejected it. Let me remind them of some important facts.

Government Orders

Eleven million Canadians have opened a tax-free savings account, and half of those earn less than \$42,000 a year. Sixty percent of those who have contributed to the tax-free savings account and who maximize their account earn less than \$60,000. Six hundred thousand seniors, aged 65-plus, with income below \$60,000 a year are currently maximizing their tax-free savings account.

Due to popular demand, today's legislation proposes to increase the tax-free savings account annual contribution limit from \$5,000 to \$10,000, effective 2015 and subsequent years.

While we are making it easier for Canadians to save money, at the same time we want seniors to feel confident that their savings will always be there, or that it will be there for them while they are enjoying their golden years. Seniors are already benefiting from important money saving measures, such as pension income splitting and taking advantage of the tax-free savings account.

The fact is that Canadians are living longer than ever, and we want to ensure that they have a secure, dignified retirement throughout their most senior years. That is why the bill that we debate today, Bill C-59, will reduce the minimum withdrawal rate for registered retirement income funds, or RRIFs.

• (1215)

As some members may know, the rules concerning registered retirement income funds and registered retirement savings plans dictate that RRSPs must be converted to RRIFs by the end of the year in which the RRSP holder reaches 71 years of age. A minimum amount must then be withdrawn. Alternatively, the RRSP savings may be used to purchase an annuity.

Economic action plan 2015 proposes to adjust that RRIF minimum withdrawal rate that applies in respect of ages 71 to 94 to better reflect more recent long-term historical real rates of return and expected inflation. The seniors advocacy group, CARP, says its members welcome this measure. As a result, the new RRIF factors will be substantially lower than the existing factors. By permitting more capital preservation, the new factors will help 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.

Our government has been consistent in advancing innovative options to allow Canadians to save and manage their finances for a secure and dignified retirement, and our work continues. Currently, 96% of pension plan assets in Canada are in a defined benefit plan, as compared to 71% in the United Kingdom, 42% in the U.S., and 15% in Australia.

That, in part, is why we began consultations on the framework for target benefit plans. These innovative plans would allow businesses to offer a third option, a middle ground between defined benefits and defined contribution models. At the same time, employees would receive a pension with a high degree of retirement income certainty.

Let me be clear. Current pensioners and retirees should be assured that it is not our intention to convert any pensions to target benefit plans without the explicit consent of that individual. A retired person's plan would not be converted unless that individual expressed a desire to convert the pension or agreed to do so. In the interim, those who are retired or saving for retirement will benefit

tremendously from targeted tax relief and new optional savings methods, such as the tax-free savings account.

However, while we keep Canada's retirement system strong, I must inform Canada's seniors about a possible new threat to CPP benefits. The Liberal leader has announced that if given the chance, he would fund his favourite infrastructure projects with "... alternative sources of capital, such as pension funds."

I regret to inform the House that it gets even worse than that. The Liberal leader has confirmed that he would implement the Ontario Liberals' dramatic payroll tax increase on every worker and small business in Canada. For a worker who earns \$60,000 a year, the Liberal leader's plan and the Liberals' policy would mean a \$1,000 tax hike. It would cost a two-worker family up to \$3,200 more per year, whether those workers like it or not.

This mandatory payroll tax increase would kill middle-class jobs and force small businesses to cut hours and wages. According to the Meridian Credit Union, the majority of Ontario's small business owners believe this type of payroll tax would be the greatest challenge that they have ever faced. According to a CFIB survey, 69% of employers in Ontario indicated that they would have to freeze or cut salaries. This is even further evidence that now is not the time for untested leadership and Liberal high-tax policies.

In closing, while I have touched on only a few of the measures in today's legislation, they are measures that would help create jobs, growth, and long-term prosperity for all Canadians. Through this legislation, we will maintain and strengthen our advantages by continuing to pursue those strategies that made us so resilient in the first place: responsibility, discipline, and determination. That is what it is going to take.

I appreciate this opportunity to serve with a government that has steered our nation out of the great recession and brought Canada back into the black. Our balanced budget and low-tax plan for jobs and security will strengthen businesses, families, and communities across the country. I urge all hon. members to give their support to this bill.

• (1220)

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, there were a few omissions in my friend's speech, which I will help put in so that he can comment on them. One is that there are 11 million Canadians without a workplace pension right now, and the Minister of Finance has invented this new pension scheme and is going to go out and consult. Why did the government never consult a single Canadian when it decided to raise the retirement age from 65 to 67, costing every single Canadian senior upwards of \$24,000 in pensions? Pensions are now delayed by two years because the Prime Minister stood in front of a bunch of billionaires in Europe to decide what Canadian pension policy would be.

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More specifically, my friend across the way and all our colleagues in this place enjoy a stable pension plan. It is a defined benefits plan as opposed to a defined contribution plan, and my friend knows the difference. Since he and all of us collectively enjoy a pension plan of a kind that most Canadians will not have access to and will never have access to, how can he stand in this place and reject the option of allowing Canadians to contribute to the most solid and secure pension plan we have, the CPP? How can the member stand in this place when the Conservatives have broken the promises the Prime Minister made to create 125,000 child care spaces in Canada and they have not created a single one?

Finally, how can the member in any good conscience want to double the TFSA, which will help the top 20% of earners by 180% more than the rest of Canadians combined?

Hon. Kevin Sorenson: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his questions, although I think what he said was more of a statement than a question.

Again, our government understands the importance of a secure and dignified retirement for the seniors who have helped build this country. That is why we are bringing forward measures that will give them that kind of retirement. Currently, many federally regulated pension plans are defined benefit plans, but Canada Post and others are finding that they have a massive pension debt. In fact, the liability is so big that they have taken a rider on even paying back into their pensions.

What companies, corporate agencies, and crown companies have asked for is not to get rid of the defined benefit plan and not to get rid of the defined contribution plan, but to have a third option. Indeed, many companies and crown corporations are even now looking at moving all new employees into a defined contribution plan. We want more security for them than that.

The opposition is saying we should have only defined benefit plans for everybody. The truth is that those who are now bringing forward pension plans are moving employees into a defined contribution plan. We want a better target benefit plan so that employees will be able to understand what their retirement will look like.

Hon. Mark Eyking (Sydney—Victoria, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in the hon. member's speech he mentioned that he represents a lot of farmers in his area. As a farmer and as the agriculture critic, I will focus on what the Conservatives have done wrong with agriculture and what they are still doing wrong with it.

We know what happened with the grain shipping problem. Farmers lost billions of dollars out west because of that. They had a good crop, and the prices were good.

However, my concern and my questions are on business risk management. Under the Conservatives' watch, millions of dollars have been cut from business risk management. Let us hope it does not happen, but what will happen if we have a drought this year and prices are low and yields are down?

My questions are these: how much did his party cut from business risk management, and why would the Conservatives make those cuts when farmers need that support when they go through hard times? How are the farmers in his riding and across Canada going to deal

with it when they go through that dip and lose money and find that business risk management will not be there for them because the Conservatives have cut over \$200 million from it?

I want to know exactly how much was cut and what is going to happen to the member's farmers if they have a drought this year and try to get business risk management.

● (1225)

Hon. Kevin Sorenson: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member. I know he is an egg producer and a very important farmer in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia.

Out west, in Ontario, through Quebec, and in Atlantic Canada, farmers understand that when there has been a disaster such as a flood or drought, this government has been there. This government has stood with them. This government has brought forward programs and plans, such as Growing Forward and others, that recognize the importance of insurance and of helping farmers and the agriculture sector get through in those times of difficulty.

The member mentioned rail transport for farming. We have had record production, especially in the prairie provinces, over the last three years. The yields have never been higher and the amount of grain has never been greater, yet that has undoubtedly been a frustration as we watched more and more oil come onto the rail lines and sometimes not as much grain as we farmers would have liked to have seen. The NDP and the Green Party are the parties that oppose pipelines for oil, and in reality what they end up saying is that oil should be shipped by rail, which pushes grain out.

We have always been there for the grain producer. We have always been there for the agriculture sector. We will stand with them through thick and thin. Right now in my area we have been dry, but we have not yet lost a crop early in June. However, this government will stand with them come what may.

Mr. Jeff Watson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, the Minister of State for Finance, for his speech on retirement income.

He raised the appropriate alarm and concern for pensioners and hard-working families. The Liberal leader would like to impose a \$1,000 pay cut with respect to the CPP, which is very similar to what we are now bracing for from Kathleen Wynne's Liberal government in Ontario and what businesses in Ontario are saying they oppose. As well, big unions are out promoting the NDP's plan, which is to double the amount that would be taken off families' paycheques or workers' paycheques for the Canada pension plan.

I wonder if the member could comment on that risky scheme and what that take-home pay cut would mean to workers, particularly in Ontario.

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Hon. Kevin Sorenson: Mr. Speaker, it is troublesome, I think, to all of us. We are in the midst of a very fragile global recovery. We see Europe with very small growth. Japan is just coming out of a recession. The United States' growth is not to the degree that we had hoped. Everywhere there are geopolitical concerns, such as ISIL, Ukraine, and others, and businesses are struggling to make it. However, the Liberal leader comes forward and confirms that he would impose a \$1,000 tax hike on middle-class workers. His plan to enact the Ontario Liberal dramatic payroll increase on every worker across Canada is not good for the economy. This would eliminate jobs and it would definitely set working families back.

More now than ever, I think Canadians understand that it is crystal clear that our Conservative government can be trusted with their tax dollars. We can be trusted to keep taxes low. That is the way to help grow an economy. That is the way to stimulate growth. The high-tax, high-spend plan of the NDP and Liberals would not promote growth in this economy.

Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, there is nothing in the bill to address climate. The hon. member speaks of addressing drought and flooding after the fact, yet nothing is included in the bill to try to prevent the growing impacts of climate on Canadians, which were identified decades ago by our natural resources department.

Why has the Conservative government not included anything in response to what we are hearing over and over again? Where are the measures to support the clean tech industry and innovation in clean energy? What do we see in the bill to deliver on the Prime Minister's promise of moving toward a carbon-free country?

• (1230)

Hon. Kevin Sorenson: Mr. Speaker, here we go again. Now that we have seen the volatility in oil prices, the NDP's plan is simply higher taxes. Tax them now. Bring forward a \$20-billion carbon tax. What is the NDP's answer to everything? High tax, high spend, and bigger government.

Compared to the Liberal government, we have seen greenhouse gases drop. We have brought forward more parks. We have provided more green spaces than ever before. As we approach the environment, Canadians get it.

We believe in the responsible development of our oil sands. That means keeping an eye on our environment and making sure that emissions and environmental controls are there and are some of the strongest in the world.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is really something to hear what the Conservatives are saying.

It will come as no surprise when Canadians reject this government's platform and policies, since the economy has been very weak for nearly 10 years now, and the government has done nothing to fight climate change and poverty here in Canada.

This is another omnibus bill that is over 150 pages long and has over 270 clauses. Not only is the Conservatives' lack of leadership affecting their popularity in the polls, but it also represents a wasted opportunity to stimulate our economy and help families. Families

need a government that understands the economy and the current reality.

[*English*]

There are two ironies that exist within this one bill, and in a sense, they are going to be the Conservatives' legacy when Canadians finally throw them from office. The first part is their shutting down debate. Just last week, we saw the Conservatives more than triple the previous record of any government in any Parliament in Canadian history for shutting down the democratic process in here by shutting down debate on something like the budget bill, as they have done with so many other bills, like Bill C-51 and all the other controversial bills they have brought in.

That is the first part of the government's legacy, and that is what it will be remembered for.

The second part will be its horrible economic management. More than 1.3 million Canadians are out of work today. The government has added more than \$150 billion in debt to the national debt. That is more than \$4,000 for every man, woman, and child. We can ask what we got for it. According to the Governor of the Bank of Canada, who, like most bankers, is hardly one to use such strong language, called this Canadian economy and the circumstances we are in right now "atrocious".

We would have thought that on the eve of an election, with an economy that continues to shed jobs, the government would have brought forward some sort of, dare I say, action plan. I am not talking about the action plan the Conservatives refer to in the \$750 million in self-promoting ads they constantly shower Canadians with. I am talking about an actual action plan. I know that it is hard to imagine that the spin could actually match some reality, but that is what we were hoping for. Canadians, from all the polling the government has done, have grown increasingly cynical about its advertising scheme, because it has met so little with the reality.

Canadians are waiting for action, hoping for action, and demanding action. Let us see what they actually got from the government in the most recent omnibus bill. Again, the government has moved thousands of pages of omnibus legislation through the House. In all of that omnibus legislation, there was virtually not a single amendment or change.

What typically happens, and it is true with this bill, is that an omnibus bill goes in to fix the mistakes of the last omnibus bill, which was fixing the mistakes of the omnibus bill before that. If we look up "incompetence" in the dictionary, we will now see a picture of the Prime Minister, and under a subheading, all of his legislation.

Let us look at the Canadian economy right now. It is shedding jobs in retail, manufacturing, and the energy sector. As I said, more than 1.3 million Canadians today are out of work.

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There was the fiasco of the temporary foreign worker program. The Conservative government created a loophole so big someone could drive a truck through it. It put more than 300,000 Canadians out of work and brought in temporary foreign workers, with absolutely no provisions to protect Canadian jobs or even the temporary foreign workers in the job conditions under which they were going to work.

The Canadian economy has lost more than 400,000 manufacturing jobs since the government took over. That is more than half a million manufacturing jobs since 2000. What is the reaction? What is the response? These are the jobs we built up over generations. We built the Canadian middle class on this. We built the strength of the Canadian economy on this. Meanwhile, these guys are fiddling while Rome burns. We have lost more than 400,000 manufacturing jobs, and the Conservatives pretend that there is no problem and that there is nothing to address.

We have also seen, according to the CIBC, that job quality in Canada is at its lowest level in a generation. It has never been this bad. The work has become more precarious, jobs are becoming more part-time, and there are fewer and fewer benefits, like pensions and true protections through the employment insurance program. That has been under the Conservative and previous Liberal governments' watch, with no addressing of it. Canadians know this experience. Their jobs have become more precarious and less certain.

●(1235)

This is a strange contradiction for the Conservatives. They continually stand in this place, as my friend just did, and talk about families and family-supporting jobs, yet in their policies, they go about destroying the very jobs that support Canadians and Canadian families. That is the great contradiction of Conservative policy. On the one hand, we get the talking points that say how important it is to build Canada and Canadian communities and Canadian families and all that *Leave It to Beaver* talk. They would like to go back in time it seems sometimes. On the other hand, the very jobs that support our homes, our communities, and our families are the very jobs the Conservatives have watched disappear, without any hint of concern whatsoever.

Child care one would think would support Canadian families. Does it not seem like something logical to take a step toward? It is so important that this Conservative Prime Minister promised Canadians in the last election that he would create 125,000 child care spaces in Canada, somewhat recognizing that there is an actual need out there. How many have they created? They have created zero spaces. When we have asked them about it, they seem to have no shame and in fact now call child care spaces institutionalizing children. Is that not a fascinating turn of phrase? Somehow the public contributing to a system like a national child care program would be institutionalizing our kids. Do they refer to our medical system that way or our public school system? When I send my children to public school, are they being institutionalized? This is rhetoric that is unfitting for any government, yet here we have it.

On pensions, this is going from bad to the bizarre. We saw the Conservatives unilaterally raise the retirement age for Canadians from 65 to 67, with no consultation. In fact, the Prime Minister stood in a roomful of billionaires in Europe to make the announcement. He

decided that it was the best place to tell Canadians that the entire pension regime was changing.

It will cost seniors as much as \$24,000 per senior in lost pensions across the board. Low income or high income, it does not matter. For Conservatives, going after pensions was their primary goal. We said this was a concern, because we thought the provinces would then follow suit and raise the age, thereby costing seniors even more. We found out just this past week that the Government of Quebec has made such an announcement to raise its retirement age in Quebec as well.

The consequences of the Prime Minister unilaterally making this policy decision have hurt seniors. The Conservatives know this, but they do not seem to care much for poor folks or the general population at large if they do not happen to vote for them. However, this is a moment when the Conservatives are now suddenly concerned, because seniors do in fact vote in our country, and lo and behold, there is an election coming soon.

What do the Conservatives do? Realizing they are losing support among Canadian seniors, they roll out a scheme, they float a balloon, saying, "Maybe we will have a voluntary system to contribute to the CPP". This is something the Conservatives themselves looked at not that many years ago and that Jim Flaherty pronounced upon. He said that they had consulted with the experts and the provinces and that such a scheme would not work. Now the Conservatives are saying they know better than the pension experts and better than their dearly departed friend Jim Flaherty. Now they are going to go to a voluntary system, undermining the basic foundation of what the Canada pension plan is.

When we ask Canadians if they would like the ability to contribute more to the CPP, along with their employers, because that is how it works, upwards of 82% of Canadians are in favour of it. Conservatives are not in favour of that. They call contributing to one's pension a tax. When Canadians take some of their salary, and that contribution is matched by an employer, they call that a tax on Canadians. My goodness. People paying into their own pensions so they can live with some dignity when they retire the Conservatives have somehow morphed into a tax.

When the only attack they have is to call everything a tax, then I guess everything starts to look like a tax, whether it is or not. I wonder if the Conservatives are walking around their ridings asking Canadians if they are contributing to their RRSPs and telling them that they should not do that, because they are self-imposing a tax, and that they should fight to get rid of their CPP contributions at work with their employers, because that must be a job-killing tax as well.

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That is such stupidity. That is ludicrous. It comes from a government that is desperate, obviously. The Conservatives are getting to the point now where they are starting to cling and grasp. They will bring up any debate they can to stir up a little more in donations and perhaps a couple of more votes. However, the plan is not working, obviously.

We also see a government that is in the midst of global concerns and a lack of job growth in Canada. In fact, in the last 16 months, job growth was at its lowest level in Canada, outside of a recession, in four decades.

• (1240)

One would think that if the Conservative plan were working, it would be working, but it is not. One would think that the Conservative strategy of giving billions away in corporate tax cuts to the largest, most profitable corporations, without any strings attached, would be creating those jobs, but it is not. The lowest job growth, outside of a recession, in 40 years is the Conservative legacy. The Conservatives are busy pulling muscles patting themselves on the back. They think this has been a job well done, that it is mission accomplished.

Let us look at the new programs the Conservatives are now going to launch. They actually ran a debt on them. Many Canadians do not know that the Conservatives ran a debt of \$2 billion a year. The cost of their income-splitting scheme is, lo and behold, about \$2 billion. They are going to borrow money to retroactively apply an income-splitting scheme that benefits only 15% of Canadian families. There is nothing for single parent families. That might not sit in the Conservative world view. I was raised by a single mom. Many Canadians are being raised by single parents. The Conservatives' income-splitting plan does nothing for them or for couples who happen to earn similar amounts of money or for individuals who sit in the middle- or lower-income bracket.

Two billion dollars has been rushed out the door by the Conservatives, who say that this will provide great help for Canadian families, yet the bottom 20% of income earners, families who might actually qualify, will get nothing, according to the Parliamentary Budget Officer.

They reject the NDP proposal for up to \$15-a-day affordable, quality child care across the country. We know, from TD Bank and other economists who have studied this, that for every \$1 we put in, \$1.50 to \$1.75 goes back into the economy. This has worked in Quebec, which is largely where our child care model is based.

We understand that there is value in helping women, if they choose, to get back into the workforce. Every industrialized country in the world looking to improve its productivity needs to help women in particular get back into the workforce. We need to do that here in Canada. We have the lowest female participation rate in the Canadian economy since 2002.

The Conservatives might think they want to do a little social engineering and turn the clock back to 1950 and that all will be well. However, this is the reality for Canadian women working today: they want access to affordable child care. They want to make the choice. When the average cost in the GTA is \$1,600 per child, there are Canadian families going to work today who are spending more on

child care than they are on their mortgages. That is a reality, and that reality often keeps incredibly qualified, talented people out of the workforce, because they simply cannot afford child care.

It is no wonder the private sector economists have said that this is an investment, but not in the way the Conservatives use the term when they talk about income splitting being an investment. It is not an investment. It is a scheme. Child care is an investment that would pay back into the economy.

The Conservatives also have no evidence that the TFSA shows an increase in investments and retirement security for Canadians. There has been no increase in contributions toward retirement vehicles. It has mostly been an exercise in people taking their retirement money and moving it from one vehicle to another. That is fine, but the Conservatives should not pretend that this is suddenly going to make retirement security better in Canada, because it will not.

The Conservatives now want to double this program. Who has \$10,000 burning a hole in his or her pocket at the end of every year? Is it the middle-class families and individuals the Conservatives are talking about? Maybe they are in their world, but they are not the people I deal with. They are not looking through their books at the end of the year and finding an extra \$10,000 sitting around and wondering what they are going to do with it, until they see an ad, which they paid for, on TV to help them figure out what to do with all that extra money. Canadians are having a hard time making ends meet.

The current personal debt rate in Canada is at an all-time historic high. Canadians owe more personal debt right now than they ever have before, and there is a reason for that. Job quality and job security have gone down, yet the cost of living has continued to rise.

Every once in a while, the Conservatives have stumbled across, almost by accident, a program that could work and help Canadians and help create jobs. Does anyone remember the home retrofit program? This was an interesting program. The Conservatives announced it once, killed it, announced it again, and killed it again. What did this program do? It helped Canadians deal with the rising cost of heating and cooling their homes. It also created jobs in the small business sector, in the localized sector. It also helped us deal with climate change. Earlier my friend talked about the drought conditions and the concerns about the weather and the increase in the intensity of storms.

It did these three things, the Holy Trinity. There it is. The program helped Canadians reduce costs. It helped small businesses get some work and provide jobs. It helped us deal with our climate change commitments. Conservative and Liberal governments made these promises but had no plan to follow through on them. They killed the program not once but twice.

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• (1245)

We are going to bring it back and actually run the program and let Canadians enjoy the benefits of dealing with climate change, because the Conservatives constantly try to pit the economy versus the environment. However, we know that not to be true. The most productive, most efficient, most prosperous countries on earth right now are doing both. They do not trade one off for the other, because anyone foolish enough and ignorant enough to think that he or she can simply drive an economy through the environment, through the ecological footprint that we bear, that there is some other virtual reality that he or she can create that is not constrained by our environment is a dinosaur and should do what dinosaurs do and have always done, which is to just go away and move along so that we can actually evolve the Canadian economy into something much more fair and much more prosperous.

We on the NDP side believe in clean technology. We saw last year globally for the first time that contributions into the clean tech sector exceeded all of the investments into the oil and gas and carbon economies. We have seen the globe moving this way, not just the so-called advanced countries, but also China, India and Brazil. Where is Canada? We have a Prime Minister who can barely utter the words “climate change”, who stands up and the only promise he is willing to commit to is something that would happen at the end of this century. When we ask him how we would get there, he says that is not for him to worry about because he will not be around.

That is similar to the Conservatives' commitments on the tax-free savings accounts. When the finance minister was asked how he was going to pay for these things, because it gets expensive really quick, he said that it was not really a problem for him to worry about, that it was a problem for the Prime Minister's hypothetical granddaughter to worry about. That was a moment of insight, almost a bit of a Freudian slip, when he said he was not concerned with it, that the Conservatives are not concerned with the huge cost of a program they hope would just maybe get them enough votes in the next election because the real costs would be paid down the line by our grandkids. “So be it and so what,” say the Conservatives, which is so similar to their approach on climate change.

Since the Conservative government's coming to office, how many years have we been promised regulations in the oil and gas sector, which by the way, is the most expensive way to deal with climate change according to the oil and gas sector. It would much rather have a price on carbon that actually meets the reality. That is why the major oil companies in this country are calling for such a thing. Do members think that the Conservatives are running into the offices of Suncor and Syncrude and yelling at them about their carbon tax policy and how they want to kill the economy? Of course they are not. We understand that businesses need certainty. They also understand that pollution costs and that the polluter pay principle should be based in law and based in science. What do the Conservatives do with science? They muzzle it.

We have also seen \$14 billion in cuts to government programs, austerity programs in the midst of this fragile economy. What the IMF, the World Bank and the EU all are suggesting right now is that we need to move our economies forward, not try to cut them to some prosperity. However, we have seen time and again where the Conservatives, and before them the Liberals, try this ideology, which

is not new; it is as old as Reaganomics. The ideology is that if they simply cut \$650 billion in corporate taxes, which the Conservatives did, as did the Liberals before them, companies would just magically reinvest in hiring more people, in manufacturing, and all of the rest of that. Mark Carney said for years that there was \$650 billion of dead money sitting in corporate bank accounts in Canada right now not being invested. Therefore, the philosophy of the Conservatives has failed.

With the Conservatives' recent infrastructure announcements and the announcements for transit, we have seen time and again that all of it is to come years down the road. What the Conservatives most care about is themselves and trying to get themselves somehow re-elected despite all to the contrary. It seems to me that the Canadian people and the Canadian economy have called for real action, not ads, not another scam, not a bit more spin. They want something that will actually help the Canadian economy.

Two suggestions which we made, and the Conservatives voted against, would have helped the manufacturing sector and the small business community. The Conservatives voted against them one month and then put them in the budget. Let us give them a bit of credit at this moment of hypocrisy where they vote against something and then drive it into the budget the next week and suddenly think it is a good idea because it is painted blue.

• (1250)

Canadians need and deserve a lot more than what they are getting, but the good news is this. There are only a few months to go until this tired and worn-out government will be tossed from office. To that effort, I move:

That the motion be amended by deleting all the words after the word “that” and substituting the following:

“this House decline to give third reading to Bill C-59, An Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on April 21, 2015 and other measures, because it:

- a) introduces income splitting and super-sized Tax-Free Savings Account measures that will primarily benefit the wealthy few while wasting billions of dollars;
- b) does not introduce a \$15 per hour minimum wage or create a universal, affordable childcare program, both of which would support the working and middle class families who actually need help;
- c) leaves Canadian interns without protections against excessive work hours, sexual harassment, and an unending cycle of unpaid work;
- d) sets a dangerous precedent for Canadians' right to know by making retroactive changes to absolve the government of its role in potential violations of access-to-information laws; and
- e) attacks the right of free and fair collective bargaining for hundreds of thousands of Canadian workers.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): The amendment is in order.

Questions and comments, the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and for La Francophonie.

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Mr. Bernard Trottier (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and for La Francophonie, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I listened attentively to the rant from the member opposite. It was a very demagogic rant, a bit of stream of consciousness and a laundry list of all of these promises.

The one thing about the budget and the reason I support it is that it is comprehensive, cohesive and fits together. When it comes to this long list of things the hon. member talked about, there is no plan in anything New Democrats say about how they will actually pay for them. After the last election, they had something like \$56 billion in increased spending. It sounds as though they are going to outdo themselves this time around and have maybe \$100 billion in increased spending by the government.

Would the member like to comment on where the money for all of these things New Democrats want to put forward will come from? Will all the taxes be increased? Carbon tax will get them part of the way there. What about all of the other taxes they will raise? That is what I would like to hear.

Mr. Nathan Cullen: Mr. Speaker, being lectured by a Conservative about running debt is like being lectured by a pyromaniac about fire safety. The Conservatives have added \$150 billion to the national debt, and 1.3 million Canadians are still out of work with the highest personal debt rate in our history.

I refer him to his own finance department's report. Every year, and it did it again this year, it looks at all the parties in this place to see which party most often balances the books over time, historically, and lo and behold, it is New Democrats who balance the books more than anybody else.

I will give the Conservatives some credit in that they beat the Liberals a little bit, but it is so ironic to hear Conservatives now lecturing everybody, after having just borrowed about \$2.5 billion to pay for income splitting that helps 15% predominantly of the wealthiest Canadians, that they somehow think they are entitled to lecture anybody on managing the books.

The hard reality for the Conservatives is that we present a fully costed plan to Canadians for infrastructure, for child care, and when we say invest, we actually mean invest, that when we put the money in, we get some money back. In fact, in most cases like infrastructure and child care, we get more back into the Canadian economy as opposed to shipping it out the door like the Conservatives do, no strings attached, to businesses that do not end up reinvesting. How do we know that? The facts support it. There were 400,000 lost manufacturing jobs in places like Windsor, and the Conservatives have nothing to say for it and no plan to make things better.

• (1255)

Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to compliment the hon. member on his rant. It was one of the finer rants I have heard in a while.

The previous question actually went where I wanted to go, which was to the self-congratulatory nonsense the Conservatives continually put forward. They have run up the national debt between \$150 billion and \$160 billion. That means that over the last 10 years, their average expenses have exceeded their revenues by somewhere

in the order of \$15 billion on an annual basis, which is hardly a way to run the economy.

Since I have already answered that question, I want to ask a second question which is on the so-called carbon pricing. Clearly, every government in Canada gets it now. B.C. prices carbon. Alberta prices carbon, and certainly the new government will be much more sensitive on pricing carbon. Ontario prices carbon. Quebec prices carbon. About 80% to 85% of the economy already prices carbon. The only place that the pricing of carbon is bad is across the aisle here, where the Conservatives simply want to keep their heads stuck literally in the sand, but I will not describe which kind of sand.

I would be interested in the hon. member's views that as a nation we have actually moved a great deal forward on the pricing of carbon, where the government has actually been a drag on the pricing of carbon.

Mr. Nathan Cullen: Mr. Speaker, the debate, while important, around the pricing of carbon and the mechanism that one chooses, and to base that on experiences, of course the Conservatives have been laggards on this. Any time they show up at any international meeting or any business forum on clean tech and clean energy, the Conservatives are shown to be what they are, laggards, trying to pull the train back, but the train has its own momentum and force. We see the Americans signing a deal with the Chinese. Again and again we are seeing countries coming forward, including less developed countries, all committing to this.

The point is that what little credit the Conservatives can take at any point when they flash a number forward about Canada's performance on climate change is directly and entirely the result of the work of the provinces and our municipalities, which have been leading this conversation from the beginning.

As the Toronto Region Board of Trade points out, the number one lag and drag on the Toronto economy, the largest city in Canada, is congestion. We actually need to invest in infrastructure, such as transit and more affordable ways to get around simply because it is costing the economy billions of dollars every single year with people stuck in traffic.

At the most practical levels, and I think this is where we need to take the debate, when we are solving the questions that Canadians have about how to produce energy, how to use it, and how to get to and from home and work, those are questions that are encapsulated in the climate change debate.

Clearly, the days are long gone in which a government like the Conservative government for years now has said that we have to choose, that it is either the economy or the environment. The Conservatives have made their choice. It does not make any sense. It does not make any practical sense. We need practical solutions. One of them is pricing pollution. We believe in it as New Democrats, and lo and behold the global consensus has moved that way as well.

We look forward to working with our provincial partners in Alberta, Ontario, Quebec, right across the country, because we know the opportunities are great, not just to battle climate change but also to fix the manufacturing crisis and get Canadians back to work.

Government Orders

• (1300)

Mr. Dan Harris (Scarborough Southwest, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I also want to thank my colleague for his fantastic rant.

This weekend I was at the peace for Scarborough event at Warden Woods Community Centre. In Scarborough, we have many impoverished neighbourhoods with few economic opportunities. In talking to a group of young people, I asked them about employment. Two of them shot up their hands, saying they had part-time jobs. Then when I asked who wants to have a job, all their hands shot up. There is clearly a lack of opportunity for young people.

Today a report came out showing that in Ontario, the low-wage workforce has skyrocketed by 94% over the past two decades, and that Ontario's workforce has gone from having 3% of the workers making minimum wage to over 12%. This really demonstrates that over the last two decades, successive Liberal and Conservative governments have done a terrible job on improving the living conditions of people in Ontario living in poverty, particularly young people who need opportunities.

I would like to ask the member if he has some ideas on what perhaps should be in this budget implementation bill to actually help young Canadians.

Mr. Nathan Cullen: Mr. Speaker, here are the facts. The Conservatives talked this morning about how the Canadian economy has weathered through the last recession. That is not true for the economy writ large, but it is particularly not true for young Canadians and young workers.

There are 250,000 fewer jobs for young Canadians now than before the recession. That is according to Finance Canada. There is an important provision in this. We have also seen job quality, as my friend talked about, drop dramatically across the entire economy, but particularly for young people. There are fewer and fewer entrance jobs. We know from all the evidence that when young people get the training at colleges, polytechnics, and universities, if they do not get into their fields of employment soon after that training, it is called employment scarring. The effects and impacts on their earning power over their entire working lives is dramatically lessened. They have to get into the work that they need.

We have seen this in this bill. This is an important piece that I did not mention before. Right now, under the Canada Labour Code, unpaid interns, the young people looking to get the experience they need, are not protected against sexual harassment or unfair work conditions. One would think that the Conservatives would move that into the Labour Code so that the young people doing the internships in particular would be protected. They said they would, and when we got to the bill they did not.

The Canadian students' associations and the Canadian Intern Association came forward at committee and asked what the government was doing and why any Canadian business taking interns would not want to commit to protecting them against sexual harassment. The Conservatives said not to worry about it, that they would take care of that later, after having promised to put it in this bill. This was something practical that could have been done to protect young Canadian workers entering the workforce. The Conservatives simply made a choice. That choice was not to take action to protect some of the most vulnerable workers, those seeking

internships, particularly unpaid ones, who are trying to get experience. The job market is so lousy for them that they have to do these other things to get the experience they so desperately desire.

For the love of Pete, New Democrats moved the amendments and implored the Conservatives to make this change and protect young Canadian workers from unfair work conditions, from extended hours, from sexual harassment, and the tough-on-crime Conservatives said no over and over again. It is shameful. I have no idea, with all good reason, ethics, and morality, why the Conservatives would not act on this, but they did not. New Democrats obviously will.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise with pleasure to address an important piece of legislation that we have before us, which I believe distinguishes the difference between all political parties inside the chamber.

It is important for me to recognize right at the beginning that today we hear a lot about Canada's middle class, as well we should. However, I would suggest that since the leader of the Liberal Party became our leader a couple of years ago, when he first raised the level of debate on the issue of middle class, we have seen other political entities in the House adopt what we believe is a very important issue; that is, the middle class of Canada. Even though the leader of the Liberal Party might have been the first to raise the profile of the issue, today we see that all political parties are trying to come to grips with what they now believe is an important issue also.

The difference is that we truly do believe that the answer to many of Canada's issues and problems we have today is to strengthen Canada's middle class. If we recognize that the greatest asset in terms of potential economic growth for our country is to invest in our middle class, we give strength to our middle class. A healthy, strong middle class equates to opportunities in a strong Canadian economy.

This is the 10th budget given by the current government. What we have noticed is that this particular budget gives the most to Canadians who need it the least. It is time for a better plan, investing in jobs and growth for the middle class and those working very hard to become a part of it. We recognize that under the current government, middle-class Canadians have had to work longer and harder to make ends meet. We would argue that this is just not right.

We talk about a plan of fairness. Here today looking at the budget, we see it is all about priorities. I will give a sample of the type of fairness that the Liberal Party of Canada is talking about.

Government Orders

A Liberal government would make the tax system fairer, and cut the middle-class tax rate by 7%. That is a \$3 billion tax cut for those who need it the most. The Liberal plan would also provide a bigger, fairer tax-free monthly cheque to help families with the high cost of raising their kids. Let me give a specific example. With the Liberal plan, a typical two-parent family with two kids, earning \$90,000 per year, would get \$490 tax free every month. With the Prime Minister's plan, that same family would receive \$275 after taxes.

We get ministers and members from the government standing up and saying that the Liberals would take away that tax break, when in fact nothing could be further from the truth. The reality is that the Liberal Party's plan compared to the government's plan would see middle-class families with children receiving more dollars every month. That is the truth.

We would also ask Canada's wealthiest Canadians to pay a little more so that the middle class can pay less. The Liberal Party would in fact 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.

• (1305)

Members will be no doubt be very much aware of the income splitting plan. This is a \$2 billion plan that the Conservative government put into place, where hundreds of millions of dollars are going to be taken out of the middle class every year to support less than 15% of Canada's wealthiest people. It is a very costly plan, which is just not necessary. Even the former minister of finance, the late Jim Flaherty, agreed that it was a bad idea, that it was not fair. Yet, the Prime Minister has seen fit to bring forward an income splitting program at a substantial cost.

We believe that is wrong. It is much like within this very same budget we are seeing the government double the TFSA contribution limits. Who is more likely to benefit from that tax initiative? Again, it is going to be some of Canada's wealthiest people. If I reflect on the residents of Winnipeg North, which I represent, I do not have constituents making between \$40,000 and \$70,000 as a household income who have an extra \$10,000 sitting around so they can invest into the TFSA maximum. That very rarely exists.

I would suggest that demonstrates just how unfair the government is in terms of its taxation policy. Whether it is the TFSA or the income split, there is a significant difference in the way the Liberals would govern compared to what we are seeing in this Conservative budget.

The Prime Minister offers tax breaks for the wealthy. Liberals, on the other hand, believe in a country that works for everyone. Our leader has been very clear. We must strengthen those at the heart of our economy, middle-class Canadians, who have not had a decent raise in 30 years.

Liberals will continue to present solutions to grow our economy. Growth is very important. We all benefit when the Government of Canada gets its priorities right within the budget. We have seen that in terms of certain industries in the last number of years. Imagine the manufacturing industry, in particular in a province like Ontario, which has been hit very hard. We are talking about tens of thousands of manufacturing jobs being lost in the province of Ontario alone,

good quality jobs in the most part, because we have a national government that has ignored that file. The jobs are not being replaced to the degree that they have been lost.

Understandably, Canadians are concerned. That is why they are looking for leadership from Ottawa in this regard. When the Conservatives say they created 1.3 million jobs, the reality is that the government has fallen short. In the last couple of years, we are maybe talking about a couple of hundred jobs. However, what kinds of jobs are they? They are not of the same nature or value as the jobs we have lost. The government continues to spread information to try to give a false impression, as if it is actually doing a good job on the issue of job creation when nothing could be further from the truth.

We see that in terms of the whole trade debate. Minister after minister will stand to say how wonderful and glorified they are to have signed trade agreements. Yes, they have signed a few trade agreements. However, the EU agreement, which is 28 of the 38 countries that the Conservatives often refer to, has still not been signed off. That agreement is not finalized. Our Prime Minister was just overseas. I suspect that there was very little progress on that file.

• (1310)

The President of Ukraine in was in this chamber. He made an appeal to all parliamentarians and, through the House, all Canadians for a trade agreement between Ukraine and Canada. However, again, the government has even let us down on that front. It could have been doing more. If we look at what the EU has done with Ukraine on the trade file and compare it with what Canada has done, we will find that Canada has fallen short.

The Conservatives might talk a tough line. They might espouse how wonderful we are. However, reality does not reflect what they say from the benches. In fact, when we talk about trade, the bottom line is whether Canada has a trade surplus or a trade deficit.

Under the Liberal administrations, we were always on the positive side. We always had a trade surplus. Not under the Conservative government. I believe it is up to 51 months of trade deficits. In fact, when the Prime Minister replaced Paul Martin, we had a \$1 billion dollar-plus trade surplus. The Prime Minister converted that trade surplus into a trade deficit, and we have had it virtually ever since

The Conservatives can talk about how great they are at trade deals, but the bottom line is they have been a total and absolute failure, at a substantial cost. One wonders why we have lost tens of thousands of manufacturing jobs. Maybe we should start looking at the trade balance and the Conservatives' less than impressive performance on this file. When we do that, we start to understand that trade surplus versus trade deficit means thousands of jobs, thousands of opportunities that have been lost.

Government Orders

We can continue on with respect to the economics of this budget when we talk about trade surplus versus trade deficit and how poorly the government has actually done on the issue. Think of what the budget implementation bill would do. It would create what it calls a balanced budget type of legislation.

Imagine a government that has failed at getting a balanced budget now preaching as if it knows what it is like to have one. The only time it actually had a balanced budget was the one year that followed then prime minister Paul Martin. Paul Martin and the Liberals provided a multi-billion dollar surplus. When the Conservatives became government, they actually had a huge surplus. Within two years, they converted that huge surplus, and that was prior to the recession, into a multi-billion dollar deficit. They think they are financial managers. I think not.

We are now months away from an election, and the government says that it has balanced the budget. The government cannot fool Canadians. Take a look at the way in which it has achieved this so-called balanced budget. It sold, at wholesale prices, \$2 billion worth of GM shares and then it went into a contingency fund, something some of the ministers said they would never do. They did this to generate a false balanced budget. It tapped into the contingency fund and sold GM sales for a few billion dollars to create a \$1 billion surplus.

I do not believe this budget will in fact be balanced. I believe we will find out after the next election, when all the numbers start coming in, that this Conservative/Reform, pretend party, or government, failed at delivering a balanced budget in 2015-16 fiscal year.

• (1315)

It is amazing how the Conservatives can look at the Liberal Party and say that the Liberals do not know how to balance budgets. In fact, the only person in this chamber who has actually balanced a budget as the minister of finance is the member who sits in front of me, the member for Wascana, the deputy leader of the Liberal Party.

If we look at the period of governance between Jean Chrétien and Paul Martin, we will find that there are numerous balanced budgets. However, we know for a fact that it is the Conservatives who have been unable to balance a budget. They are the ones off in fairyland, pretending or trying to give a false impression that they are good at balancing the books, when reality says that it is the absolute opposite. If there is any party with any credibility whatsoever on this issue of balanced budgets, it is definitely not the Conservative Party. The record clearly shows that the Liberal Party can and does balance its books.

At the same time, the Liberal Party knows what is important to Canadians, and we ensure the financing is in fact there. I will give a couple of examples on that.

There is the issue of pensions. A few years back, the Prime Minister, while on the other side of the ocean, announced that the age of retirement would be increased from 65 to 67. The Liberal Party recognizes the cost of that for Canadians. It is a cost that we are not prepared to accept. Through that policy, the Conservative government will put thousands more seniors into poverty.

The explanation provided from the Conservatives in justifying increasing the age from 65 to 67 is absolutely bogus. They have tried to create a crisis situation. There is no value to their arguments as to why the government has made that decision. The independent Parliamentary Budget Officer in essence is saying that, as are outside stakeholders.

This is an issue I plan to use at the door for my constituents. The Liberal Party has been very clear that it will revert that and maintain the age 65. We will not allow the Conservative government to get away with increasing the age of retirement from 65 to 67.

When we look at CPP, it is very clear the Prime Minister has in the past indicated that he does not support CPP. He would just as soon see CPP disappear. Now the Prime Minister is refusing to meet with premiers to work at improving CPP. It has become very clear that the Prime Minister does not care about the social safety net of Canada's three pension programs. The facts and the words from him clearly demonstrate that.

The Prime Minister does not recognize what Canadians hold close to their hearts and truly believe in, such as our health care system. However, the Liberal Party does believe in CPP. We do believe in health care. We do believe in the importance of a social safety net, which is something with which we cannot trust the Conservatives.

• (1320)

Mr. Jeff Watson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member spent an awful lot of time on two elements, one less at the end, with respect to protecting social programs, which were a significant part of the budget deficits we ran during the period of the stimulus and beyond, when we were bringing the budget back to balance. We did not cut the transfers to the provinces.

I know the member is a rookie in the House and was not here during the great recession, but I want to ask him this question. In Bloomberg, on March 25, 2009, the headline said, "Canada Needs Second Round of Stimulus, Ignatieff Says". It goes on to suggest that not only did the Liberals demand larger and bigger deficits of the minority Conservative government at the time, but they threatened to topple the government if they did not produce bigger deficits.

I wonder how the member feels about the member for Wascana and his colleagues voting in that fashion, for much bigger deficits during the stimulus period.

• (1325)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: First, Mr. Speaker, if the member wants to challenge what the Liberal Party did on health care, it was the Liberal Party that nationalized the health care program across Canada, recognizing the valuable role it played.

Government Orders

It was former prime minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau who, through the Canada Health Act, ensured an ongoing commitment to health care. It was former prime minister Jean Chrétien, during the 1990s, who established ongoing cash as opposed to tax point transfers, which guaranteed cash financial contributions to health care. It was Paul Martin in 2004 who ultimately signed the health care accord, which led to the highest contributions ever. These record highs that the government likes to brag about can all be attributed to Paul Martin's health care accord signed in 2004, which expired in 2014. The government chose to ignore the importance of the health care accord and did not renew it.

With regard to the question, the government has now had 10 budgets and has yet to demonstrate one balanced budget on its own merit.

Mr. Ted Hsu (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, would my colleague comment on health care and housing with respect to this bill?

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, housing is a very important issue. It does not matter what region of the country one lives in, there are significant needs in housing. Let me give a couple of very specific examples.

A proactive national government working with other levels of government and other stakeholders could make a difference, everything from housing co-ops, which provide a wonderful alternative to owning a home, to being a renter, to looking at senior life lease programming, infill housing, encouraging governments to support home improvements. Canada's overall housing stock should be of concern to all of us. It does not matter in what region of the country one lives.

There are serious issues surrounding first nations housing and the affordability of housing. We need to recognize that the Government of Canada has to play a stronger leadership role in working with the different stakeholders, the different levels of government in trying to address a national housing strategy that would make housing more affordable, safer and cleaner, ultimately investing in housing infrastructure across Canada.

Mr. John Carmichael (Don Valley West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government not only delivered a prudent, balanced budget, but one that also contains important measures to address the priorities of Canadians. I am pleased to take the opportunity to discuss a few highlights today, and I will be sharing my time with the member for Burlington.

Just as our government has worked hard to bring forward a balanced budget, every day Canadian families are also working hard to balance their budgets, and that is one of the reasons I am particularly happy about budget 2015: because it supports Canadian families in meaningful ways.

We have recognized that each family is unique. We are not attempting a one-size-fits-all solution, as some of the opposition members are proposing. One such example is the universal child care benefit, which would give families \$1,920 per year for each child under six and \$720 per year for children six through 17. This money could be used for the needs of children in whatever way parents choose.

As promised, our government implemented income splitting for families with minor children. This allows many families to be in a lower tax bracket, keeping more money in moms' and dads' pockets.

We have also increased the children's fitness tax credit to \$1,000, helping to provide children with the opportunity to participate in the sports they love and build the habit of a healthy, active lifestyle. These tax measures and benefits provide relief for 100% of families, primarily hard-working middle-class families.

Our government's measures provide tax relief and benefits of up to \$6,600 for an average family of four. That is almost \$7,000 per family each year. I know from experience that raising a family is not inexpensive, and although my children are now grown, I can appreciate what these measures would mean to Canadian families with young children.

Statistics show that 11 million Canadians have eagerly made use of the tax-free savings account. Budget 2015 increased the annual contribution limit to \$10,000 each year. I have had numerous constituents in my riding who are quite excited about this new saving opportunity.

I have just highlighted measures that benefit families raising the next generation of Canadians, but I would also like to talk about how budget 2015 benefits our seniors, those who have spent their lives building Canada into the proud nation that it is today.

The financial state of our seniors has seen great improvement. Canada's low-income rate for seniors has fallen from 21.4% in 1980 to 5.2% in 2011. That is one of the lowest rates in the industrial world.

Budget 2011 introduced the largest GIS increase in over 25 years, investing more than \$300 million per year to further improve the financial security and well-being of more than 680,000 seniors across Canada.

Our government has also implemented pension income splitting for pensioners. In 2014, a single senior can earn at least \$20,054 and a couple at least \$40,108 before paying federal income tax. As a result of the actions our government has taken since 2006, approximately 380,000 seniors have been removed from federal tax rolls completely.

Over the last few years, many of the seniors in my riding have written to me about the need to adjust RRIF rules to bring them into alignment with the increased lifespan of seniors. In response to their letters and calls, I addressed this issue with the Minister of Finance. Budget 2015 significantly reduces the minimum withdrawal factors for RRIF, allowing seniors to preserve more of their retirement savings.

Government Orders

As well, budget 2015 introduces the home accessibility tax credit for seniors and persons with disabilities so that they can continue to live independently in their own homes.

Speaking of those who have contributed to building our nation, there are those who have put their very lives on the line to defend our nation's freedom and security: our veterans. In Don Valley West, we are proud to be the home of Sunnybrook, the largest veterans centre in Canada. I enjoy serving the veterans in my riding and I am thankful that our government continues to place their care as a priority.

The government has continually made important improvements to the new veterans charter to meet the needs of veterans.

• (1330)

Economic action plan 2015 further demonstrated this growing commitment. This includes implementing the new retirement income security benefit for moderately to severely injured veterans, expanding access to the permanent impairment allowance to help compensate disabled veterans for the loss of career opportunities, modifying the earning loss benefit to ensure that part-time reserve force veterans have access to the same level of income support as regular full-time reserve force veterans, and increasing the level of individualized care to veterans requiring regular support by improving the ratio of veterans to case managers.

In addition to the measures in the 2015 budget, we have also opened new front-line mental health clinics across the country. The new family caregiver relief benefit will provide veterans who have a service-related injury with an annual tax-free grant of over \$7,000 to provide caregivers in the home with flexibility or relief while ensuring that the needs of the seriously injured veterans are met.

All these benefits build on our record of keeping our economy strong by defending Canada at home and abroad, enhancing national security, and standing up for our veterans.

I have spoken about various groups of people and what the budget means for them. Now I would like to take the opportunity to highlight what budget 2015 holds for an issue that I hear about from every age group and from many walks of life in my riding of Don Valley West: the issue of transit.

One of the most common complaints I hear from Toronto constituents has to do with congested traffic and gridlock. This year's budget held particularly good news for Toronto: the new innovative public transit fund will invest an additional \$750 million over two years starting in 2017-18, and \$1 billion per year ongoing thereafter.

Our mayor said of the new innovative public transit fund, "This is a major step forward for Toronto and for the country" and said, "The federal government committed to establishing a dedicated, national fund to invest in public transportation. This is good news for Toronto and for cities across Canada."

This new transit fund is in addition to the ongoing funding already in place through the new Building Canada plan, which continues to provide \$5.35 billion per year on average for infrastructure, and in addition to the gas tax fund.

I feel very few people know about the Building Canada plan and the gas tax fund, and even fewer understand how these programs have already impacted their cities and municipalities, and specifically, in my case, the city of Toronto. For example, since 2006, through the gas tax fund, the Government of Canada has invested more than \$2.2 billion to support municipal infrastructure projects across the GTA. Our government doubled and extended the federal gas tax fund and made it permanent. This is a dedicated, predictable, and flexible source of infrastructure funding for municipalities.

Despite all contrary claims, since 2006 our investment in infrastructure has been at the highest level and length ever seen in Canadian history. Being a businessman, I like solid numbers without the spin. The facts cannot be clearer. I am proud of our government's record investment in infrastructure.

Another issue that I often hear addressed by all age groups is health care funding. The administration of health care is carried out by the province, but the federal government contributes to the funding. This year the Province of Ontario will receive record high transfer payments from our government to support health care, education, and social programs. Ontario will receive \$20.4 billion in federal transfers this year alone. This is an increase of 88% from under the old federal Liberal government, which radically slashed transfer payments to the provinces. We will never do that, nor will we allow it.

Our government's balanced budget and our low-tax plan for jobs, growth, and security are just further demonstrations of our strong leadership for Canada, leadership that has been consistently demonstrated and carried out through action. This year's economic action plan 2015 is no exception.

I look forward to seeing the bright future of our growing, beautiful country, one that we are all proud to call home.

• (1335)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my question to the member is with respect to infrastructure. The government continually says that it is investing in infrastructure as no other government has done in the past. However, what it is actually doing is allocating a large block of tax dollars over the next number of years, and this relates to the question I have for the member. The government is not spending money this year or next year. The actual allotment is heavy at the latter part of its commitment. In other words, the Conservatives will go around throughout the summertime saying that they will give this to this community and that to that community, knowing full well that the money will not flow for at least a year and more.

Government Orders

Would the member not agree that the government is putting politics ahead of the very badly needed infrastructure that we need to be investing in today? The question is this: why is the government playing politics with infrastructure dollars?

● (1340)

Mr. John Carmichael: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my colleague's question. Clearly, I totally disagree with the premise upon which he places it.

The Building Canada fund was a great initiative that was established a year ago. It set out a 10-year target of \$53 billion, the largest infrastructure commitment in the history of this country. That is combined with the gas tax fund, which we made into law and which delivered infrastructure spending to municipalities from day one, including \$2.2 billion to the area that I represent in Toronto.

I think the member opposite has to be fair in assessing the infrastructure programs that we have established, built, and developed. They are clearly designed to phase in as applications become available, but those applications are already under way today. I can look at a list of projects in my area alone. These programs provided \$622 million for the Toronto-York Spadina subway extension and \$133 million for the Toronto Union Station revitalization. I could go on, but I think I have made my point.

Mr. Mike Wallace (Burlington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague for sharing his time with me. This probably will be the last time I am on my feet making a speech in the House in the 41st Parliament, but I am hoping to be back in the next Parliament. I think the Speaker was hoping that this was a going away speech, but it is not. I want to give a shout out to my grandmother who watches the House of Commons on television every day hoping that her grandson will get up to speak, so Mr. Speaker, allow me to say hello to Grandma Wallace.

Today we are speaking to Bill C-59, which is the budget implementation bill. I explain to my constituents all the time that the budget itself is a policy document that needs to be implemented. We have a couple of opportunities throughout the year to implement what is in the budget. The budget was actually passed by the House and now we have to implement what was in the budget through a ways and means motion and this bill we are debating today. Normally we would have one in the spring and one in the fall, but we will be active on the campaign trail in the fall, so we are addressing Bill C-59 now, which has a lot of very important pieces that were in the budget and which will be implemented immediately.

I also heard today that our colleague from Edmonton—Leduc is retiring and is not seeking re-election. That member of Parliament has done an excellent job for a number of years as the chair of the finance committee. I want to thank him for his efforts and all he has done on the financial items.

We heard some really good speeches last week. I was in attendance both Tuesday and Wednesday nights last week for the speeches of those who are not seeking re-election in the fall. I want to thank my colleagues on both sides of the House who made some excellent speeches about why they ran for office, the accomplishments they made and why it is important for us as parliamentarians to continue this work. I want to thank those individuals who are moving on either to retirement or to other career opportunities.

The budget implementation bill we are dealing with today has a number of key items which I and other colleagues have advocated for over a number of years.

The first item is the changes to the plans in terms of withdrawal rates for RRIFs.

I have been told that in my riding of Burlington, the statistics are that 50% of my constituents are age 55 and older. I do not represent all of Burlington. I represent a portion, but the area I represent tends to have a fair number of seniors.

I have been here nine years and there were a number of issues where I had a response from constituents. On the issue of withdrawal rates for RRIFs, there were 40 individuals who came to see me. They were not related to each other. They were not connected by any organization. Forty individuals expressed the need for a change to the RRIF plan. They explained to me why it is important.

People in my riding are living longer, as people are across the country. I still have a grandmother. When RRIFs first came to be, there was an understanding based on what the average lifespan of an individual was. In Canada, because of our quality of life, the health care provided and the environment, people are living longer. They need to be able to stretch their retirement dollars longer as the average age is increasing.

The other point that is important is that once people turn 71 years of age, their RRSPs have to be converted into registered retirement income funds. The Conservatives moved the age from 69 to 71 years.

● (1345)

Those funds are normally invested in the marketplace, and there were some challenges in the marketplace in 2008 and 2009. Those retirement nest eggs that those people worked all their lives for and saved for suffered due to the economic downturn that happened at that time. At the same time, we were forcing individuals to take money out at a minimum level even if they did not need the cash flow because they had other cash flow opportunities, whether that was a pension plan or funds from other sources. The requirement to take that money out meant that those individuals felt a loss twice: once in the marketplace and once in having to pay taxes on money that earned less than they had anticipated it would earn.

With the help of many of my colleagues on this side of the House, we advocated that the Minister of Finance reduce the minimum amount that had to be drawn from a RRIF. I am very happy to see that in the budget. It is a win for seniors across the country, including in my riding of Burlington. I am happy that it is part of this implementation bill so we can have it in place before this Parliament is done.

The next item is something that I had talked about and advocated for. This was actually a bit of a surprise. Often, we backbenchers are asked how much influence we have. On two points in this budget alone, I can say we backbenchers were advocating for change.

Government Orders

One change allows people who are caring for a sick loved one to collect EI for six months instead of six weeks. That is a significant change and an important piece for my riding. As I said, we have a number of seniors in my riding and, as we know, when people age, their health care and support needs increase. It is natural for that to happen. In this budget there is the opportunity for caregivers to increase the amount they can collect in EI if for some personal or family reason they need to be at home to look after someone who is in need. That change from six weeks to six months will have an important impact on someone being able to afford to stay at home with a relative who needs that support. It will also help build the community. It will help the family because at whatever stage of the illness the individual is experiencing, the caregiver will be there and will not have to worry about the financial aspects of missing work for that six-month period.

The other thing I would like to talk about is that in my riding we do not have one big employer. We are not a one industry town. Our largest employer employs around 800 people, which is fairly large. That is a good-sized company. Members should know that the unemployment rate for Burlington is in the range of 5% to 5.6%. The majority of our employment base is small businesses, the job creators in this country. Our change to the tax rate from 11% to 9% will make a significant impact on the small businesses in my community. They will be able to pay more people to come to work for them. The tax burden will be less. They will be able to use the money that will become available to reinvest in their businesses. Reinvesting in their businesses means either buying more equipment or having more employees, which creates employment and wealth and makes this country a better place.

It was my honour to speak to Bill C-59.

• (1350)

[Translation]

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his speech. I would also like to join him in wishing the member for Edmonton—Leduc the best of luck. I had the good fortune of working with him on the Standing Committee on Finance. He is highly regarded on both sides of the committee table.

With respect to my colleague's speech, at the end, he was boasting about initiatives like lowering taxes for SMEs from 11% to 9%. This budget also contains a measure that is basically a two-year extension of the accelerated capital cost allowance for businesses in the manufacturing sector.

I have a very simple question. I would like to know why, on February 5, 2015, when we put forward an opposition day motion dealing precisely with those two issues, my colleague voted against the proposal, only to turn around and boast about including those two NDP proposed measures in the budget.

[English]

Mr. Mike Wallace: Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his comments as well as his congratulations to the member for Edmonton—Leduc.

People ask me what the main issue is I hear on the streets and in the coffee shops and workplaces in Burlington. The main issue I

have heard is about balancing the books, that we not spend more than we bring in if we can help it. We did not face a recession, as did other countries around the world. We invested to make sure we got people back to work.

We also made a commitment on this side of the House. In budget after budget we made a commitment and a plan to get back to balance. That has meant that we have had to make tough decisions and have had to make them in an orderly manner. That is why this budget gets us back to balance. That is why there are a number of things in the budget implementation bill that we are now able to accomplish, because we made the hard decisions at the right time to get us back to balance.

Mr. Scott Simms (Bonaville—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member made the point that from the backbench he was able to talk to the front bench about how he wanted to make it more lenient for caregivers to access EI. I wonder if in the to and fro of the backbench and the front bench he was able to advocate not just for the caregivers but for the actual sick themselves, who only get 15 weeks of EI benefits. I think that should be expanded to more, and my private member's bill should be supported. I was wondering if he had that conversation as well.

Mr. Mike Wallace: Mr. Speaker, the answer is no. The point that had been brought to my attention by a number of organizations and individuals in my riding was about the caregivers. That is what I advocated.

So members across and people watching at home know, every year when there is a budget, members of Parliament are given an opportunity to talk to the Minister of Finance about the issues and items they think are important to Canadians and important to their riding. I had a number of them on my list this year. It was the same as every year, 11 or 12. In actual fact, a number of them were included in the budget.

It would be erroneous for me to say that I can do it once and it happens. It has been a number of years of advocating for these changes. That is my job, advocating for my riding, for my constituents and for Canadians. I hope to continue to do that after October 19.

• (1355)

[Translation]

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to point out that the member for Burlington did not really answer the question I asked him. I asked him why the Conservatives included measures such as cutting the small business tax rate from 11% to 9% and extending the accelerated capital cost allowance. Those two measures were in the opposition motion that we moved, that the Conservatives opposed, and that they voted against.

I am going to talk about Bill C-59. I will be splitting my time with the member for Chicoutimi—Le Fjord.

Statements by Members

I spoke to this bill at second reading. I was a member of the Standing Committee on Finance for three years. That was my first love. Not much has changed with Bill C-59. It is yet another random collection of laws being amended, abolished and even created by an omnibus bill, and it makes no sense. Many of these measures have nothing to do with the budget. Like many of the previous omnibus budget bills, this one contains measures that I would call unconstitutional and that will not survive a Supreme Court challenge.

That has happened before. I clearly remember when the Conservatives introduced a bill two years ago to retroactively amend the rules for appointing Quebec judges to the Supreme Court in an attempt to extricate themselves from the mess they made when they tried to appoint Justice Nadon. This latest bill contains two measures that will most likely be deemed unconstitutional and overturned by the Supreme Court.

The first measure amends the provisions dealing with the gun registry. We are not talking about the registry itself but access to the data it contained. The Ontario Provincial Police is currently conducting an investigation into the RCMP's failure to comply with the provisions of the Access to Information Act on the gun registry. I am not accusing the RCMP of anything at this time. We do not know what happened. An investigation is under way. However, this budget bill attempts—and I have never seen such a thing before—to retroactively amend provisions of the act to exonerate the RCMP and put an end to the investigation. That goes against all of the rules of law that we have in this country. The Conservatives should be ashamed of themselves for resorting to such a measure, which, if it is passed and not overturned by the Supreme Court, will certainly set an extremely dangerous precedent for our country's legislative process.

What is more, this measure is not set out in a public safety bill and was not examined by the committee that deals with the Access to Information Act. This measure is set out in a budget bill.

I sat in for one of my colleagues at a meeting of the Standing Committee on Finance, where two RCMP officers were called as witnesses. Honestly, I felt uncomfortable for them because they were asked to appear but could say nothing. They could not comment on the precedent that it would set or on the Ontario Provincial Police investigation. In fact, they could not talk about anything, except for the question about the Access to Information Act. That issue was not included in the bill. The subject was really the process of amending legislation and they had nothing to say about that.

That clearly shows that the Conservatives are abusing the budget process. That worked well for them in the first budget bills. Everyone was offended, but no one could do anything because it was actually not illegal to do it. It simply was not ethical and, above all, it was not transparent.

I will end with the second measure, before I am allowed to resume my speech. This measure gives the government the unilateral authority to limit the health care plan and the public service sick leave benefits, and to impose changes on these two systems. Negotiations must involve two consenting parties. If the government uses its weight and legislative authority to legislate changes to a

contract, which really should be negotiated, the process will be perverted.

● (1400)

Once again, this creates a dangerous precedent that jeopardizes the right of the public sector, as a unionized body, to conduct negotiations freely.

I will be pleased to come back to this after question period. I will have many other things to say to the House.

[English]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): The time for government orders has expired. The hon. member for Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques will have five minutes remaining when this item is next before the House.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

MEMBER FOR SASKATOON—ROSETOWN—BIGGAR

Mrs. Kelly Block (Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this fall will mark seven years that I have had the honour of representing the great riding of Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar.

For some reason, the boundary commission in Saskatchewan decided to do away with the urban and rural blended ridings in Saskatoon, and, as a result, Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar will be no more once the writ is dropped.

As this may be my last statement in this Parliament, I want to thank the people of SRB for the confidence they placed in me in these past two elections. It has been a pleasure meeting with constituents, attending riding events, and just getting to know the many wonderful residents in the riding.

Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar, and indeed all of Saskatchewan, has experienced tremendous growth and prosperity in recent years. This, in no small part, is due to the joint focus of our federal and provincial governments on the priorities that matter most to Canadians: jobs and economic growth.

In Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar, and all of Saskatchewan, we have proof that prosperity comes through the focus on trade, training, and tax cuts.

* * *

ELDER ABUSE

Ms. Irene Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Mr. Speaker, today is World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, and New Democrats would like to take a moment to bring attention to this human rights issue.

According to the United Nations, approximately 4% to 6% of elderly persons face some form of maltreatment that can affect them physically, emotionally, and financially. Their perpetrators are typically those closest to them, and these acts of abuse often go unreported. This tragic cycle must be broken.

Statements by Members

Just as they rely on their caregivers, our seniors look to their government for protection and support. We need to fully address the underlying problems of elder abuse that continue to plague this growing segment of our population.

The NDP plan for a national strategy on aging will protect vulnerable seniors by giving them the resources and financial stability to maintain control over their lives. We will ensure that every senior citizen is afforded a life of comfort and dignity.

* * *

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Mr. Mike Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac, CPC): Mr. Speaker, last week, the Chartered Professional Accountants of Canada and their South Korean counterparts, the Korean Institute of Certified Public Accountants, announced a memorandum of co-operation that strengthens relations between the Canadian and South Korean accounting professions. It identifies areas of joint interest for future collaboration, such as professional education and best practices in member regulation.

[Translation]

This memorandum of co-operation was proposed during the Minister of International Trade's latest trade mission in South Korea. It partly evolved from the Canada-Korea free trade agreement that was implemented earlier this year. The two accounting organizations believe that the profession can play a positive role in business relationships between the two countries.

[English]

As a CPA myself, I am proud that those in my profession are capitalizing on our government's aggressive pro-trade agenda to seek global opportunities, and I want to congratulate them on their efforts. I encourage other organizations and businesses to carefully consider the tremendous opportunities available to them under Canada's free trade agreements and our global markets action plan.

* * *

ELDER ABUSE

Mr. Frank Valeriote (Guelph, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today is World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, the one day in the year when the whole world voices its opposition to the abuse and suffering inflicted on some of our older generation.

Elder abuse often occurs in private settings and affects the health and human rights of millions of older people around the world. It leads to serious physical injuries and long-term mental health impacts. Tragically, the incidence of elder abuse is predicted to increase as many countries are experiencing rapidly aging populations.

Let us remember that it is our seniors who built Canada and that they continue to play a vital role in our future. Let us recognize that elder abuse happens in communities across Canada, and that seniors from all walks of life remain vulnerable. Let us combat elder abuse by refusing to ignore this problem, keeping our eyes open and alert to its occurrence, and knowing how to provide help.

ROBERT KENNY

Hon. Keith Ashfield (Fredericton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is with heavy heart that I rise in this House today to pay tribute to a dedicated, respected, and endearing community leader from Fredericton.

Robert "Bob" Kenny passed away on June 6 at the age of 72. Bob spent countless hours championing community-led initiatives and serving on various boards throughout Fredericton and New Brunswick.

While his passing leaves a hole in our community, the inspiration and vision he left behind speaks to his legacy of community service, selflessness, and a passion for bettering the lives of those around him.

In 2012, I had the privilege of presenting Bob with the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal in recognition of his exceptional contribution to our community.

On behalf of all Frederictonians and New Brunswickers, we thank him for his truly exceptional contribution to our great community.

I ask all members to join me in sending Bob's wife Joan, and his daughters Brigette, Natalie, and Mary Ellen, our most sincere condolences.

* * *

● (1405)

[Translation]

WORLD ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS DAY

Ms. Isabelle Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mark World Elder Abuse Awareness Day.

Unfortunately, elder abuse is a reality that is quite prevalent and that affects a significant segment of our population. We must remain vigilant and watchful, and we must do everything we can to combat this injustice.

Today is the perfect opportunity to express our solidarity with all those who have been victims of abuse in the past and to express our commitment to ensuring that our seniors can have a better quality of life and live with dignity, one of the most fundamental rights.

[English]

It is both disturbing and tragic that elder abuse, be it physical, psychological, sexual or financial, remains mostly underestimated and ignored by societies across the world. At the same time, there is increasing evidence indicating that elder abuse is an important public health and societal problem. Canada is not an exception. Canadian seniors are vulnerable to elder abuse, and it is happening in communities across the country.

Let us pay close attention to this serious issue and take responsibility to better protect our seniors and ensure they age with dignity and security.

*Statements by Members***MEMBER FOR EDMONTON EAST**

Mr. Peter Goldring (Edmonton East, CPC): Mr. Speaker, 18 years ago I entered this arena we reverently call the House of Commons, commoners serving together for the betterment of all.

As I reflect upon our party's promises in 1997, I find it to be significant to compare the outcomes of today: veterans' issues resolved; the homeless helped; the military strengthened; effective foreign development aid; criminal justice improved; taxes lowered; the long gun registry cancelled; the GST cut twice; Turks and Caicos a work in progress; and, Canada's unity greatly improved upon.

I depart this chamber in the fact that the promises made are all promises that were kept. We have made Canada a better place for our children's children, for my grandchildren, Katelin, Alexandra, and Eleanor.

May this august chamber of commoners continue its good work, further showing that Canadians too are caring citizens of the world, for the world.

* * *

MEMBER FOR ELGIN—MIDDLESEX—LONDON

Mr. Joe Preston (Elgin—Middlesex—London, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as I prepare to leave this place after more than a decade of serving the people of Elgin—Middlesex—London, all I can say is what a ride.

I thank the voters of Elgin—Middlesex—London who kept sending me back to this place, and for their trust and kind words over the years.

I thank my wife Geri and my children, Adam, Kate and Neil, for helping me be strong and for sharing me with so many others.

The shining dedication of my team, Karen, JoAnna, Kimberly, Cathy, Kaylie and Jena, and many more before them, has made me look brighter.

I thank the friends I have accumulated in this place from all parties and all parts of Canada for the many memories that will last me a lifetime.

At what became my other home here, the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, I will miss Marie-France Renaud, Andre and all of the members, and the egg salad sandwiches of course.

When my grandson Elliot asks Bubba about Parliament, I will tell him that I am happy I had this great opportunity. I made no enemies and I will truly miss my friends.

* * *

GRADUATING CLASSES

Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims (Newton—North Delta, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I stand with pride today to congratulate the graduating classes of Princess Margaret, Tamanawis, Panorama Ridge, Frank Hurt, Delview, North Delta, Seaquam and Burnsvew secondary schools in Surrey, Newton and North Delta. As a teacher, I am delighted to know that these young people have worked diligently to achieve their goals. I wish them a lifetime of continued success.

I would encourage all levels of government to invest generously in quality public education. It is a cornerstone of our democracy, and our kids are worth it as they are our future.

I also congratulate and commend the parents, guardians and teachers who have supported these students throughout their journey

I know I speak for everyone in Surrey when I say that our graduating classes have done a great job and we hope they enjoy their well-earned summer. They have made us very proud.

* * *

●(1410)

[Translation]

TAXATION

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our Conservative government is working hard for all Canadian families.

We recently brought in the family tax cut and the universal child care benefit, which will benefit all families with children, since they will be able to save money and spend it on their priorities.

The Liberal leader has a different plan for Canadian families. He wants to eliminate the family tax cut that our government implemented and replace it with another tax on families. That is unacceptable.

Canadians do not want that and they will reject these plans based on tax hikes. We reject them as well.

* * *

[English]

REMEMBRANCE DAY

Mr. Dan Harris (Scarborough Southwest, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by once again thanking the great people of Scarborough Southwest for their support in 2011. It has been an honour and a privilege to represent them in the House for the past four years.

My bill, Bill C-597, which would make Remembrance Day a legal holiday, is finally back from committee after 205 days and studied by two parliamentary committees. The bill would add exactly one word to the Holidays Act. No new changes were made to the bill during this committee odyssey.

This Friday, my bill will be back before the House. Now we can finish the great work that began last November when the bill passed second reading 258 to 2.

This Friday, let us end the 41st Parliament on a high note and elevate Remembrance Day to the same status as Canada Day and Victoria Day by passing Bill C-597, making Remembrance Day a legal holiday.

*Statements by Members***TAXATION**

Mr. Mark Adler (York Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the middle class of York Centre rejects the Liberal leader's plan to impose a mandatory \$1,000 tax hike. By promising to bring to Ottawa the Ontario Liberal plan to hike payroll taxes on every employee and employer, the Liberals would force businesses to cut jobs.

According to Meridian Credit Union, the majority of small business owners believe the Ontario registered pension plan "would be their greatest challenge ever faced".

Instead of reckless, high spend-and-tax plans, which the Liberals and the NDP propose, our government believes in helping hard-working Canadian middle-class families prosper. Therefore, we have reduced taxes to the tune of \$6,600 this year for a typical family of four. We have doubled the tax-free savings account so Canadians can save more tax free. However, the Liberal leader would shut these accounts down and raise taxes.

Now is not the time for risky tax hikes and untested leadership.

* * *

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Ms. Joyce Murray (Vancouver Quadra, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Conservative government has spent almost a decade promoting a false record on national defence while the reality is it has failed the Canadian Armed Forces on so many fronts.

Recently, I launched a national campaign to bust five Conservative defence myths. For example, the Conservatives claim the men and women in uniform are a priority; they boast the best equipment will be provided; they say funding is stable and increasing over 20 years; they pretend northern sovereignty is a priority; and they argue only the Conservatives can be trusted on defence.

That is not so. The reality is the opposite. Too many forces members, veterans and their families suffer from serious neglect. So many major procurements have been delayed or cancelled that the military must raid museums and search eBay to find obsolete parts. The Prime Minister has cut and clawed back billions of dollars to spend on election year tax cuts for wealthy Canadians.

Sadly, the government cannot be trusted on defence. On its watch, the Canadian Armed Forces' well-being and capability are in serious jeopardy and Canadians look forward to an end—

The Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Okanagan—Coquihalla.

* * *

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Dan Albas (Okanagan—Coquihalla, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Allan Schoenborn, who admitted to killing his three children in Merritt, British Columbia, will be allowed day passes out of the psychiatric hospital where he is currently confined.

Our thoughts continue to be with Darcie Clarke and her family at this time. We are disappointed with the decision by the B.C. Review Board.

Our Conservative government has taken concrete steps to protect Canadians and put victims first. We have strengthened our country's not criminally responsible laws by ensuring that public safety is the paramount consideration and creating a high-risk offender status for violent not criminally responsible individuals. We will continue to stand up for Canadians.

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●(1415)

[*Translation*]

ETHICS

Mr. Pierre Nantel (Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in 2005, a member said here in the House that he had had enough of this culture of entitlement where taxpayers' money is used for partisan purposes. Who was that member? It was none other than the Prime Minister himself, who at that time, promised more accountability.

However, once he took office, he did exactly the opposite, and now, just before an election, the Prime Minister is redoubling his efforts. In particular, he is going to increase advertising for his two-year old infrastructure program. Is that a coincidence? No. The Prime Minister is doing the same thing as his Liberal predecessors and is misusing taxpayers' money to campaign by conducting more polls and trying to validate his questionable policies. If he got out there and talked to people on the street, he would know right away what Canadians think of the Conservatives. When it comes to corruption, the Conservatives and the Liberals are exactly the same. The student has surpassed the teacher.

In October, Canadians will have a chance to get rid of these old, worn-out parties and finally elect the first NDP government in Ottawa, the only party that will stand up for their interests.

* * *

[*English*]

UKRAINE

Mr. Ted Opitz (Etobicoke Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, recently I travelled with the Prime Minister to Ukraine, meeting with President Poroshenko and discussing Canada's strong support for Ukraine in combatting Putin's aggression.

The Prime Minister is clear that Canada recognizes the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, and Canada will never recognize Putin's illegal occupation of any Ukrainian territory. Putin must withdraw his troops and weapons from Ukraine and cease his material support to his proxies. Canada will always stand with the people of Ukraine.

Oral Questions

The House has an opportunity to demonstrate that support today by joining the International Council in Support of Ukraine, the *Ukrainian Echo* weekly newspaper, the League of Ukrainian Canadians, the League of Ukrainian Canadian Women and the Ukrainian Research Institute at a reception in Room 238S after question period for the release of a unique publication entitled *Holodomor: the Ukrainian Genocide 1932-33*. The book raises public awareness of the Holodomor, a famine genocide perpetrated by Stalin.

I hope all members will make an effort to participate this afternoon.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[Translation]

ETHICS

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Leader of the Opposition, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Auditor General identified 30 more senators who are guilty of fraudulent spending. However, it is important to point out that the report does not include any senators who had already paid back their fraudulent expenses before the investigation began.

How many senators did the Prime Minister's Office protect in that way by telling them to use the Duffy technique, namely, to repay their expenses before the investigation began?

How many others did the Prime Minister protect?

[English]

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as members know, I have said on a number of occasions that it was the Senate that actually invited in the Auditor General to review their expenses. We expect them to work with and co-operate with that process.

At the same time, the Leader of the Opposition and 67 other members of his party owe the Canadian taxpayers \$2.7 million. The Leader of the Opposition himself, personally owes \$400,000 to the taxpayers of Canada. I hope he will do the right thing and repay that money.

[Translation]

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Leader of the Opposition, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Canadian taxpayers will have to spend another \$25 million because senators are refusing to walk a few extra steps to their offices.

Conservative and Liberal senators have no problem whatsoever travelling all over the country at taxpayers' expense, but they cannot walk a few extra metres.

Will the Prime Minister intervene and tell these corrupt senators that he is not going to waste another \$25 million in taxpayers' money because they are too lazy to walk?

Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we expect the Senate to agree to have its offices in a building that will offer the best value for money for taxpayers.

[English]

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Leader of the Opposition, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is a full 90 metres, so that does mean \$270,000 of taxpayers' money per senator's step, just so she can help with her calculations.

At least four senators named by the Prime Minister have now been caught lying about where they live. The Prime Minister does not care what provinces they actually lived in; he was only interested in using them as shells and fundraisers for the Conservative Party. In fact, the Prime Minister once said that senators "don't represent anybody but the prime minister who appoints them".

Why did the Prime Minister appoint this bunch to represent him?

● (1420)

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition is completely delusional if he thinks that Canadians will ever give him the opportunity to serve on this side of the House while he refuses to respect the fact that he owes them \$2.7 million.

If Canadians cannot trust him to ethically manage his own office budget, there is no way they will ever trust him to ethically manage the budget of the entire country. I certainly hope it will not take 17 years for him to do the right thing.

* * *

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Leader of the Opposition, NDP): Mr. Speaker, today the Prime Minister and I are each meeting with Bono and representatives of the ONE campaign to talk about millennium development goals and how we can work together to fight the kind of gut-wrenching poverty that, thankfully, most Canadians will never see.

However, while the Prime Minister is talking about fighting poverty, leaked government documents show that he has abandoned the next round of UN development goals before they have even been adopted.

Will the Prime Minister confirm that he hid the truth from our G7 partners last week, and that his promises to fight extreme poverty around the world are only for show?

Hon. Christian Paradis (Minister of International Development and Minister for La Francophonie, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are very happy to welcome a good philanthropist like Bono here because we are happy to have good partnerships with people like him.

We have taken a leadership role in addressing the health challenges faced by women, newborns, and children in the world's poorest countries.

Canadians are expecting results. Under our Prime Minister's initiative on maternal, newborn, and child health, we will help to save the lives of 1.3 million children and newborns, as well as more than 60,000 women.

Oral Questions

Our humanitarian assistance has increased 62%. We are there for people in need. We pay what we pledge. This is what Canadians expect from its government.

* * *

[Translation]

NOTHERN DEVELOPMENT

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Leader of the Opposition, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the problem is that the Conservatives are once again saying one thing in public and another thing in private.

Meanwhile, the living conditions in aboriginal communities across Canada are absolutely deplorable, and some residents in the north are digging through garbage to find food.

How can we expect the wealthy in African or Middle Eastern countries to do their part to help their fellow citizens when our own Prime Minister here in Canada refuses to do the same?

Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, for anyone who wants the truth, the facts show that no Canadian government has done as much for northern Canada as this Conservative government.

All of our investments in the north, such as the new research centre and the program to help people access good-quality food, have been successful. We will continue to work with people in the north to ensure that they continue to prosper.

* * *

[English]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Wascana, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Information Commissioner has taken the government to court over its illegal destruction of records. These records were and still are the subject of a live, unresolved access to information request.

Documents filed in court make three points. First, the destruction of these documents was indeed illegal. Second, both the RCMP and the public safety minister were fully aware of that illegality. Third, the minister's office pressured the RCMP to break the law and cover it up.

Who in the minister's office counselled that illegal behaviour?

Hon. Steven Blaney (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC): Mr. Speaker, let us be clear. It is this government that has ended the wasteful and ineffective long-gun registry. We reject any claim that the RCMP did anything wrong by following the express will of Parliament to destroy the data from the long-gun registry.

It was still possible to access outdated data from the long gun registry. We are fixing that loophole.

We will stand up for law-abiding citizens and stop treating them as second-class citizens in this country.

• (1425)

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Wascana, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government cannot slough this off. It is being investigated now by the OPP.

If the government thinks it can whitewash this illegality with some retroactive exemption buried in the budget bill, it needs to think again. A new government in October could just as easily withdraw that phony absolution, especially for those who pressured the RCMP into illegal conduct and then lied about it.

Who concocted the plan to destroy the data illegally while deceitfully telling the Information Commissioner that it was preserved?

[Translation]

Hon. Steven Blaney (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC): Mr. Speaker, let us be very clear. It is our government that put an end to the wasteful and inefficient long gun registry after Parliament expressed its will in a vote.

What is shameful is that that member and his party are putting out misleading ads at the expense of public safety. We will continue to implement effective measures to protect the public and to show respect for the firearms community, law-abiding Canadians who do not deserve to be treated like second-class citizens.

Hon. Stéphane Dion (Saint-Laurent—Cartierville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the minister is doing his level best to avoid the question. To sum up, in 2012, the office of the Minister of Public Safety, with the approval of the Prime Minister's Office and in violation of the Access to Information Act, put pressure on the RCMP to destroy the data from the gun registry as quickly as possible.

Will the Conservatives admit that they broke the law, that they are now trying to change the law retroactively to cover their tracks, and that the scheme they tried to hide—which the minister is still trying to hide—is both constitutionally suspect and morally indefensible?

Hon. Steven Blaney (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will be very clear about this. Our government is very proud to have followed the will of Parliament by destroying the wasteful and ineffective long gun registry. We will not apologize for respecting the will of Parliament. We will, however, make sure that the Liberals' misleading ads, which threaten public safety, will be treated like the hogwash they are. We will treat all Canadians with respect. Law-abiding Canadians will be treated like everyone else, not like second-class citizens.

* * *

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Hélène Laverdière (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Canada is lagging behind when it comes to contributing to international development.

The minister himself has acknowledged that Canada's financial contribution to development is declining. Canada ranks near the bottom of the list of donor countries and is nowhere near to meeting the goal of 0.7% of gross national income set by the international community.

How did we get to this point? Why is the Conservative government refusing to do its part?

Oral Questions

Hon. Christian Paradis (Minister of International Development and Minister for La Francophonie, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on the contrary, the Prime Minister has shown leadership on the world stage when it comes to closing the gaps in order to reach millennium development goals 4 and 5, which deal with saving women and children.

Let us look at the facts and the results. In 2011, over 700,000 more children around the world celebrated their fifth birthday than in 2010. Over the past five years, maternal mortality rates have dropped significantly in over 125 countries. Between 2010 and 2013, an estimated two million deaths from disease were prevented. Lastly, five million children were treated with vitamin A.

We are doing what we said we would do and delivering results—

The Speaker: Order. The hon. member for Laurier—Sainte-Marie.

[English]

Ms. Hélène Laverdière (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we also have to provide education and a future for those children.

Ninety-four per cent of Canadians believe it is important to improve the lives of the world's poor, but Canada's record is embarrassing. Our international assistance is at the lowest level in a decade, and only under the Liberal government of Paul Martin was it ever lower. Even the Conservative government in the U.K. reached its 0.7% goal.

Why is Canada not pulling its weight?

• (1430)

Hon. Christian Paradis (Minister of International Development and Minister for La Francophonie, CPC): Embarrassing, Mr. Speaker? Come on.

Let me cite Rosemary McCarney, a coordinator for the Canadian Network for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health, who stated:

Canada came out of the gate when MDG 4 and 5 were the worst performing MDGs, and Canada said we're going to do something about that, and get our G8 partners onto it, and kept going.

David Morley of UNICEF recently praised our efforts, saying, "The Government of Canada [is] a global leader in maternal, newborn and child health..."

The *Toronto Star* gave the Prime Minister credit in a recent editorial, declaring, "Canada's contribution is almost twice what we might normally have been expected to provide".

Mr. Speaker—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Ottawa Centre.

* * *

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. Paul Dewar (Ottawa Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we cannot expect others to follow if we do not lead. Today, a leaked memo shows that the government will not implement a UN sustainable development plan here at home. Despite the G7 communiqué declaring support for the arms trade treaty, Canada has not signed it yet. Every one of our friends and allies has signed this treaty,

everyone in the G7 and everyone in NATO. A hundred and thirty countries have signed the arms trade treaty.

I have a basic question for the government. Why will it not take a leadership role and at least sign the arms trade treaty?

Hon. Rob Nicholson (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canada already has some of the strongest export controls. The treaty actually brings countries up to our already existing export control standards. We are going to continue consulting with stakeholders and experts to ensure that this treaty will not affect lawful and responsible firearms owners. We will only make a decision to join this treaty if it is determined that it is in the best interests of Canada and Canadians.

* * *

[Translation]

ETHICS

Ms. Ève Pécelet (La Pointe-de-l'Île, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is always a double standard with this Prime Minister.

He promised Canadians he would clean up the Senate. However, once in power, his plan to reform the Senate was quashed by the Supreme Court, and now nothing is happening. It is the status quo for the Conservatives.

Apparently the 30 Liberal and Conservative senators named in the Auditor General's report might be investigated by the RCMP. There is a real pattern of abuse in the Senate, and the Prime Minister just stands idly by.

What is he going to do? Will he take charge and clean house in the Senate once and for all?

[English]

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as I already said in this question period, it was the Senate that invited in the Auditor General to review their expenses. He, of course, came forward with a report that showed some 30 senators in dispute, but at the same time, this side of the House has come forward with a report that shows some 68 members of Parliament with three times the amount. In fact, all 68 of those happen to be NDP members of Parliament. That particular member owes her constituents over \$27,000, and I hope that member will do the right thing and pay her constituents back.

* * *

[Translation]

PARLIAMENTARY PRECINCT

Ms. Ève Pécelet (La Pointe-de-l'Île, NDP): Mr. Speaker, as if that were not enough, we found out from Public Works and Government Services Canada that the senators' temporary offices could cost Canadian taxpayers \$24.5 million just so that the Liberal and Conservative senators do not have to walk an extra block to get to Parliament, their place of work. Frankly, it is high time we abolished the Senate.

Oral Questions

However, in the meantime, will the Prime Minister put his foot down and say no to the senators and this \$24.5 million expense?

Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as I said, we expect the Senate to agree to occupy a building that provides the best value for taxpayers' money.

[*English*]

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, last week Conservatives and Liberals rubber-stamped another \$57 million for the Senate. Now we learn that senators are going to ding taxpayers for \$24 million because they just do not want to have to walk an extra block to go to work.

The government is a party that has lost its way. Conservatives have become the defenders of entitlement, while New Democrats will defend the taxpayer. I have a simple question: will they work with New Democrats to end this rip-off of the taxpayer by rich insiders who are too lazy to walk a block to work?

Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, CPC): Mr. Speaker, quite frankly, the member opposite and his party spending taxpayers' money on illegal offices is an abuse of taxpayers' money. Public Works, as a common service provider, works to fulfill the requirements of the Senate. We do hope that the Senate will agree to occupy a building that provides the best value for taxpayers' money.

* * *

GOVERNMENT POLLING

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, they really need help with their answers. No wonder so many Conservatives are jumping ship. This used to be the government that railed against the Senate; now it is a party that defends Duffy and Wallin. It has become a mirror image of the corrupt old Liberal government. Remember how the Prime Minister, when he was in opposition, used to rail against Paul Martin for spending millions on partisan polling and advertising? Now, in the dying days of the current corrupt government, they turn the taps on to try and kick-start their electioneering machine.

I have a simple question: take your hands out of taxpayers' pockets and spend your own money on—

• (1435)

The Speaker: Order. I would just remind colleagues to address their comments to the Chair and not directly at one another.

The hon. Minister of Employment.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I gather the question was about advertising. The reason we are communicating with Canadians is to tell them about the expanded universal child care benefit. The benefit that has already lifted 41,000 children out of poverty and into the middle class is being expanded, and 100% of children under the age of 18 will be eligible to receive it. It will provide \$2,000 for kids under age six and \$720 for kids age six through 17.

I understand the NDP wants to take that money away and spend it on big bureaucratic programs. We are going to tell parents about it and make sure they get the money they are owed.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mathieu Ravignat (Pontiac, NDP): Mr. Speaker, everyone knows what they are doing.

With the election just a few months away, the Conservative Party of Canada is conducting more polling to find out what Canadian voters are concerned about, at the taxpayers' expense. The Privy Council Office is supposed to provide non-partisan support to the Prime Minister. However, it spent nearly half a million dollars finding out what Canadians think about the Islamic State, taxes and Senate reform.

When will the Conservatives stop using taxpayers' money as a campaign coffer?

[*English*]

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this type of polling—

An hon. member: A prison haircut.

Mr. Paul Calandra: Mr. Speaker, there are so many things that are confronting this country and confronting the international community, but the member for Hamilton Centre thinks that this is the right time to hurl a comment about my hair.

Of all the members to be critical like a schoolyard bully, the member for Hamilton Centre thinks that is funny. While the little boys and girls over there play in the sandbox—

Some hon members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order. The hon. member for Burnaby—New Westminster.

Mr. Peter Julian (Burnaby—New Westminster, NDP): Boy, Mr. Speaker, do Conservatives not want to talk about these most recent scandals. We have a scandal-plagued government on its last legs, spending its last days wasting millions of tax dollars on self-promotional partisan advertising and partisan public opinion polling and rolling out cynical election-style infrastructure photo ops and taking every unfair advantage they can think of to try to cling to power.

Now the Prime Minister is playing the part of Paul Martin. How can the Prime Minister justify this cynical electioneering when he should be hanging his head in shame?

Oral Questions

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, talking about hanging his head in shame, this is the member of Parliament who was very happy to accept an extra \$40,000 in salary when the member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley was fired, but not the responsibility that comes with the office. When he was asked how he would repay the \$189,000 he owed, he said, “No, no, no”, and then he went on to say, “Well, first off, Peter, these are figures that go for previous folks in the office.”

That is this man's legacy. Pay back the \$189,000—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order. The hon. member for Etobicoke North.

* * *

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Kirsty Duncan (Etobicoke North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, 2015 marks a watershed moment as the international community negotiates a new development agenda. The central tenet is the principle of universality, which would require all countries to address inequality within their borders. Despite tough talk abroad, a memo prepared for the minister of international co-operation concedes that “...Canada has no plans to apply the Post-2015 Agenda domestically”, beyond the status quo.

Why does the government settle for the status quo when it comes to poverty and income inequality in Canada?

• (1440)

Hon. Candice Bergen (Minister of State (Social Development), CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government has done more than any other government to lift Canadians out of poverty. In fact, more than 1.4 million fewer Canadians are living in poverty.

That is because of our benefits, such as the universal child care benefit and the family tax cuts. These are benefits that give money directly to those parents who are living in low-income or poverty situations. We are going to expand it and increase it. The Liberals would end it.

Canadians know they can count on this government to give them more money in their pockets.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Marc Garneau (Westmount—Ville-Marie, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, one in seven Canadians is living in poverty. In 2011, 13.3% of our children were living in poverty and 40% of our aboriginal children were living in poverty.

However, according to a memo to the minister, the government has no intention of applying the post-2015 sustainable development agenda in Canada or taking on any new reporting obligations. Canada is setting a terrible example for other countries.

Why is the government not taking the lead and setting an example?

[*English*]

Hon. Candice Bergen (Minister of State (Social Development), CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is shocking to hear this coming from the Liberals, who have promised to end the universal child care benefit,

the same benefit that UNICEF said is what lifted 180,000 children in Canada out of poverty during the depth of the recession. That is the kind of policy that gives money back to families.

The Liberals want to tax families and they want to end universal benefits for families. We are going to continue to lift Canadian children and families out of poverty by implementing good, sound Conservative policy.

* * *

EMPLOYMENT

Hon. Scott Brison (Kings—Hants, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, for Canadian students, the search for summer jobs is even tougher this year. There are more students looking for work and there are fewer jobs for them. Layoffs in the retail sector have hit young Canadians particularly hard. Students need summer work to pay for school and they need the work experience. However, the Conservatives have slashed the number of jobs created by the Canada summer jobs program by more than half.

When will the government reverse these cuts? When will the Conservatives do more to help young Canadians who are struggling to find work?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I begin by correcting a falsehood. The Canada summer jobs program has actually been maintained at its existing funding levels.

As for employment for young people, we have an approach that is the three *t*'s: training, trade, and tax cuts. We have expanded trade through agreements with Europe and South Korea, and actually added 38 free trade agreements. We have given over half a million apprenticeship grants to help young people get high-paying jobs in blue-collar trades. Finally, we have cut taxes so small business owners can hire more young people.

The Liberals promise a brand new \$1,000 payroll tax that would start applying to young workers even when they are still in university.

* * *

[*Translation*]

HEALTH

Ms. Christine Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, NDP): Mr. Speaker, a new survey shows that Canadians are very concerned about our deteriorating health care system. The list of concerns is very long and includes lack of access, lack of long-term care and lack of money to pay for medication.

However, the Conservatives' solution is to cut \$36 billion in transfers to the provinces. Health is Canadians' top priority.

Why is our government abandoning the public health care system?

Oral Questions

[English]

Mrs. Cathy McLeod (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health and for Western Economic Diversification, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the comment by the member is absolutely absurd.

Since we took office, health transfers have increased by 70%. We will reach record funding, \$40 billion annually, by the end of the decade. What we have done is we have ensured that the provinces have stable, long-term, sustainable funding.

Mr. Murray Rankin (Victoria, NDP): Mr. Speaker, what the Conservatives have done is unilaterally cut \$36 billion from future health care funding. At the same time, they refuse to sit down with the provinces and territories to address urgent priorities, such as seniors care, palliative care, and the high cost of prescription drugs.

The results are clear. A majority of Canadians now believe our health care system is deteriorating and is increasingly unsafe, so why have the Conservatives failed to work collaboratively with the provinces and territories to address these concerns and strengthen our public health care system?

• (1445)

Mrs. Cathy McLeod (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health and for Western Economic Diversification, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I hate to make another comment about the NDP and its math, but I have to say that a 6% increase every year is not a cut and 3% is not a cut.

The other important fact is that dollars are not the only thing that is going to make the difference. Today our minister was talking about investments in innovation that are going to make a huge difference.

We are proud of record levels of transfers to the provinces. We are proud of the work that we do.

* * *

CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

Mr. Andrew Cash (Davenport, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives have landed in a familiar place once again: they are back in court.

This time they are throwing away taxpayer money, as they love to do, fighting a Federal Court ruling that told them their cuts to the interim federal health program were “cruel and unusual”.

Their pathological single-mindedness to attack children and pregnant women, to deny them health care, is an obsession that goes right against the main frame of Canadian values. These are some of our most vulnerable people. Therefore, will they do the right thing and reinstate health care for refugees?

Hon. Chris Alexander (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, CPC): Mr. Speaker, once again the member opposite is completely misleading the Canadian public and a broader public. Refugees in our country receive health care. We are proud that they continue to receive that health care from their federal government.

Yes, we will continue our appeal, because we do not think it is fair that those whose asylum claims have failed or those whose asylum claims are fraudulent should be receiving better health care than Canadians themselves.

This is a government that is looking after refugees. This is a government that has done more than any other party in this place for refugees over the last several decades.

[Translation]

Ms. Lysane Blanchette-Lamothe (Pierrefonds—Dollard, NDP): Mr. Speaker, what is most deplorable is that the minister is denying that there is a problem.

The Conservatives should stop playing petty politics at the expense of people's health. The Federal Court was clear: cutting health care coverage for those seeking asylum is against the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Instead of heeding the ruling, the Conservatives decided to appeal it. That is shameful.

Will the Conservatives finally listen to doctors, experts and the Federal Court and stop targeting health care for asylum seekers?

Hon. Chris Alexander (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, CPC): Mr. Speaker, once again, the hon. member is wrong. Refugees and protected persons receive excellent health care in Canada. Yes, we are going to court because taxpayers should not shoulder the cost for people whose asylum claims have failed or people who make fraudulent claims. Unlike the NDP, we will protect the interests of refugees and Canadian taxpayers.

* * *

[English]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Earl Dreeshen (Red Deer, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my constituents believe in justice. They want to know that when a criminal or a terrorist harms a Canadian, their government will work to ensure that justice is delivered and that those responsible will have to answer to the law. Too often crimes go unpunished, and people lose trust in our justice system.

Could the Minister of Public Safety provide an update on the case of the 2008 kidnapping of my former constituent, Amanda Lindhout?

[Translation]

Hon. Steven Blaney (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for Red Deer for the support he gave to Amanda Lindhout and her family. I would also like to recognize the work of the integrated national security enforcement team under the command of Assistant Commissioner Malizia. I would like to confirm that an arrest has been made in connection with the crime committed.

The complex operation was successful. The message this sends is as follows.

[English]

Any criminal, any terrorist who harms a Canadian anywhere in the world can be assured that Canada will hunt them down and ensure they face the full force of the law.

Oral Questions

[Translation]

LABOUR

Mr. Hoang Mai (Brossard—La Prairie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, hundreds of aircraft refuelers at Trudeau and Pearson airports are worried about losing their jobs.

They are accusing Air Canada and other airlines of changing contractors to hire the same employees for less pay and fewer benefits. The workers whose jobs are in peril have submitted complaints of unfair labour practices to the Canada Industrial Relations Board.

Will the Conservatives stand by twiddling their thumbs while hundreds of people lose their jobs?

● (1450)

[English]

Hon. K. Kellie Leitch (Minister of Labour and Minister of Status of Women, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as I said in the House last week, we allow the employers and employees to work together to come up with the best solution for themselves at their place of work. We will continue to encourage them to do that. If they require the support of the mediation and conciliation service at Labour Canada, we are happy to help.

Ms. Peggy Nash (Parkdale—High Park, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the jobs of hundreds of airport workers at Pearson and in Montreal are in peril. Some are being asked to take a 30% pay cut and others will lose their jobs. This is just the latest in a pattern of contract flipping at Pearson, which has meant lost jobs, reduced pay and cuts to benefits.

Given that the deadline for layoffs is looming, which is at the end of this month, will the minister now take concrete action to protect these jobs and wages while the Industrial Relations Board investigates these serious complaints?

Hon. K. Kellie Leitch (Minister of Labour and Minister of Status of Women, CPC): Mr. Speaker, to give members an idea of what Labour Canada does, just this weekend Air Canada and Unifor came to a tentative agreement so they could move forward together. They came to that agreement together, and that means planes are going to keep flying and people are going to get paid rate wages.

What we are doing now is ensuring that parties can continue to speak together, as I mentioned. They come up with the best solutions together, usually without us moving forward here. We want to continue to encourage them to do so by having the federal mediation and conciliation service available if they require them.

* * *

TOURISM INDUSTRY

Mr. Malcolm Allen (Welland, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the tourism industry is responsible for 600,000 jobs in cities and towns across Canada. People in my riding of Welland and across Canada know how important tourism is to local economies.

However, not only have Conservatives slashed the budget of the Canadian Tourism Commission by nearly 30%, the Minister of State actually bragged about how much he had cut. As a result, Canada has dropped dramatically as a tourism destination.

Why do Conservatives continue to ignore a sector that employs so many Canadians?

Hon. Maxime Bernier (Minister of State (Small Business and Tourism, and Agriculture), CPC): Mr. Speaker, contrary to what the member just said, which is false, we did not cut any money from the Canadian Tourism Commission; we increased the budget by \$30 million. This is an investment in U.S. tourism, which will ensure that we have more travellers from the U.S. visiting our nice country.

[Translation]

Ms. Annick Papillon (Québec, NDP): Mr. Speaker, let me set the record straight. The Canadian Tourism Commission's budget was cut by 19% in 2014.

For thousands of workers in Quebec City's tourism industry, the summer is a short but critical time for them to earn enough money. The Conservatives cut the budget for the organization that promotes Canada as a world-class tourism destination in foreign markets, and our tourism businesses are paying the price. In 2014, Canada ranked 20th of 50 countries for tourism revenue compared to 17th in 2013.

Will the Conservatives invest to save the—

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of State for Small Business and Tourism.

Hon. Maxime Bernier (Minister of State (Small Business and Tourism, and Agriculture), CPC): Mr. Speaker, I wonder where my colleague was.

A few weeks ago in Niagara Falls, we made a major announcement about an additional \$30 million investment in Destination Canada to promote our country. The entire tourism industry was very happy about that announcement.

The figures the member quoted are completely false. We have increased the budgets for the Canadian Tourism Commission and Destination Canada. We believe that they will do their job and attract even more visitors to Canada.

* * *

[English]

MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY

Hon. Judy Sgro (York West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Statistics Canada has confirmed what families that rely on manufacturing jobs already know: times are tough and getting tougher.

Manufacturing sales fell another 2.1% in April, the third decline in four months. In fact, sales are 7.3% lower than their post-recession peak. Conservatives of course say that manufacturing will rebound if we just wait and wait, but unemployed families are tired of waiting.

How many jobs does the sector have to lose before the Conservatives will admit their fiscal failures, or do we have to wait for more ads to tell us how great things are?

Oral Questions

Hon. James Moore (Minister of Industry, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the math of this is quite simple. One-third of Canadians live in the province of Ontario. Ontario is over 40% of the Canadian economy, and the backbone of the Ontario economy is manufacturing.

That is why, when we came forward with budget 2015, we worked with the province of Ontario, we worked with the private sector, we worked with the auto sector and the aerospace sector to come forward with a package of policies that would make sense.

That is why the Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters, that is why the Canadian Automotive Parts Manufacturers' Association and others, who actually work in this sector and with whom we work, have said that our budget is the right way forward to ensure that we are creating jobs, creating growth and creating long-term prosperity for Canada's manufacturing sector.

* * *

● (1455)

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Ms. Chrystia Freeland (Toronto Centre, Lib.): Numbers do not lie, Mr. Speaker. The manufacturing performance is dismal, particularly with the dollar at 81¢, and it is part of a wider trend.

The trade deficit has soared to historic highs: in January, \$1.8 billion; in February, \$2 billion; in March, an all-time slump, \$3.9 billion; in April, another \$3 billion. That is a total deficit so far this year of more than \$10 billion.

Without reciting talking points, could the government explain how it will turn those terrible numbers around?

Hon. Ed Fast (Minister of International Trade, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I do not accept the premise of that question. No government has done more to advance Canada's trade interests than this Conservative government. That is why we have concluded free trade agreements with 38 different countries around the world, and we have also concluded 29 investment protection agreements.

Had the member actually reviewed the statistics, she would have found that non-energy exports actually went up 6.2% over the previous year. Last year was the first time that Canadian exports were over \$1 trillion. We are very proud of that accomplishment.

* * *

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims (Newton—North Delta, NDP): Mr. Speaker, while the Prime Minister was off at the G7 signing feel-good statements about taking action on poverty at home and abroad, the Minister of International Development is quietly admitting the government has no intention to address poverty here at home.

Despite rising inequality, hundreds of thousands of Canadians turning to food banks every month, growing numbers of working poor and first nations not having access to clean drinking water or safe housing, the Conservatives see no reason to act.

Why are the Conservatives refusing to address poverty in Canada?

Hon. Candice Bergen (Minister of State (Social Development), CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have talked about the numbers in terms of poverty that we have seen since we have come into government. In

fact, we have seen the level of poverty decrease substantially because of the benefits that we provided, like the universal child care benefit. Now we have introduced the family tax cut.

We know the Liberals and the NDP do not like the universal child benefit because they want to pick and choose who gets the benefits.

We believe all families should get it and the evidence shows that this is what is helping lift children and families out of poverty.

[Translation]

Mrs. Sadia Groguhé (Saint-Lambert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, there is always a double standard with this government. On the one hand, the Prime Minister is publicly boasting that he supports the United Nations' ambitious plan to combat poverty. However, back in Canada, his minister is doing absolutely nothing to reach the plan's targets. Nearly 15% of Canadians live below the poverty line, including more than one million children.

What concrete measures is the Prime Minister proposing to keep his promise to reduce poverty in Canada?

[English]

Hon. Candice Bergen (Minister of State (Social Development), CPC): Mr. Speaker, let me tell the House what somebody from outside of Canada said about what we were doing to lift children out of poverty. He said, "That's really impressive. It's better than what the majority of other countries did during the recession". That was because we have lifted 180,000 children out of poverty.

We know what the NDP and the Liberals would do. They would end benefits to families. They would increase taxes on seniors, on job creators and on the most vulnerable.

We will continue with evidence-based policies. We look forward to seeing more families supported.

Let me read from David Morley, president and CEO of UNICEF Canada. He said that the money we provided kept money in circulation.

* * *

TAXATION

Mrs. Stella Ambler (Mississauga South, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our Conservative government has consistently lowered taxes and created voluntary savings options, like the tax-free savings account. Our low-tax plan saves \$6,600 this year for a typical family, but the Liberal leader has exposed his scheme to cut back tax-free savings accounts and hike taxes.

Could the Minister of State for Finance please clarify the government's position on mandatory payroll taxes?

Hon. Kevin Sorenson (Minister of State (Finance), CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the hard-working member for Mississauga South.

The Liberal leader has confirmed that he would impose a \$1,000 tax hike on middle-class workers. We know that would kill jobs and it would set working families back.

Now, more than ever, it is crystal clear that only our Conservative government can be trusted to keep taxes low for Canadians. Now is not the time for risky tax schemes and untested leadership.

* * *

• (1500)

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with over 10,000 children in foster care in the province of Manitoba, what is clear is that the NDP government does not know what it is doing and the federal government does not understand the needs of its foster children, of which 90% are from an indigenous background.

Struggling through education, the majority will not graduate from high school. What is the Government of Canada doing?

My question for the minister responsible is this. What is his government prepared to do for the 10,000-plus kids who are in foster care today in Manitoba?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am sure all of us are concerned about some of the stories that have come out of Manitoba. Of course the foster care system is run by the provincial government. That said, the federal government has provided increased social transfers precisely so provinces can run the foster care system.

Beyond that, guardians, in addition to parents, are eligible to receive the universal child care benefit. Guardians will be eligible to see an increase of up to \$2,000 for kids under 6 and \$720 for kids aged 6 through 17 per year, every year.

* * *

[Translation]

PUBLIC WORKS AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Mr. Denis Blanchette (Louis-Hébert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the people of Lévis are still waiting for the government to take action on the short-term renewal of our fleet of supply ships. Hundreds of jobs are at stake here.

The Davie shipyard submitted a credible proposal to the government, but the Conservatives keep refusing to follow through. Time is of the essence. In the meantime, the delays keep piling up, and I should point out that the navy really needs these ships.

Will the government stop postponing its decision and finally make one?

Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we always want the Canadian Forces to have all the equipment they need.

In this case, the Royal Canadian Navy is examining all the options in the wake of consultations it held with the industry.

Oral Questions

[English]

SENIORS

Mr. Ray Boughen (Palliser, CPC): Mr. Speaker, seniors across our country have expressed concerns about elder abuse, financial abuse and fraud. Our government has a record to be proud of when it comes to protecting seniors and supporting elder abuse awareness.

Could the Minister of State for Seniors please update the House on her work to combat elder abuse?

Hon. Alice Wong (Minister of State (Seniors), CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to mark in the House today the 10th anniversary of World Elder Abuse Awareness Day.

This government has a strong record of standing up for seniors. It was our government that introduced the Victims Bill of Rights Act and the Protecting Canada's Seniors Act to protect victims of elder abuse.

Earlier, I was at an announcement that would help to raise the awareness of ageism in Ottawa, one of the many new horizons for seniors program projects.

I am proud of the government's work in fighting against elder abuse.

* * *

[Translation]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Louis Plamondon (Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet—Bécancour, BQ): Mr. Speaker, it is unbelievable that the National Energy Board of Canada will be the one to make the final decision about whether to allow oil to move through Quebec, without consultation or consent.

Whether by pipeline, train or ship, and whether those are painted red, blue or orange, the shipping of oil poses the same risk to our rivers, our environment, our cities and towns and our people.

Does the Minister of the Environment realize that these risks are being imposed on Quebeckers, even though Quebec will not get a single—

• (1505)

[English]

Mrs. Kelly Block (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member knows that we do not take positions on specific applications for energy infrastructure until an independent review is complete. Our government relies on the independent National Energy Board for decisions related to proposals for energy infrastructure, including TransCanada's energy east proposal.

Our government has been clear. Proposals will only be approved if they are safe for Canadians and safe for the environment.

Routine Proceedings

Mr. Bruce Hyer (Thunder Bay—Superior North, GP): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is introducing last-minute bills deliberately set to fail to pass, like the Lake Superior national marine conservation area act in Thunder Bay—Superior North. The NMCA and \$20 million was a pre-election promise by our Prime Minister in Nipigon eight long years ago. Is Bill C-61 just another pre-election false promise, or will the Prime Minister seek unanimous consent for Bill C-61 to actually pass before the House rises?

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (Minister of the Environment, Minister of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency and Minister for the Arctic Council, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government has played a leadership role when it comes to protecting our environment. This is why we have invested significantly to clean up and improve water quality and to protect fish in the Great Lakes.

The new Canada-Ontario Agreement on Great Lakes Water Quality and Ecosystem Health entered into force just last December. We also worked with our American partners to update the Canada-U.S. Great Lakes water quality agreement. That will help to prevent and address issues impacting water quality and ecosystem health.

* * *

[Translation]

RAIL TRANSPORTATION

Mrs. Maria Mourani (Ahuntsic, Ind.): Mr. Speaker, the CN line runs through the cities of Montreal and Ahuntsic from west to east, and the CP line runs though from north to south. As everyone knows, more and more oil is being transported by rail these days. The Department of Transport and the rail companies have reportedly been given risk studies. In the spirit of transparency, will the Minister of Transport release those risk studies to the public?

[English]

Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Transport, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government has done an awful lot when it comes to ensuring the safe transport of our natural resources here in Canada. One of the things we have done is that we are working with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities on sharing information needed for first responders. The federation has, of course, been very grateful for the information we do provide.

With respect to these risk assessments, they are considered proprietary information. They will be utilized in good faith by Transport Canada officials to ensure that we are doing everything we can to ensure that the regulation of this oil by rail is done as properly and as safely as possible.

* * *

FISHERIES AND OCEANS

Mr. Scott Andrews (Avalon, Ind.): Mr. Speaker, for a number of years, the current government has promised the residents of Newfoundland and Labrador parity with the rest of Atlantic Canada when it comes to the food fishery. Still, we have one set of rules for the Maritimes and a different set of rules for Newfoundland and Labrador. The minister promised to look at all of the options last July, but still there has been no change. When will the government stop treating the residents of my riding and my province like second-

class citizens and extend them the same rights to catch fish for food as fishers in her own province?

Hon. Gail Shea (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we certainly understand how important the food fishery is to Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. That is why we are looking into the matter to see if there is any way we can extend the food fishery so that people will be able to go and get their food for the winter.

* * *

PRESENCE IN GALLERY

The Speaker: I would like to draw the attention of hon. members to the presence in the gallery of Bono, lead singer of U2 and co-founder of the ONE campaign, present today with representatives of the Canadian international development sector community.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Scott Brison: Mr. Speaker, I would like to seek consent for the following motion: that the House (a) express its deep concern over the contents of the Information Commissioner's affidavit, filed June 3, 2015, which demonstrates that the government exerted pressure on civil servants to break the law by destroying records which were subject to the right of access guaranteed by subsection 4 (1) of the Access to Information Act; (b) share the concern of—

Some hon. members: No.

● (1510)

The Speaker: I do not know that the House needs to hear (b) or (c) or (d), because members started saying no after they heard (a). In the interest of saving time and moving along, I am going to assume that there is no unanimous consent for that.

However, I do have some good news. The hon. parliamentary secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons is going to table something.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to 88 petitions.

* * *

VICTIMS RIGHTS IN THE MILITARY JUSTICE SYSTEM ACT

Hon. Jason Kenney (Minister of National Defence, CPC) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-71, An Act to amend the National Defence Act and the Criminal Code.

Routine Proceedings

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

* * *

QAUSUITTUQ NATIONAL PARK OF CANADA ACT

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (Minister of the Environment, CPC) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-72, An Act to amend the Canada National Parks Act.

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

* * *

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Hon. Peter Kent (Thornhill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 13th report of the Standing Committee on National Defence, entitled “Canada and the Defence of North America”.

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

As we approach the end of this parliamentary session, I would to thank, on behalf of the committee, our clerk, the analysts, and the staff.

LIAISON

Mr. Dean Allison (Niagara West—Glanbrook, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the sixth report of the Standing Committee on Liaison regarding committee activities and expenditures.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Dean Allison (Niagara West—Glanbrook, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I also have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 11th report of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development, entitled “Hong Kong’s Democratic Future”.

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

PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington, CPC) moved:

That the 21st Report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, presented on Friday, October 3, 2014, be concurred in.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I will be dividing my time with the hon. member for Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre.

The subject matter of the 21st report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs is Motion No. 489, a private member’s motion I introduced in the House in early 2014. This motion would amend Standing Order 4, which governs the election of Speakers of the House. If the 21st report is concurred in, Motion No. 489 will be deemed to be approved by the House, and the next Speaker will be elected, as the new text lays out, by preferential ballot rather than by the current system of what is known as an exhaustive ballot, which is to say one first-past-the-post vote followed by another until one candidate has achieved 50% of the total votes. I will get back to this in a second.

First, let me deal with the legislative history of Motion No. 489. It proposes:

That the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs be instructed to consider the advisability of instituting a single, preferential ballot for the election of the Speaker by replacing Standing Order 4 with the following:

There then follows the proposed electoral process, which I will not read, as it is available to the House. The motion concludes by stating that the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs should:

report its findings to the House no later than six months following the adoption of this order.

If I had known in early 2014 what I know now, I would have added a few words to that. I would have said, “and that the report come back in the time designated for private members’ business”, but that was not done. This has had the odd result of causing this report on an issue of private members’ business to come into the time designated for government business, or if it were a supply day, for opposition business. This is unfortunate, but it is the way it has worked out.

The first hour of debate on the private member’s business took place during the private members’ hour on February 24, 2014. The second hour of debate was on April 7, 2014. The committee dealt with this matter at a couple of hearings in September and October 2014, reporting back to the House in early October.

Since April of this year, I have been seeking unanimous consent to get this debate moved from the time set for government business to the time set aside for private members’ business, or alternatively, to the hour after private members’ business has been concluded. We have sought unanimous consent and have been unsuccessful after about two months of working at this. Thus, it has been necessary to start this debate in the time normally reserved for government business.

Let me turn now to the substance of Motion No. 489. It would make three meaningful changes to Standing Order 4.

First, it would change the electoral system by which Speakers are elected from the exhaustive ballot used at present to a preferential ballot, similar to the one used by the House of Lords to elect its Speaker, a process that was adopted by the House of Lords in the early 2000s during the significant reforms of that body and a process that has been used twice, so far, with considerable success. Commentators to the committee indicated that, having looked at that system versus the system used to elect the Speaker of the House of Commons in Britain, which is similar to our own, the preferential ballot seemed superior.

Second, this system would remove the embarrassment that can result if a candidate for the speakership has had virtually no support from his or her colleagues, less than 5%. At present, this embarrassing fact is revealed, in practice if not in form, by the method of striking members off the second ballot. That would cease to be a problem under the new proposal.

Routine Proceedings

Third, it would create a mechanism for resolving tie votes. This is no mere theoretical advantage. In 1994, there was a tie vote on the fifth ballot between the two remaining candidates for the speakership: Gib Parent and Jean-Robert Gauthier. The solution, which was frankly jury-rigged at the time, was to have the whole ballot held over again. When this was done, someone changed his or her vote, and the result was that Gib Parent became the Speaker. This would not happen under this system in the future. There would in fact be a formal tie-breaking process, which would be a significant advantage.

• (1515)

Now let me turn to a contrast between the status quo and a preferential ballot. Here is how the exhaustive ballot, our current system, works. Each MP casts a single ballot for his or her preferred candidate. The candidate who has the smallest number of votes is dropped from the ballot and a new round of voting takes place. Candidates are dropped from the ballot, one per round of voting, until a single candidate gets 50% of the vote.

To those of us who are serving today, this may seem to have existed since time immemorial, but that is not correct. It was first used in 1986. Prior to that, speakers were elected by an open show of hands in the House of Commons. Votes took place along partisan lines, and the speaker was chosen, in practice, by the prime minister of the day. From 1953 until the eighties, the speaker was chosen in consultation with the prime minister and the leader of the opposition, although the sense I get is that this was sometimes pro forma consultation.

Therefore, we have a system that is really 30 years old, and while it is an improvement on what existed previously, it could be improved upon considerably.

Most obviously, there are the time constraints. The rules require at least an hour to pass between ballots, and the process of balloting takes some additional time. This consumes an entire day. In 1986, the first time that the system was used, Speaker Fraser was elected in an 11 ballot process. There were six ballots in 1994, four in 1997, five in 2001, five in 2008, and six in 2011.

On average, seven hours have been consumed in electing a speaker in each of the Parliaments since the procedure was introduced. That includes the easy ones, where there was only one ballot because there was only one candidate. A little math means that 7 hours times 308 members is 2,156 hours. However, if it were 11 ballots, as it was on one occasion which took 12 hours, times 330 members, as we will have in the next Parliament, we are looking at something like 4,000 hours worth of balloting. That is the equivalent of two work years. This is not an ideal system.

More significant than that is perhaps the fact that we now have evidence from a senior body within the Commonwealth, the House of Lords, operating under the preferential ballot system. What we can see from that experience and the comparisons made between the two systems, sometimes by individuals who have served in both the House of Commons and the House of Lords in the United Kingdom, is that a more consensual approach emerges, as is typical with preferential balloting. This is the system that is now used by parties to elect their leaders. It is a system under which many of us were nominated. It is in fact the system under which I was nominated.

As anyone who has gone through a preferential ballot knows, the secret to getting elected is to be everyone's second choice. We need to have enough first choices that we survive the initial counts, but if we are acceptable to everyone, we are likely to ultimately succeed.

The proof of that comes from the 2006 and 2011 elections of the speakers in the House of Lords. One difference between its system and what is proposed here is that it makes public the results of each round of balloting. It is clear that the more consensual, less partisan candidate in both elections moved up the ranks over the course of balloting. That is to say, those who were more partisan may have come in with strong support; those who were the best representatives at simply following the rules and of demonstrating impartiality were the most likely to progress through the ballots and get elected with time.

I suggest that producing someone who is concerned simply with following the rules as best as possible, and embodying those rules, is the ideal candidate for speaker. Such an individual is likely to be the kind of person who would be elected under the preferential ballot proposed under Motion No. 489. For that reason, I ask that all members of the House vote in favour of concurrence in the report of the standing committee, and therefore in favour of Motion No. 489.

• (1520)

Mr. Craig Scott (Toronto—Danforth, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for the effort he has put into the motion. We worked together on committee.

It is very important, for the record, that everyone knows that the committee sent it back to the House in order that the report could be voted on, so people could express their own views. However, the committee is not recommending this system. It is a formal mechanism so that the vote can take place here, but the committee is not recommending the system. It is not not recommending the system either. It is here for everyone to make their own choice.

I still find the argument about it being a waste of time to do it the way we do now to be a little odd. There are not a lot of things that newly elected MPs could do differently, as one of the first acts they do after being elected, that are more important than electing the most important officer of the House.

It allows people to bond a bit. It allows people to spend time with people across the aisles. It is meant to be a vote that is both secret and that spans the aisle. Also, as this is one of the Houses in the Westminster world that turns over the most, it allows newcomers to come to learn who the candidates are with each successive ballot.

I am strongly in favour of maintaining our current system, and I will be voting against concurrence in the report.

• (1525)

Mr. Scott Reid: Mr. Speaker, I can only say with regard to the question of how we use our time that I have not found the time spent to be as productive as the hon. member for Toronto—Danforth. I will perhaps simply leave it at that. It is a different way that we value the time we have. There are a number of different ways in which we make the acquaintance of other members of the House, and, in my view, the work we do in committees, at parliamentary friendship associations and so on, is more useful.

With regard to the committee report, he is quite right that the committee did not state it was either in favour or against the proposal. It simply reported that this was the motion; there was no commentary on it at all. This is an item for members of the House to make up their own minds on. As a practical matter, voting in favour of the report nonetheless has the effect of causing the motion to go forward. Voting against concurrence in the report would have the effect of defeating the motion.

This is the first indication I have had from a member of the New Democratic Party on the subject. I will be very interested to hear what my other New Democratic Party colleagues have to say on this motion and to determine whether indeed there will be a free vote, or something that is a little more stringently applied, where we see all New Democrats voting against it.

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

That the debate be now adjourned.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): 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. I declare the motion carried.

(Motion agreed to)

* * *

PETITIONS

CANADA POST

Ms. Peggy Nash (Parkdale—High Park, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to stand here today to present three petitions on behalf of the constituents I represent in Parkdale—High Park.

The first petition is calling on the Government of Canada to stop the cuts to Canada Post. People want to maintain their postal service. A great many constituents signed that petition.

RAIL SAFETY

Ms. Peggy Nash (Parkdale—High Park, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the second petition involves an issue that is very important in my community and many communities across Canada, which is rail safety. I have a petition signed by many Canadians calling for volatile substances to be processed to reduce their volatility at source. They are calling for stronger tank car production so that the cars themselves are safer, more government oversight to the safety management system with greater funding from the government, and full liability on behalf of shippers for any accidents that occur.

Routine Proceedings

SENIORS

Ms. Peggy Nash (Parkdale—High Park, NDP): Last, Mr. Speaker, I submit a petition on behalf of many petitioners who call for a national strategy on aging. These petitioners are seeking to ensure that the health care system is fully funded, that their out-of-pocket expenses are reduced, and that there is affordable and appropriate housing for seniors. Finally, they want to make sure they have adequate income security in their senior years.

IMPAIRED DRIVING

Mr. Earl Dreeshen (Red Deer, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour for me to present five identical petitions today. They have to do with drinking and driving, impaired driving, and many senseless deaths of young people. I am thinking specifically of Krystal Owchar, and the Owchar and Riley families and how they have been devastated, as well as Tyler Isbister, Jeremie LeBlanc, William Harris, Gwen Martin. These are young lives who were taken from us because of this senseless act.

Families For Justice is a group of Canadians who have had loved ones killed by impaired drivers. They believe that Canada's impaired driving laws are much too lenient and want the crime to be called what it is, which is vehicular homicide. It is the number one cause of criminal death in Canada; over 1,200 Canadians are killed every year by drunk drivers. Families For Justice is calling for mandatory sentencing for vehicular homicide and for Parliament to support Bill C-652, Kassandra's law.

● (1530)

[Translation]

VIA RAIL

Mr. Philip Toone (Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour today to present a petition signed by hundreds of people in my riding who are calling for the return of passenger rail service to the Gaspé. We absolutely want VIA Rail service, which was abandoned two years ago, to be restored.

However, now that the province owns the rail system, there is a great deal of hope in the region that a federal-provincial partnership will be created, and I hope the government is listening.

[English]

AGRICULTURE

Mr. Dave Van Kesteren (Chatham-Kent—Essex, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I too have the honour of presenting a petition. A number of constituents in my riding would like the Government of Canada and the House of Commons to commit to adopting international aid policies that support small family farmers, especially women, and recognize their vital role in the struggle against hunger and poverty; to ensure that Canadian policies and programs are developed in consultation with small family farmers, and that they protect the rights of small family farmers in the global south to preserve, use, and freely exchange seeds.

Routine Proceedings

[Translation]

THE ENVIRONMENT

CREATION OF A NATIONAL URBAN PARK

Ms. Hélène LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the riding of LaSalle—Émard runs along the St. Lawrence River, an important part of our natural and historic heritage. It is also where we find the Lachine canal and rapids.

The signatories to the petition I am presenting support the creation of a national urban park in Montreal to celebrate the 375th anniversary of the founding of Montreal, the 150th anniversary of Confederation and the 80th anniversary of the Île aux Herons Migratory Bird Sanctuary, as well as the sites near the St. Lawrence, such as the Lachine rapids park. These sites have historical significance in relation to the founding of Montreal.

The petitioners are calling for the creation of a national urban park in Montreal.

[English]

IMMIGRATION

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, every year, thousands of people are denied the opportunity to be able to visit Canada.

These petitioners are calling for the government to recognize the importance of family when someone from another country who is of good character and is in relatively good health wants to visit Canada. They are thinking in terms of weddings, graduations, birthdays, funerals, other family gatherings and family needs, where the family member should be given more consideration in being granted a visiting visa.

The petitioners are asking for the House of Commons to recognize the importance of families, and to take action needed to ensure that those who want to visit Canada, who have family in Canada, be given extra consideration when applying for a visiting visa.

Mr. Bruce Hyer (Thunder Bay—Superior North, GP): Mr. Speaker, I have petitions from across Ontario and Quebec regarding climate change and pricing carbon.

The petitioners feel that due to the IPCC recommendations, the severe climatic effects that are occurring, and the fact that it is becoming clear to most of us that we humans are causing this in large part, they would like to see the adoption of a carbon pricing policy called carbon fee and dividend, supported by the Citizens Climate Lobby under the Green Party of Canada. It would set a fee on carbon where it comes out of the ground or at the port of entry, increase that fee over time, and distribute 100% of that money from the fee equally among all Canadians.

[Translation]

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Isabelle Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to rise in the House today to present a petition signed by many people in my riding, including the nuns of the Congregation of Sisters of Sainte-Anne, who are very active in social and humanitarian issues.

The petitioners are calling on the government to respect the rights of small family farmers to store, trade and use seed. They want us to adopt international aid policies that support small farmers, especially women, and recognize their vital role in the struggle against hunger and poverty.

They are also calling on us to ensure that policies and programs are developed in consultation with small farmers and that these policies protect the rights of small farmers in the global south to preserve, use and freely exchange seeds. I think this is a very important issue.

* * *

● (1535)

[English]

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Questions Nos. 1229, 1236, 1238, 1240, 1248, 1265, and 1297 will be answered today.

Routine Proceedings

[Text]

Question No. 1229—**Hon. Irwin Cotler:**

With regard to funding for programs that facilitate the reintegration of offenders into communities following incarceration: (a) for each Circles of Support and Accountability (CoSA) site in Canada, what funding did the government provide in each of the last ten years, broken down by department or agency providing the funding; (b) for each CoSA site in Canada, what funding will the government provide this year and in each of the next five years, broken down by department or agency providing the funding; (c) what funding has the government provided to CoSA Canada since the group's inception in 2014, broken down by department or agency providing the funding; (d) what funding will the government provide to CoSA Canada this year and in each of the next five years, broken down by department or agency providing the funding; (e) what program evaluations of CoSA has the government conducted in the last five years; (f) for each program evaluation in (e), (i) when was it conducted, (ii) who conducted it, (iii) what was its objective, (iv) what was its outcome, (v) how much did it cost; (g) based on what factors did the government decide to cut the funding for CoSA that had been provided by Correctional Service Canada (CSC); (h) based on what factors did the government decide not to renew funding for CoSA as part of the National Demonstration Project funded by the National Crime Prevention Centre; (i) regarding the decision in (g), (i) who made it, (ii) when was it made, (iii) what groups or individuals were consulted, (iv) what ministers or ministers' offices were involved in the decision-making process; (j) regarding the decision in (h), (i) who made it, (ii) when was it made, (iii) what groups or individuals were consulted, (iv) what ministers or ministers' offices were involved in the decision-making process; (k) what ministers or ministers' offices have been involved in other decisions regarding funding for CoSA; (l) in the last two years, what reports, briefing materials, briefing notes, memoranda, dossiers, dockets, assessments, presentations or other documents have been created regarding funding for CoSA; (m) for each document in (l), what is the (i) date, (ii) title, (iii) internal tracking number; (n) for each meeting held in the last two years regarding funding for CoSA, (i) when was it held, (ii) where was it held, (iii) who was present, (iv) what was the objective, (v) what was the outcome; (o) what objectives was the government seeking to achieve by providing funding for CoSA through CSC prior to March 31, 2015; (p) how will the objectives in (o) be achieved following the cut to CSC funding for CoSA effective March 31, 2015; (q) what objectives was the government seeking to achieve by funding CoSA as part of the National Demonstration Project funded by the National Crime Prevention Centre; (r) how will the objectives in (q) be achieved following the termination of funding for CoSA as part of the National Demonstration Project funded by the National Crime Prevention Centre; (s) what evaluations has the government conducted of the impact of the cut to CSC funding for CoSA; (t) for each evaluation in (s), (i) when was it conducted, (ii) who conducted it, (iii) what was its objective, (iv) what was its outcome, (v) how much did it cost; (u) what evaluations has the government conducted of the impact of the termination of funding for CoSA as part of the National Demonstration Project funded by the National Crime Prevention Centre; (v) for each evaluation in (u), (i) when was it conducted, (ii) who conducted it, (iii) what was its objective, (iv) what was its outcome, (v) how much did it cost; (w) what programs other than CoSA that aim to facilitate the reintegration of offenders into communities after their warrant expiry dates does the government run or fund; (x) for each program in (w), (i) what funding did the government provide for each of the last ten years, (ii) what funding will the government provide this year, (iii) what funding will the government provide in each of the next five years; (y) what evaluations has the government conducted in the last five years regarding the reintegration of offenders into communities following their warrant expiry dates; (z) what evaluations has the government conducted regarding the impact of CoSA and the programs in (w) on the reintegration of offenders into communities following their warrant expiry dates; (aa) for each evaluation in (y) and (z), (i) when was it conducted, (ii) who conducted it, (iii) what was its objective, (iv) what was its outcome, (v) how much did it cost; (bb) what evaluations has the government conducted regarding the impact of CoSA and the programs in (w) on recidivism rates; and (cc) for each evaluation in (bb), (i) when was it conducted, (ii) who conducted it, (iii) what was its objective, (iv) what was its outcome, (v) how much did it cost?

Hon. Steven Blaney (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the government believes that dangerous sex offenders belong behind bars.

That is why the government has put forward a number of important measures to ensure our streets and communities are safe for our children, such as establishing the high-risk child sex offender

database and cracking down on convicted sex offenders who seek to travel.

CSC has a contract with the Mennonite Central Committee of Ontario for the provision of CoSA services in southern Ontario, for \$325,000 per year, to March 31, 2018.

The government is always looking for efficient ways to improve the safety of our streets and communities while respecting taxpayers.

Question No. 1236—**Mr. Matthew Dubé:**

With regard to the children's fitness tax credit: (a) does the government have in its possession studies measuring the impact of the tax credit on the level of sports participation among young Canadians, including studies on the increase of the level of sports participation of young Canadians after this tax credit was introduced; (b) what has been the impact of this tax credit on parents' decisions to register their children in physical activities when they are eligible for the tax credit; and (c) has the government conducted an evaluation of this tax credit after four years, as called for by a group of experts appointed in 2006 to advise Finance Canada on developing the children's fitness tax credit?

Hon. Joe Oliver (Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in response to (a), the department reviewed the existing literature in 2013 to determine whether there were studies measuring the impact of the children's fitness tax credit on the level of sports participation among young Canadians. No studies measuring the impact of the children's fitness tax credit on sport participation were identified. Data on physical activities among children, however, exist and are in the possession of the department—Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute and the Canada community health survey from Statistics Canada—but that data does not allow concluding on the impact of the children's fitness tax credit on sports participation. Overall, not enough data existed in 2013 to allow the department to conduct a multivariate analysis of this nature.

In response to (b), the department reviewed the existing literature in 2013 to determine whether there were studies examining parents' decisions to register their children in physical activities. No studies measuring the impact of the children's fitness tax credit or other similar credits on the demand for children's physical activities were identified, and not enough data existed to allow the department to conduct a multivariate analysis of this nature.

In response to part (c), the department completed an internal evaluation on the children's fitness tax credit in January 2013.

*Routine Proceedings*Question No. 1238—**Mr. Craig Scott** :

With regard to the statement made by the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness on March 10, 2015, before the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security that “[c]urrently CSIS can detect security threats but is unable to take action unlike most allies are doing”: (a) has the government compiled a list of which allies permit “action” by their intelligence agencies in those agencies’ domestic operations, that is, in their operations within the state’s own borders; (b) at the time of this statement, was the government aware of the report issued by the Security and Intelligence Review Committee (SIRC) on June 2, 2010, on its Study 2009-05 entitled “CSIS’ Use of Disruption to Counter National Security Threats”, and, if not, is the government now aware of this report; (c) does the government accept the conclusion of SIRC that not all disruptions were a mere by-product of investigative interviews but, rather, some were intended courses of action; (d) after the SIRC report, did CSIS cease the activities characterized as disruption by SIRC report; (e) if the answer to (d) is in the affirmative, was it as a result of a government directive; (f) at any point since the SIRC report was published, has the government issued any directives, guidelines, or any other form of instruction permitting the activities characterized as disruption by SIRC in its report subject to conditions on, and criteria for, such activities; and (h) if the answer to (f) is in the affirmative, has the government or SIRC made any or all of them available to SIRC to facilitate SIRC’s review functions and, if so, when was this done?

Hon. Steven Blaney (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the international jihadist movement has declared war on Canada and her allies. Canadians are being targeted by jihadi terrorists simply because these terrorists hate our society and the values it represents. That is why the government has put forward the Anti-terrorism Act, 2015. It will protect Canadians against jihadi terrorists who seek to destroy the very principles that make Canada the best country in the world in which to live.

In response to (a), the government has reviewed the legislation of Canadian Security Intelligence Service’s, CSIS, foreign partners, and discussed with these partners their authority to take action to disrupt, diminish and degrade threats. Examples of these powers in some of Canada’s close democratic allies include: in the United States, the Central Intelligence Agency can, pursuant to the National Security Act, conduct domestic threat disruption with an executive order. In the United Kingdom, MI5 can, pursuant to section 1 of the Security Service Act conduct any activity to protect national security. The Norwegian Police Security Service has a domestic mandate to prevent and investigate any crime against the state, including terrorism. The Finnish Security Intelligence Service is mandated to prevent crimes in Finland that may endanger the governmental or political system, and internal or external security, pursuant to section 10 of the Act on Police Administration. The government will ensure that CSIS has the same tools to keep Canadians safe.

In response to (b) and (c), the government was aware of the passage cited from the Security Intelligence Review Committee’s, SIRC, report entitled “CSIS’ Use of Disruption to Counter National Security Threats” at the time of the statement. It is also important to note that the report stated “whenever CSIS conducts investigations, an intended or unintended consequence can be to counter or disrupt a threat to national security. This may include making it generally known to targets that their activities are being investigated, thus reducing the likelihood that the targets will continue with their plans. It is also possible that a threat may be disrupted unintentionally, wherein an activity undertaken by the service could dissuade an individual from pursuing future threat-related behaviour even though that result was not intended. The service recognizes that such tactics depart from typical forms of information collection, and that certain

risks must be managed when undertaking this investigative activity”. Rather than risk managing an important function of a modern intelligence agency, the Anti-terrorism Act, 2015 makes it clear that CSIS is mandated to conduct threat disruption activities.

In response to (d) through (f), the government does not comment on operational matters of national security.

In response to (g), subsection 6(2) of the CSIS Act states that a “copy of any [Ministerial] direction shall, forthwith after it is issued, be given to the Review Committee”.

Question No. 1240—**Hon. Judy Sgro**:

With regard to government responses to written questions placed on the Order Paper, for each such question which has been answered during the current Parliament by way of an Order for Return, where the Order for Return contains tabular or columnar material: (a) in what file format was the tabular or columnar material prepared by the department, agency, crown corporation or other government body which responded to the question or to a portion of the question; (b) was the tabular or columnar material received in that same format by the Privy Council Office; (c) was the tabular or columnar material printed from that same format for the purpose of tabling in the House of Commons; and (d) if the answer to (c) is negative, from what other format was it printed for that purpose?

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in the 41st Parliament, the government has responded to more than 2,500 written questions placed on the order paper. Producing the information requested is not feasible in the time period required for this response. Furthermore, the only response the government considers to be official is the paper copy tabled in Parliament.

Question No. 1248—**Hon. Judy Sgro**:

With regard to materials prepared for the Clerk of the Privy Council since January 1, 2011, for every briefing document or docket prepared: what is (i) the date, (ii) the title or the subject matter of the document, (iii) the department’s internal tracking number?

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Privy Council Office is unable to produce the information requested in the timeframe allotted.

Question No. 1265—**Ms. Charmaine Borg**:

With regard to affordable housing: (a) what is the total federal investment in Terrebonne, Quebec; (b) what projects benefitted from the investment identified in (a); and (c) the investment identified in (a) represents what percentage of funding allocated by the federal government under Investment in Affordable Housing?

Routine Proceedings

Mr. Scott Armstrong (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister of Labour, CPC): Mr. Speaker, since April 1, 2011, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, CMHC, provides federal funding under the investment in affordable housing, IAH, which the Province of Quebec cost-shares and has the responsibility for the design and delivery of affordable housing programs to address their local housing needs and priorities. Funding information by municipality is available only for capital projects committed under the IAH. CMHC is not aware of any capital projects that would have received federal funding under the IAH in Terrebonne, Quebec. Assistance under the IAH provided directly to individuals, e.g., shelter allowance, is not available to CMHC by municipality. However, some of this funding may have been provided for housing located in Terrebonne, Quebec.

Question No. 1297—**Mr. Mathieu Ravignat:**

With regard to the various claims for employment insurance in the constituency of Pontiac: (a) how many claims were denied; and (b) among the claims listed in (a), how many were denied (i) because of an unavailability to travel more than an hour to work, (ii) due to an inability to find suitable employment?

Mr. Scott Armstrong (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister of Labour, CPC): Mr. Speaker, data are not available at the constituency level. Furthermore, it is not possible to arrive at an accurate number of denied claims because some claims that do not become established initially could be put into pay with additional information.

* * *

[English]

QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURNS

Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, if Questions Nos. 1215, 1218, 1219, 1221, 1222, 1224, 1226, 1228, 1230, 1231, 1232, 1237, 1244, 1246, 1247, 1250, 1251, 1252, 1254, 1255, and 1257 could be made orders for returns, these returns would be tabled immediately.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[Text]

Question No. 1215—**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:**

With regard to the \$288 million announced in the 2014 Budget for Canada's Small Craft Harbours: (a) what financial document included the announcement of this funding; (b) what is the detailed breakdown of all projects which have or will receive funding from the allocated \$288 million, broken down by (i) federal riding, (ii) community or other location, (iii) details of the project, (iv) amount of funding allocated, (v) date the funding was allocated or projected future date for funding allocation, (vi) high-level departmental condition rating for the project in question, (vii) which government officials made the announcement for each project; (c) how much of the total amount has been spent to date, broken down by (i) total, (ii) amount spent in each federal riding; and (d) what are the details of all government correspondences and documentations relating to this Small Craft Harbour funding, broken down by (i) relevant file or internal tracking numbers, (ii) correspondence or file type, (iii) subject, (iv) date, (v) purpose, (vi) origin, (vii) intended destination, (viii) other officials, agencies, departments, or contractors copied or involved?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1218—**Hon. Ralph Goodale:**

With regard to the government's Media Cost Guides: (a) which media outlets are currently included in the guide, including (i) their name, (ii) the province, (iii) the address, (iv) the audience, (v) the language of publication, (vi) the frequency; and (b) in the last three years, which outlets have been removed and what was the reason for their removal, including (i) their name, (ii) the province, (iii) the address, (iv) the audience, (v) the language of publication, (vi) the frequency?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1219—**Mr. Philip Toone:**

With regard to government funding provided from fiscal year 2013-2014 to present within the constituency of Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine and the constituency of Haute-Gaspésie—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia: what are the amounts, broken down by (i) year, (ii) department or agency, (iii) initiative?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1221—**Mr. Philip Toone:**

With regard to airports: (a) what are the airports owned by the federal government, broken down by province; (b) for each airport in (a), what are the amounts invested by the government from 1990 to today, broken down by (i) airport, (ii) year; and (c) for each airport in (a), what are the investments planned over the next five years, broken down by (i) airport, (ii) year?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1222—**Mr. Philip Toone:**

With regard to oil spills: (a) since 2011, how many full-time and part-time positions have been cut in the various Marine Communications and Traffic Services Centres, broken down by (i) centre, (ii) year; (b) in case of such spills, what dispersants are authorised or are being considered for use in Canada; and (c) what measures have been taken to address the conclusions reached in sections 1.113 and 1.114 of the Report of the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development, published in the autumn of 2012?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1224—**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc:**

With regard to public speaking or other engagements by ministers, parliamentary secretaries, or any other parliamentarians speaking or acting on behalf of the government, related in whole or in part to promoting or highlighting the 2015 Budget or any measure contained therein: what were the costs of each such engagement, broken down by (i) travel, hospitality and accommodations for parliamentarians, and staff involved, (ii) rental of facilities or equipment, (iii) printing, (iv) all other costs, providing the details of those costs?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1226—**Mr. Brian Masse:**

With regard to all federal office closures in Windsor, Ontario, in the past decade, including permanent government office closures, restricted access to the government offices by the public, and crown corporations: (a) what were the total operating costs for all offices in the previous three fiscal years before their respective closures or restricted access; and (b) what have the savings been to the government for the fiscal year following the office closure or restricted access?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1228—**Mr. Brian Masse:**

With regard to government funding: what is the total amount of funding, since fiscal year 2013-2014 up to and including the current fiscal year, allocated within the constituency of Windsor West, listing each department or agency, initiative, and amount?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 1230—Hon. Irwin Cotler:**

With regard to the War Crimes and Crimes Against Humanity Program (the Program): (a) what is the Program's most recent report on its activities; (b) where can the report in (a) be accessed; (c) has the Program produced any reports on its activities since the 12th Report on Canada's Crimes Against Humanity and War Crimes Program; (d) where can the reports in (c) be accessed; (e) has the Program produced any annual reports on its activities since the 11th annual report on Canada's Crimes Against Humanity and War Crimes Program; (f) where can the reports in (e) be accessed; (g) if the Program has not produced any annual reports on its activities since the 11th annual report on Canada's Crimes Against Humanity and War Crimes Program, what accounts for the lack of any such reports; (h) if the Program has not produced any reports on its activities since the 12th Report on Canada's Crimes Against Humanity and War Crimes Program, what accounts for the lack of any such reports; (i) is the Program currently producing a report on its activities; (j) when will the report in (i) be publicly available; (k) what were the objectives of producing annual reports; (l) how have the objectives in (k) been achieved since the publication of (i) the 11th annual report, (ii) the 12th report; (m) for each year since the Program's creation in 1998, what funds have been allocated to it, broken down by department or agency; (n) for each year since the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court entered into force in 2002, what funds have been allocated by Canada to the International Criminal Court; (o) for each year since the Program's creation in 1998, how many employees were assigned to the Program, broken down by department or agency; (p) regarding the consideration of future funding options referred to in the government's response to Q-478, provided on December 7, 2009, (i) when did it begin, (ii) when was it completed, (iii) what were its objectives, (iv) what were its outcomes, (v) who in the government was involved, (vi) who outside the government was consulted, (vii) what did it cost; (q) if the government has undertaken any considerations of future funding options since the consideration in (o), (i) when did they begin, (ii) when were they completed, (iii) what were their objectives, (iv) what were their outcomes, (v) who in the government was involved, (vi) who outside the government was consulted, (vii) what did they cost; (r) for each year since 1998, how many investigations has the Program initiated; (s) for each year since 1998, how many arrests have resulted from investigations initiated by the Program; (t) for each year since 1998, how many prosecutions have resulted from investigations initiated by the Program; (u) for each year since 1998, how many convictions have resulted from investigations initiated by the Program; (v) for each year since 1998, how many extraditions have resulted from investigations initiated by the Program, broken down by country to which the individual was extradited; (x) for each year since 1998, how many deportations have resulted from investigations initiated by the Program, broken down by country to which the individual was deported; (y) what measures does the government take to ensure that individuals extradited or deported as a result of investigations initiated by the Program face prosecution; (z) what measures does the government take to ensure that the individuals in (w) are treated fairly and humanely; (aa) broken down by country of origin, how many investigations initiated by the Program are ongoing; and (bb) when did each investigation in (y) begin?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1231—Mr. Yvon Godin:

With regard to government funding for the constituency of Acadie-Bathurst for each fiscal year since 2007-2008 inclusively: (a) what are the details of all grants, contributions and loans to any organization, body or group, broken down by (i) the name of the recipient, (ii) the municipality in which the recipient is located, (iii) the date on which funding was received, (iv) the amount received, (v) the department or agency providing the funding, (vi) the program under which the grant, contribution or loan was made, (vii) the nature or purpose; and (b) for each grant, contribution and loan identified in (a), was a press release issued to announce it and, if so, what is the (i) date, (ii) headline, (iii) file number of the press release?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1232—Mr. Fin Donnelly:

With regard to the Kitsilano Coast Guard Base, from January 1, 2009, until February 19, 2013, broken down by fiscal year and by month: (a) what equipment and vessels were stationed at the base; (b) what is the total number of search and rescue missions conducted from the base; (c) what is the total number of marine pollution response missions conducted from the base; and (d) what is the total number of staff stationed at the base trained for marine pollution response?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1237—Ms. Joyce Bateman:

With regard to government funding in the riding of Winnipeg South Centre, for each fiscal year since 2007-2008 inclusively: (a) what are the details of all grants, contributions, and loans to any organization, body, or group, broken down by (i) name of the recipient, (ii) municipality of the recipient, (iii) date on which the funding was received, (iv) amount received, (v) department or agency providing the funding, (vi) program under which the grant, contribution, or loan was made, (vii) nature or purpose; and (b) for each grant, contribution and loan identified in (a), was a press release issued to announce it and, if so, what is the (i) date, (ii) headline of the press release?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1244—Hon. John McCallum:

With regard to materials prepared for past or current parliamentary secretaries or their staff from April 1, 2007, to March 31, 2009: for every briefing document or docket prepared, what is (i) the date, (ii) the title or the subject matter, (iii) the department's internal tracking number?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1246—Hon. Judy Sgro:

With regard to government contracts: what are the particulars of all contracts entered into by a department, agency, or crown corporation, since January 1, 2011, which have been cancelled, abrogated, or otherwise terminated by the department, agency, or crown corporation for failure of a contracting party to perform its obligations under the contract, specifying (i) the date on which the contract was entered into, (ii) the parties to the contract, (iii) the initial value of the contract, (iv) the nature or description of the purpose of the contract, (v) the date on which the contract was cancelled, abrogated, or otherwise terminated, (vi) whether the contract was the subject of legal action, and, if affirmative, giving the date on which legal action was commenced, the disposition of the action, and the court docket numbers related to the action?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1247—Hon. Judy Sgro:

With regard to government funding, for each program of grants, contributions, loans or other type of funding which currently exists, or which formerly existed at any time since April 1, 2007: (a) is or was the funding tracked using a database; (b) if the answer to (a) is affirmative, what is or was the name or title of that database; (c) what are or were the data fields which are kept in that database in respect of each grant, contribution, loan, or other type of funding; (d) has the database been proactively made available to the public as part of the government's Open Data initiative or policy, or otherwise; and (e) if the database has not been made available to the public, what is the reason that it has not been?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1250—Mr. David McGuinty:

With regard to government advertising: (a) how much has each department, agency, or Crown corporation spent to (i) purchase advertising on Facebook since January 29, 2015, (ii) purchase advertising on Xbox, Xbox 360, or Xbox One since January 29, 2015, (iii) purchase advertising on YouTube since January 29, 2015, (iv) promote tweets on Twitter since January 29, 2015; (b) for each individual advertising purchase, what was the (i) nature, (ii) purpose, (iii) target audience or demographic, (iv) cost; (c) what was the Media Authorization Number for each advertising purchase; and (d) what are the file numbers of all documents, reports, or memoranda concerning each advertising purchase or of any post-campaign assessment or evaluation?

(Return tabled)

*Government Orders***Question No. 1251—Mr. David McGuinty:**

With regard to government communications since January 28, 2015: (a) for each press release containing the phrase “Harper government” issued by any government department, agency, office, Crown corporation, or other government body, what is the (i) headline or subject line, (ii) date, (iii) file or code-number, (iv) subject matter; (b) for each such press release, was it distributed (i) on the web site of the issuing department, agency, office, Crown corporation, or other government body, (ii) on Marketwire, (iii) on Canada Newswire, (iv) on any other commercial wire or distribution service, specifying which service; and (c) for each press release distributed by a commercial wire or distribution service mentioned in (b)(ii) through (b)(iv), what was the cost of using the service?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1252—Mr. David McGuinty:

With regard to the backdrops used by the government for announcements since January 28, 2015: for each backdrop purchased, what was (a) the date when (i) the tender was issued for the backdrop, (ii) the contract was signed, (iii) the backdrop was delivered; (b) the cost of the backdrop; (c) the announcement for which the backdrop was used; (d) the department that paid for the backdrop; and (e) the dates on which the backdrop was used?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1254—Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:

With regard to contracts under \$10 000 granted by Veterans Affairs Canada since January 28, 2015: what are the (a) vendors' names; (b) contracts' reference numbers; (c) dates of the contracts; (d) descriptions of the services provided; (e) delivery dates; (f) original contracts' values; and (g) final contracts' values, if different from the original contracts' values?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1255—Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:

With regard to contracts under \$10 000 granted by the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces since January 29, 2015: what are the (a) vendors' names; (b) contracts' reference numbers; (c) dates of the contracts; (d) descriptions of the services provided; (e) delivery dates; (f) original contracts' values; and (g) final contracts' values, if different from the original contracts' values?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1257—Mr. Jasbir Sandhu:

With regard to the remarks made by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness in the House of Commons on April 29, 2015 regarding spending on crime prevention in Surrey: (a) what is the itemized annual amount for the spending; (b) which departments were involved in the spending and with what amounts; (c) which components are grants or contributions; and (d) what is the government's definition of crime prevention?

(Return tabled)

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

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*Translation*]

ECONOMIC ACTION PLAN 2015 ACT, NO. 1

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-59, An Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in

Parliament on April 21, 2015 and other measures, be read the third time and passed, and of the amendment.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): The last time the House considered this motion, the hon. member for Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques had five minutes left.

Resuming debate, the hon. member has the floor.

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, before question period I spoke at length about the fact that the Conservatives have once again included provisions in their bill that are probably unconstitutional. I was referring to the provisions concerning a retroactive amendment to the Access to Information Act, which would affect the gun registry and block an Ontario Provincial Police investigation. I was also referring to the fact that the government wants to include a provision that would force the pre-emptive resolution of the public sector sick leave issue. This violates the freedom to negotiate that has been recognized by various courts, including the Supreme Court. These two measures are unconstitutional and could be challenged in the Supreme Court. That has already happened with measures such as the retroactive amendments to the rules for Supreme Court appointments of Quebec justices, which was an attempt to avoid the fiasco of Justice Nadon's appointment.

I do not have much time left. I could probably talk for two or three days, but I will give my colleagues a chance to debate the aspects of Bill C-59 that affect them. This government is clearly tired and worn out, as the member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley just said. The government's economic measures are doing nothing to stimulate growth or job creation, despite the fancy numbers it has been throwing at us since the great recession. The numbers that have been released on economic growth have been clear: we are stagnating. The Conservatives have no solution.

Since the budget was tabled and we have been debating this bill, we have talked quite a bit about income splitting, which this government decided to call the “family tax cut” because it is aware of the public backlash against this measure, which will benefit just 15% of Canada's wealthiest families. It is obvious, though, that this is income splitting, an unfair measure that, at the end of the day, left us in a deficit in the last fiscal year, since this measure applies to current tax returns. We have also talked at length about the increase in the TFSA limit. That is yet another measure that will only benefit the wealthiest taxpayers.

These measures ultimately do nothing to address the problems with economic growth. They only help the families with the highest incomes and leave middle-class and low-income families out in the cold, with no guarantee that the money that ends up in the wealthiest taxpayers' pockets will eventually be reinvested in the economy.

Government Orders

The government also enhanced the universal child care benefit. Notwithstanding the fact that this measure is still called the universal child care benefit, it will be extended to include children ages 6 to 17, even though 17-year-olds can hardly be called children. Of course, we are not opposed to this measure. However, the fact remains that the funding for it mainly comes from the elimination of another tax credit, the child tax credit. The Conservatives do not talk about it very often. They did away with the child tax credit, took that money and reinvested it to enhance the universal child care benefit, and then they boast about doing something for families. However, when it comes right down to it, the impact of this measure will not be as great as it would have been had the government decided to support the NDP's proposal to create a pan-Canadian child care program like Quebec's.

Quebec's program has been very successful. I will end by talking a little bit about that because I am running out of time. Between 1996, when low-cost child care was introduced in Quebec, and 2008, 69,700 mothers joined the workforce. The employment rate for mothers with children under the age of six increased by 22%. The number of single mothers on social assistance was reduced by more than half, from 99,000 to 45,000 women. The after-tax median income of single mothers rose by 81%, and the relative poverty rates for single-parent families headed by women declined from 36% to 22%, that is, from more than a third to less than a quarter.

• (1540)

During that period, the GDP rose by \$5.1 billion, or 1.7%.

We are proposing measures that will not only provide direct assistance to Canadian families but also contribute directly to economic growth. Meanwhile, the Conservatives are turning a deaf ear, and they will feel the effects of their inaction when they are kicked out of office on October 19 and replaced by an NDP government that listens to these families.

Mr. Dany Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am glad that my colleague had a chance to talk about the budget. In a while, I will also have a chance to give a speech on this major budget, which will be the last.

In my speech, I will talk about how things are in my region, Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean, but I would like to know how things are in my colleague's part of the country.

What measures to help his constituents would he have liked to see in this budget but did not, unfortunately?

Mr. Guy Caron: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Chicoutimi—Le Fjord for his excellent question. Many of the issues that matter to people in the lower St. Lawrence region are similar to those that matter to people in my colleague's region, Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean.

The really striking thing is that the government keeps going on and on about balancing the budget, but it does not talk about how it was done. That is something people often talk to me about when I am in my riding.

The government cut public services drastically and closed regional service offices, but the main reason it achieved a balanced budget is that it once again pilfered money from the employment insurance fund surplus.

Next year, the employment insurance fund will have a surplus of \$1.8 billion. The government has announced a surplus of \$1.4 billion. Clearly, the government is putting the employment insurance fund surplus into general revenues to make itself look like a good, responsible manager, but it is all just political smoke and mirrors.

Everyone knows that the fund should be truly independent. That is an NDP promise that we will make good on in October 2015. We will ensure that the fund is managed by the people who pay into it—workers and employers. The government's job will be to help them to that.

[English]

Mrs. Cathy McLeod (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health and for Western Economic Diversification, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would ask my hon. colleague how he is going to explain voting against this budget to the shift worker who really needs that universal child care benefit, because there is no daycare that is available during the night. A nurse would be another example. Then there is the person in the remote community whose grandmother lives with the family and takes care of the children.

The NDP has this plan for daycare at \$15 a day, which might help a few people, but those members are going to have to explain to all of those other Canadian parents and families as to why the NDP is not supporting a universal child care benefit that will help every single one of them in terms of making the decisions that they need to make in terms of their child care needs.

• (1545)

[Translation]

Mr. Guy Caron: Mr. Speaker, the answer is very simple. The member just has to look at how we voted at the Standing Committee on Finance to see that we actually supported the enhancement to the universal child care benefit.

Obviously, we cannot support this budget, which includes far too many measures, some of which are clearly unconstitutional. We are strongly opposed to income splitting, for example. As for TFSAs, which we support in principle, we do not oppose a \$5,000 limit, but raising it to \$10,000 is another thing altogether.

These two measures will do nothing to improve our economic performance or make life better for the middle class and low income families. They will be detrimental to the public purse and the flexibility to reinvest in this enhancement of the UCCB and create more child care spaces, in order to allow people outside Quebec—since Quebec already has a child care system—to benefit from Quebec's example and increase women's participation in the workforce.

As my colleague from Skeena—Bulkley Valley pointed out, we have the lowest female participation rate in the workforce since 2002. The measure that we want to introduce would allow us to improve that record and make it easier for women to access the workforce.

Government Orders

Mr. Dany Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to finally be able to speak to the budget. I am not going to lie. As an MP, I felt muzzled, especially this year with the time allocation motion on the budget. For a long time I did not think the member for Chicoutimi—Le Fjord would get 10 minutes to talk about his expectations regarding the budget. I would not dare expect 20 minutes.

The budget includes some good measures that I will go over. However, it also has some shortcomings and misses opportunities. I am also aware that when I am finished my speech, the government is not necessarily going to take my suggestions and rewrite the budget this year, what with just a few days left before the House adjourns. However, I hope that regardless who is in power this fall, the government might consider the needs of my riding and the realities of Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean. It is a region that I am very proud to represent. I am the member for Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, but in the region, there is not much difference between the ridings except at the local level. Whether we are talking about Jonquière—Alma, Lac-Saint-Jean or Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, we have the same reality and we must work together for our industries and our people. I will not necessarily make a distinction between the needs of the ridings. We can make progress by working together.

I will begin by talking about the good things about the budget. I commend the Conservative government for adopting one of the ideas that the NDP put forward in 2011. I personally campaigned on this issue. I am talking about our measure to encourage job creation and stimulate the economy by focusing on SMEs because they create over 70% of the new jobs in Canada. Helping SMEs just makes sense. The government adopted the NDP's idea to lower the small business tax rate by 2%, from 11% to 9%. As this idea is implemented over the next few years, I honestly think that it will have a positive impact on our business community, whether in large cities like Montreal, Toronto or Vancouver or in small communities like mine.

I represent a number of small communities, including Saint-Fulgence, Sainte-Rose-du-Nord, Ferland-et-Boilleau, L'Anse-Saint-Jean, Petit-Saguenay, Rivière-Éternité, Saint-Félix-d'Otis and Saint-Honoré. These small municipalities have from 500 to 2,500 residents. Naturally, a large corporation is not going to move into the town and create 2,000 jobs. Small and medium-sized businesses, like gas stations, are the ones that will open up. Unfortunately, over the past four years, municipalities have lost more gas stations than they have gained. Many other small municipalities are at risk of losing their grocery stores. My point is that in these small municipalities, jobs at SMEs make all the difference. These businesses ensure that someone who is born in the town can continue to live there and work there as long as possible, even as they age.

Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean is a beautiful area of the country for nature lovers, and it is a top destination for people who want to live there and those who want to visit. I find it sad that young people cannot find summer jobs. They know that once they reach adulthood they will most likely end up in the big city, such as Saguenay, Quebec City or Montreal. I am, above all, an advocate for the regions. Political stripes aside, my region is what defines me. My region is currently struggling when it comes to jobs. The

unemployment rate remains quite high—higher than the average, in fact. Although things improve come spring and summer, the unemployment rate still remains quite high. A number of plants and big companies have closed in recent years, which has left a mark on our economy. It infuriates me that the government dipped into the employment insurance fund to balance its budget this year.

● (1550)

I think that money could have gone to the unemployed workers who are going through tough times. They need all the federal help they can get to ensure that their families have what they need. Entrepreneurs need help in order to create new jobs.

There are things missing from this budget, and I think that is a shame. In March, I made the same grocery list. I wanted to put pressure on the government on three major issues that would have made a big difference for a riding like mine and all of Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean.

First there is forestry. There is no denying that Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean has a number of major industries tied to forestry and aluminum. Agriculture and tourism are very important as well. When things go poorly for a major player like forestry, then many jobs are on the line. In my region, forestry jobs have been lost or have become very precarious. Ideally, the federal government should have invested in research and development. I hope that they will consider that in a future budget. That would be good not only for secondary and tertiary processing of forest products, in order to develop new niches and processes, but also for exporting this type of new product. Unfortunately, even though I see that this year's budget includes a two-year renewal of the funding for the national forestry engineering research centre—the exact name escapes me—it is not a lot of money for the entire industry in Canada. More research would be good. We must not abandon our primary industry.

Our big corporations, including Resolute Forest Products, play a vital role in the regional economy. That is why I liked one of the previous government programs. It was the four-year \$90 million investments forest industry transformation program. It was a step in the right direction because this program met the exact needs of the forestry industry in my region and throughout Canada.

The problem was that it was a four-year program and the \$90 million was spent in the first year. Our forestry industry needs more federal assistance to renew itself, modernize its facilities and improve its performance. The Forest Products Association of Canada had determined that the industry would need \$500 million over six years. The government proposed \$90 million over four years, and already there is no money left. We urge the federal government to invest more in forestry.

Government Orders

Furthermore, seven years ago, the Conservatives made a promise that has yet to be included in a budget, or even put to Treasury Board. I am referring to funding for 2 Wing at the Bagotville military base. This project has a \$300 million price tag, with \$180 million for infrastructure, which would house 500 members assigned to Bagotville. Two hundred and fifty members have already arrived and they still do not have dedicated premises. They are sharing the resources of 3 Wing. The \$180 million will also be used for warehouses, because this is a vital unit of our Department of National Defence. It is important to release the \$180 million in funding for the Bagotville and 2 Wing infrastructure.

I have very little time remaining. I will close by talking about our tourism industry. Helping this industry is a simple matter: we need customs services at the Bagotville airport. Right now, we do not have full customs services. Services are available only when flight capacity does not exceed 30 passengers. That is not good because Europeans love our region and they want to come spend money there and contribute to our tourism economy. However, the government needs to do more on this project so that we can get more equipment. I am convinced that this should be easy to do. The facilities at the airport and the Bagotville military base are of high quality.

• (1555)

[*English*]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when asked about the family plan where a monthly cheque is provided to families with children, the last speaker from New Democratic Party responded that the NDP would support that aspect of the budget. The question I have is related to that.

The Liberal Party is prepared to give a significant tax-free monthly cheque to middle-class families with young children. It is even more generous than what the Conservatives are proposing. I do not know the position of the New Democrats. Could the member indicate what their position is on that tax-free monthly cheque that would be provided to middle-class Canadians to support them and their children? I am looking for clarification. The New Democrats are looking at saying yes to the Conservatives' plan. Would they consider saying yes to the Liberals' plan which is more generous? If so, do they still plan to charge \$15 a day for daycare?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Dany Morin: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my Liberal colleague for his question. It is rather complex. He is asking me to assess the Liberal's economic plan for families.

To be quite honest, I have not studied the Liberal's entire economic platform. However, I know that we need a budget and election promises. Canadians have been cheated election after election. Promises need to be kept. However, the budget also needs to be balanced. The NDP decided to make \$15 a day child care a priority because it is an investment that yields returns. What is more, I know that the NDP has the money to fund that program.

That is why I cannot comment on the Liberal platform. However, I hope that the Liberals will present Canadians with a balanced platform. Canadians can then decide for themselves whether the Liberal plan makes sense.

[*English*]

Mr. Mike Sullivan (York South—Weston, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the biggest problem in my riding is unemployment, especially youth unemployment. The budget does virtually nothing to provide jobs or provide any avenue for jobs.

Two years ago, the finance minister suggested something that we had pushed for and I thought was quite progressive and that was to suggest that when the federal government spends money on infrastructure, a condition of the spend would be the creation of apprenticeships for youth. Every time I have asked the government where that is, the answer I get back is that the government provided some kind of tax credit for apprentices. While that is good, it does not actually create jobs.

We would love to see the creation of real jobs for youth in the budget, but it is not there. Would the member like to comment?

• (1600)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Dany Morin: Mr. Speaker, I thank my NDP colleague for his question.

That is definitely something I would like to comment on. Each political party announces the good initiatives it would like the Canadian government to implement. The NDP leader proposed an excellent solution that would reduce the youth unemployment rate: a hiring credit. The NDP wants to make sure that the measures we introduce to help businesses really do create new jobs. We wanted to see a \$1,000 credit for each new job; \$2,000 if the employee is young. I think that will make a difference. Our youth need to be in the job market. They need training and encouragement. They are the next generation. This kind of measure could change young people's lives, and it could even change the Canadian economy.

[*English*]

Mrs. Cathy McLeod (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health and for Western Economic Diversification, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Mississauga—Streetsville.

I am delighted to stand and speak to the budget implementation act.

I did have the opportunity to speak to the budget not too long ago. When I spoke to the budget originally, I spoke to the commitment to get back to a balanced budget. I spoke to the measures that would help Canadians. I gave many examples of the important support that the budget was giving to the constituents in my riding of Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo.

Today, because of my role as Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health, I thought I would like to focus on some of the elements regarding health within this budget. We truly have a strong story to tell in this area. What is really important to note is that while respecting provincial jurisdiction, we have moved forward in so many ways. What I am going to look at is how we will continue to move forward not only with the ongoing programs that we are committed to, but also with some specific things in the budget and in the BIA.

Government Orders

Most important, I want to start by talking about the transfer dollars. Since we have taken office, the Canada health transfer dollars have gone up by 70%. We have heard some rhetoric from the opposition and I truly question the ability of those members to look at the facts and portray the facts accurately to Canadians. There has been a 70% increase since we have taken office. The transfers will be \$32.1 billion in 2014-15, and by 2019-20, \$40.9 billion will be transferred to the provinces for health care. That is an additional \$27 billion over the next five years. I would really appreciate it if the opposition members would be more factual when they look at the very incredibly strong record that we have.

We put our Canadian health care transfers on a sustainable and predictable path going forward. It is going to be 6% this year, 6% next year, 3% the year after or based on the average of nominal GDP. If our economy is very strong, it will increase more significantly.

Another important piece to note is that we are providing increases that are higher than what the provinces are intending to spend. The majority of the provinces are increasing their health care spending by under 3%. It is also important to note that we spend I think it is approximately \$9 billion in other kinds of direct health care spending. There is really significant federal government dollars going into the health care system.

What is more important is that money is not the only answer. Money will not fix the inefficiencies in the health care system. What is going to fix the inefficiencies in the health care system? This is where we have an incredibly strong and important story to tell.

The provinces are tasked with the delivery of health care. They no doubt are grappling with the challenges of delivering health care with the changing demographics and the changing technology that is available. I think they are doing their best to try and manage their health care systems effectively into the future. What is going to support them is where the government is playing an absolutely critical role. Information is absolutely critical. Good information is needed in order to make decisions. If we look at the Canadian institute for Health Information, CIHI as it is known, I believe in the main estimates this year they are looking at about \$78 million. Information is absolutely critical.

Another area that is absolutely critical to move forward is health research. The Canadian Institutes of Health Research will be getting over \$1 billion from the federal government this year. There are other mechanisms by which research is funded, but this is a critically important way to fund research. Some 3,600 grants went out last year. They focus on cancer, strokes, children's health, aboriginal health, and many other areas.

• (1605)

I, like many of my colleagues in the House, had an opportunity to do the ALS walk this past weekend in Ottawa, and next weekend it will be in my riding. They see hope from the research for this disease. This is a way for them to overcome what is a horrific disease.

I love what one of the people participating in the walk had to say, that we are going to take ALS out of the medical books and move it into the history books. It is a profound thing to say. It is what research is going to do for the health of Canadians.

It is important to notice that this economic action plan did earmark \$15 million for a strategy for patient-oriented research. That is a critical support. It takes the on-the-ground level to see how we could improve the lives of Canadians. It is a sort of bedside approach to patient-oriented research

Canada Health Infoway was one of the drivers behind digital transformation. Many might recall the days when we had the processing machine and the doctor would look at an X-ray by putting it up on a screen with a light behind it.

Now, for a person who lives in a rural community, his or her X-ray can be electronically submitted to another community where there is a radiologist, which saves health care dollars. It provides the ability to diagnose someone in a rural community. They might be okay, but there might be something significant which would be seen in an X-ray in real time in that other community.

Therefore, technology is another important way to move things forward and another way that Canada is doing an absolutely excellent job. I could also speak about electronic health records and whole host of other areas that are critical.

I have talked about information and research. However, today the minister announced \$14 million for the Canadian Foundation for Healthcare Improvement, which is in this budget implementation act. People might wonder what those dollars are providing.

The Canadian Foundation for Healthcare Improvement is helping to make the health care system more effective, patient centred, and sustainable. There was a cost-benefit analysis done as part of the 2014 evaluation process. It showed that just six of the projects that were funded have avoided more health care costs than the entire budget of CFHI from 2006 to 2013. It is incredible work.

Through its EXTRA program, over 200 health care improvement projects have been completed, and more than 300 fellows have graduated from the program. Those health leaders are in turn raising awareness and encouraging other novel cost-cutting and effective ways to improve health care.

The INSPIRED initiative is another program, which is looking at transforming care for people who live with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and providing support for their caregivers.

There are 10 CFHI sponsored teams who are taking part in the Institute for Healthcare Improvement triple aim collaboratives, which helps organizations plan and implement care delivery systems that serve the needs of patients living with complex health needs. Again, that improves health care outcomes.

I could go on about the many initiatives from CFHI which are changing the lives of Canadians, but as we look at this budget implementation act and our government's commitment, I want to take it back to the areas that are important.

Government Orders

We are respecting provincial jurisdiction while we provide them with much-needed support. We have given them long-term sustainable dollars so that they can plan. Most importantly, we are playing a key leadership role in the ways that are going to transform our system into the future, which is in the areas of innovation, research, information, and technology. Then, of course, there is the important role we are playing with the Mental Health Commission of Canada and the Public Health Agency of Canada.

• (1610)

Therefore, I am very proud of the excellent work of our federal government in supporting the provinces in the sustainability and delivery of a comprehensive public health care system.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Paulina Ayala (Honoré-Mercier, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech.

There is one thing I am very worried about. When we talk about budget measures, we are talking about economic measures to make the country's economy work. However, when the government introduces yet another omnibus bill, it includes important measures that have nothing to do with the budget.

My question for my colleague is this: as a legislator, does she not feel that democracy is undermined every time there is an omnibus bill and the House passes legislative measures that have nothing to do with the budget? Then the government asks why we did not support those measures.

I certainly find that this shows a lack of respect for our work as legislators.

[*English*]

Mrs. Cathy McLeod: Mr. Speaker, like any household, the federal government puts forward a comprehensive budget. When a household puts forward a budget, it is not just about the money that it is putting in and the money going out; it is also about the goals and the aspirations and the priorities as a family.

This budget does exactly that. It is looking at universal child care benefits and it is looking at extending the compassionate care leave. It is examining what our goals are as a government and how we are going to spend our money. To be quite frank, it is more than a line of revenue in, revenue out, and normal costs. It is an aspirational document and a critical document. It is a road map for the government's plans.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if we were to canvass Canadians at any given point in time in the last number of years, we would always find that health care was one of the top three or four issues. That has been fairly consistent for years.

In recognition of just how important health care is to Canadians, it is very important for the government to reflect those priorities. However, what we have not seen the government do is work with the different entities, particularly our provinces, to come up with a more comprehensive health care policy, to use the member's words. The government has fallen short in working with our premiers. We see that in how the Prime Minister has not met with the premiers and has never put health care on the agenda of a first ministers conference.

I wonder if the member can indicate to the House whether her government believes that it can provide the quality health care that Canadians want to see when the Prime Minister is unwilling to meet with the premiers to talk about one of the most important issues in Canada.

• (1615)

Mrs. Cathy McLeod: Mr. Speaker, with all due respect, that was a bit of an absurd comment. If he has been paying attention, he knows that the Minister of Health has been meeting with her colleagues regularly. They are moving forward on a number of initiatives that are important to Canadians.

As I outlined in my speech, the provinces have an important role in the delivery of health care, but what the federal government is really focusing on is research, innovation, information, technology, and providing that umbrella of important support. The needs in a province like Newfoundland and Labrador are very different from the needs in a province like British Columbia, and those are very different from the needs in downtown Toronto.

Acknowledging the differences of our provinces and working in a respectful way is the only route forward, and it is important to do so.

Mr. Bernard Trottier (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and for La Francophonie, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my colleague commented in her speech about the gap between the annual increase in the Canada health transfer of 6% a year and what the provinces are actually spending.

Her province of B.C. is an example. I just checked the report from the Canadian Institute for Health Information entitled "National Health Expenditure Trends, 1975 to 2014", which says that B.C. only increased its health care spending by 3.2% in 2011, 4.2% in 2012, 2% in 2013, and only 1.8% in 2014. There is a similar trend in Ontario over that same time frame. It was 2.5% in 2011, 1.9% in 2012, 1.6% in 2013, and 1.6% in 2014.

Given all of the funds that we are providing through the Canada health transfer, why are the provinces not necessarily spending those funds on health care?

Mrs. Cathy McLeod: Mr. Speaker, I want to reiterate that the transfers in 2014-15 are \$32.1 billion and are going to go up to \$40.9 billion in 2019-20.

As my colleague has indicated, the provinces were on an escalator that in a short time was going to be consuming over half of their budgets, and they recognized that they had to do something. They recognized that they had to focus on innovation and all the other areas I have talked about. What we have done as a federal government is committed in a way that gives them confidence about what their transfers are going to be.

I have to point out that unlike the Liberal government, which actually balanced its budget in the 1990s on the backs of the provinces' transfer payments, we are back to a balanced budget and yet have committed to unprecedented increases in transfer payments.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): It is my duty pursuant to Standing Order 38 to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Thunder Bay—Superior North, The Environment; the hon. member for Ahuntsic, Employment.

Government Orders

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Mississauga—Streetsville.

Mr. Brad Butt (Mississauga—Streetsville, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it gives me pleasure today to rise in the House to speak at third reading stage of Bill C-59, economic action plan 2015 act, No. 1.

At the outset, I would like to congratulate the Minister of Finance, the hon. member for Eglinton—Lawrence, on his first budget, a very comprehensive budget, one that I am very proud to be a member of a team and a government to support in the House. I wish him well for many more balanced and successful budgets in the future.

This bill would legislate key elements of economic action plan 2015, which include measures to support jobs and growth, help communities prosper and ensure the security of Canadians. The bill also includes the measures that were contained in Bill C-57, the support for families act, and Bill C-58, the support for veterans and their families act.

However, perhaps the most significant part of the bill is that it would return Canada to a balanced budget and would enshrine in law balanced budget legislation reflecting our government's responsible fiscal management policy, which is creating jobs and putting more money back in the pockets of Canadians. A balanced budget allows the Government of Canada to cut taxes further for Canadian families, individuals and businesses.

My riding of Mississauga—Streetsville has the second highest number of families with children living at home in all of Canada. That is why our government's family tax cut and benefits plan really hits home in my community.

Our government will increase the universal child care benefit for children 6 and under to \$160 per month, and extend the benefit for children aged 7 to 17 by \$60 per month. This initiative puts thousands of dollars a year back into the pockets of families in my riding, and allows parents to make their choices for their children on how that money will be spent. It is important to note that the increase to the UCCB is retroactive to January 1, 2015 and that the new benefit will start to flow for families this July.

Further, our government is instituting a family income-splitting program that would allow a higher income spouse to, in effect, transfer \$50,000 of taxable income to a spouse in a lower tax bracket, effective for the 2014 tax year. Some families would save as much as \$2,000 a year in total family tax paid, yet another example of how we are putting more money back into the pockets of hard-working Canadian families.

Economic action plan 2015 would also increase the child care expense deduction dollar limits by \$1,000, effective for the 2015 tax year. The maximum amounts that can be claimed will increase to \$8,000 from \$7,000 for children under age 7, to \$5,000 from \$4,000 for children aged 7 to 16, and up to \$11,000 from \$10,000 for children who are eligible for the disability tax credit.

Millions of Canadians have taken advantage of the very popular tax-free savings account. TFSAs are an excellent way for Canadians to save tax free and have that money available in the future for their personal needs. Many Canadians have maxed out at the old \$5,500 a year limit, and many would contribute more if allowed. I am very pleased to report that economic action plan 2015 would raise the

maximum contribution limit to \$10,000, effective in 2015 and subsequent years.

• (1620)

Bill C-59 would also reduce the minimum withdrawal factors for registered retirement income funds to permit seniors to preserve more of their retirement savings to better support their retirement income needs.

The bill would also create the home accessibility tax credit to assist seniors and disabled Canadians offset renovation costs to make their homes safer and more accessible so they could live independently and remain in their homes.

Mississauga—Streetsville is home to many seniors who tell me they want to age gracefully in place, remain in their cherished home as long as possible and be able to make modifications to improve their living conditions. The home accessibility tax credit is welcome news in my community.

Branch 139 of the Royal Canadian Legion is located in the village of Streetsville. I am a member and I visit the legion regularly to support its initiatives. I have met with veterans there and I was honoured to present World War II "V" pins to dozens of these brave Canadians. That is why I am pleased economic action plan 2015 would ensure that veterans and their families receive the support they need by providing a new retirement income security benefit to moderately and severely disabled veterans. It would expand access to the permanent impairment allowance for disabled veterans and would create a new tax-free family caregiver relief benefit to recognize the very important role of caregivers.

This government values and supports the brave women and men who have served in our Canadian Forces and we will ensure that our veterans get the full support they need and deserve.

During pre-budget consultations and meetings, I had the opportunity to meet with groups like ALS Society of Canada, the MS Society of Canada and others about the compassionate care benefit provided under the employment insurance system.

Bill C-59 would extend compassionate care benefits from the current six weeks of coverage to six months to better support Canadians caring for gravely ill and dying family members. This change would benefit thousands of families across Canada when they need the financial and emotional support the most.

The bill would also implement very important measures for supporting jobs and growth. Our government would reduce the small business tax rate to 9% by 2019, lowering taxes for job-creating small businesses and their owners by \$2.7 billion between now and 2019-20. This is very good news for members of the Streetsville Business Improvement Association and other companies operating in Mississauga—Streetsville. Predictable lower taxes each and every year is an important signal to the small business community.

Government Orders

Recently, I have had the opportunity to announce several investments in Mississauga, through the Federal Economic Development Corporation of Southern Ontario. These strategic investments assist leading edge companies grow and expand, create new high-wage jobs, and contribute to research and innovation.

Economic action plan 2015 would see the budget deficit reduced from \$55.6 billion during the height of the recession and now with a \$1.4 billion projected surplus. All Canadians should be thanked and should be proud for their hard work and their support of this government as we return Canada to balanced budgets.

I ask all members of the House to carefully read Bill C-59 and the important initiatives contained within it, and to rise to support the bill so we can continue to ensure Canada is strong, proud and free.

• (1625)

Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims (Newton—North Delta, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we are here to discuss the budget, Bill C-59. However, like other budget bills, this is more like a telephone directory for many of our towns and cities across the country because it has so much other stuff buried within it that has very little to do with the budget.

How can my colleague justify putting in the budget bill legislation that would retroactively change an existing law and justify the shredding of the long gun registry data?

Mr. Brad Butt: Mr. Speaker, Parliament has been very clear on the long gun registry. The majority of the members of this Parliament voted to scrap the long gun registry.

When a registry is scrapped, it means we get rid of the documents. The RCMP was acting on the instruction of the democratically elected members of Parliament who decided to end the long gun registry and ensure the documents associated with that registry were eliminated. The RCMP is doing its job.

We are ensuring, through one section of this bill, that the appropriate legal protection is in it as we move forward. The RCMP is absolutely acting on the will of Parliament.

• (1630)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, during the debate of the budget implementation bill, we hear a lot about the bigger picture issues, whether it is health care, the idea of balanced budgets, infrastructure, tax fairness and so on.

What is important is that we do not forget our communities, the communities we represent and for which we advocate. I think of Winnipeg North, Maples, Tyndall Park and Garden Grove. I have canvassed opinions throughout the constituency, as I am sure many members have. In particular, I have canvassed opinions from the residents of Scotia Street regarding housing programs, the Red River and more.

Constituents are concerned that the government addresses all issues in an appropriate fashion. When I think of those community-type issues, a number of thoughts come to mind.

Could the member give us some specific or general thoughts on issues such as protecting our waters? Lake Winnipeg is a huge concern in the province of Manitoba. Our river system is another huge concern for all residents of Manitoba, particularly for people living in the city of Winnipeg. Does the member believe the

government is doing enough to deal with the smaller but very important issues that Canadians face every day?

Mr. Brad Butt: Mr. Speaker, I have been a very proud member of this government for the past four years.

I am proud of the major initiatives we have brought forward, not just on major national and international issues, but major investments that we have made in local communities, whether it be infrastructure, water treatment or the renewal of the affordable housing agreements with the provinces to invest in affordable housing that is needed across the country, an issue I have been extremely involved in since I was elected to this place. We have done a tremendous amount.

One of the most important initiatives for municipalities was making the gas tax transfer permanent and adjusting it for the rate of inflation. Municipalities are a true partner, a true player now in getting direct federal government funding to municipalities to assist them with their challenges around infrastructure, transit and transportation issues.

I am proud of those initiatives. There is more to do, but we have done a lot.

[Translation]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): We have time for a brief question and answer.

The hon. member for Saint-Lambert.

Mrs. Sadia Groguhé (Saint-Lambert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, as usual, the government, and therefore my colleague, are boasting about introducing a bill that will be extremely beneficial for all Canadians.

Needless to say, the Conservative government is once again sacrificing middle-class families who can no longer make ends meet. It is imposing income splitting and increasing the contribution limit for tax-free savings accounts. However, these measures will only help the rich and will waste billions of dollars,

How can he justify the fact that middle-class families are being sacrificed once again?

[English]

Mr. Brad Butt: Mr. Speaker, the member has it completely wrong. I have talked to families about income splitting. The families that benefit the most are moderate and low-income families in my riding. The families benefiting from the increase in the universal child care benefit are middle and low-income families in my community.

Most of the people contributing to a TFSA earn less than \$60,000 a year. The New Democrats think those people are wealthy, but they are not. Those are middle-income Canadians who are being encouraged to save for their future through the TFSAs.

This is a middle-class budget. This speaks to those families all across Canada, encourages them to save, supports their children and lowers their taxes. They should be supporting this budget.

Government Orders

[*Translation*]

Mr. Robert Aubin (Trois-Rivières, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in order to allow more of my colleagues to speak out loud and clear in the House and to give a voice to the people of their respective ridings, I will be sharing my time with the member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine.

Indeed, we have to share our time, because once again the Conservatives are resorting to two of their old habits, which are both equally atrocious, namely gag orders and omnibus bills in which they put absolutely anything and everything.

By introducing Bill C-59 as an omnibus bill, they are forcing us to answer yes or no to a whole series of measures that are often unrelated to one another. For example, I could say that I support the home renovation tax credit, which is in this budget, but at the same time, how could I possibly say yes to income splitting, which is tailor-made for the rich? Both of those examples deal with measures related to the economy and have their place in a budget, I think.

At the end of the day, I could take stock, weigh the pros and cons, and then decide. However, I will provide a few other examples to give us a taste and allow those watching us to understand the inconsistencies of such an approach.

For example, I could very easily say yes to the lower tax rate for SMEs in the budget. What is more, that measure is based on one that was proposed by the NDP, although it extends over a longer period of time. We wanted to do things more quickly, knowing that small and medium size businesses were the backbone of the Canadian economy and that the sooner we supported them, the sooner we would promote job creation. However, voting in favour of this measure in Bill C-59 would also mean voting in favour of hijacking the bargaining process with public servants, which is also included in the bill. I simply cannot do that.

I could certainly vote in favour of the new veterans charter, which had its own bill number, Bill C-58, if memory serves me correctly. Why are we not voting on Bill C-58 and Bill C-59 separately? If this is not playing politics, then I do not know what is. In order to vote in favour of the new veterans charter, I would have to also vote for retroactive changes to access to information legislation.

None of these things—veterans, the Access to Information Act, or the bargaining process with public servants—have anything to do with the budgetary process.

As I said earlier, Bill C-59 contains a few positive measures. For example, it improves support for caregivers. However, this measure comes in response to many concerns that were raised by the NDP, again, during this Parliament and the previous Parliament. Except for a few miserly measures, this budget does nothing for the Canadian economy. Budget 2015 ignores the middle class and posts a false surplus at the expense of the most vulnerable and our public services.

The Minister of Finance boasted that because the government is a good economic manager, it was posting a surplus of \$1.4 billion. The surplus is nothing more than an accounting trick. In reality, the Conservatives helped themselves to \$2 billion from the employment insurance fund, dipped into the federal fund for natural disasters and sold its General Motors shares at bargain basement prices. Thus, this

election budget comes at the expense of unemployed workers and other Canadians.

As I mentioned, the 2015 budget forgets all about middle-class workers and is detrimental to the Canadian economy. Let us start with the budget's tax measures. More and more studies by well-known economists show that income-splitting and increasing the TFSA contribution limit are unfair and ineffective policies.

● (1635)

For those watching who are not familiar with income splitting, a couple could split up to \$50,000 in income thereby reducing their total income and rate of taxation.

With that in mind, let us take the example of single-parent families, which represent one in three families in Quebec. Whom do these families split their income with? We can see right away that this measure becomes less and less attractive.

According to the economists at the C. D. Howe Institute, which, I imagine, must be a very left-leaning organization, only 15% of families could take advantage of this program. Which 15%? The families where there is a huge difference in the income of the spouses. The income gap between rich and poor continues to widen, and this measure would really benefit those families where one spouse has a substantially higher income than the other. Some studies have shown that this might be an incentive for the other spouse not to work outside the home. More often than not, the woman is the person who stays home.

I remind members that the former finance minister was highly critical of this idea and recommended that it not be supported. What is the cost of this tax measure? It will cost the federal government \$2 billion a year.

How will the Minister of Finance recover that \$2 billion? The answer is quite simple, and members need only take a look at the EI fund to see that the \$2 billion given to the wealthiest Canadians has been taken out of the EI premiums paid by workers and employers.

Since the Conservatives are nothing if not consistent as managers and insist on making this a budget for the wealthy, this budget increases the TFSA limit to \$10,000. Most of my constituents have a hard time maxing out their RRSP. Imagine putting \$5,000 in a TFSA.

The measure in itself is not a bad one. However, the people who benefit when we double the limit are those who have very good incomes and who are among the wealthiest of our society. Furthermore, the financial cost of this increase will double over the next four years and reach \$13.5 billion by 2030.

Government Orders

Of course we had concerns about the impact of that financial burden on future generations. The Minister of Finance may also have given a moment's thought to future generations when he made the following statement.

He simply said, "Why don't we leave that to [the] Prime Minister [s] granddaughter to solve that problem?" Let us just keep shovelling the pile forward until we hit a wall.

I could go on and on about employment insurance. If barely 39% of the people who contribute manage to collect benefits when bad luck strikes, that means there is a problem with the way the employment insurance fund is managed.

The NDP proposed measures that should be in the budget but are not: getting rid of income splitting, which costs us \$2 billion; developing a comprehensive strategy to tackle structural youth unemployment and underemployment; offering a hiring and training tax credit to help businesses create jobs for Canadian youth; and abolishing the appalling employment insurance reform. I could go on.

The New Democratic Party's proposals will be in its platform and will enable all Canadians to choose a better government that listens to their needs and has a clear vision for development that will leave no member of society behind. That will happen on October 19.

Between now and then, I invite the majority of MPs in the House of Commons to vote against this way of doing business that involves repeated use of time allocation and omnibus bills that purport to fix all of the world's problems with a single yes or no.

● (1640)

Mr. Dan Harris (Scarborough Southwest, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for his speech.

He certainly raised a number of important points. However, I want to ask him what an NDP government would have done differently with a budget at this point in time.

● (1645)

Mr. Robert Aubin: Mr. Speaker, I am tempted to reply "virtually everything".

Actually, the best measures in this Conservative budget are watered down NDP measures. I want to make that very clear to all Canadians. They will soon have a choice between settling for a copy or getting the real deal.

As an example, let us look at the lower tax rate for SMEs, which is going to dip from 11% to 9%. We proposed doing that over two consecutive years, at 1% each year. The Conservatives are adopting this measure, because they realize that, first of all, they forgot about it and they are out of touch with SMEs, which are the backbone of our economy, and second, they are becoming less popular with voters. However, they are spreading it over four years, or 0.5% a year. That is one measure, just one example.

I could also talk about reestablishing the retirement age at 65. Think about it. The Chief Actuary of Canada confirmed that a pension age of 65 poses no financial problems. What, then, is the ideology behind this measure, when people who worked, often physically and very hard, for decades are being forced to continue

doing so until the age of 67, when their health is often beginning to fail? I think they deserve a better life than that and greater recognition than what the Conservatives are giving them.

Mr. Sean Casey (Charlottetown, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals think that the budget is good for the wealthiest Canadians, those who do not need help. However, I have a question about seniors.

We know that some of the measures in the budget will affect seniors. However, two years ago, the Conservatives increased the retirement age and the eligibility age for some government programs. The question I have for the hon. member is the following: does the budget include any measures to help seniors who are poor and in need?

Mr. Robert Aubin: Mr. Speaker, quite simply, I would say that the thing that is going to help seniors in our country and every generation is October 19.

I was clear. We have a whole series of measures to ensure that everyone in society, regardless their age, social status, job or gender, will be part of a booming society where the creation of wealth will leave no one behind.

To answer my hon. colleague's question, I repeat that the NDP, under the direction and leadership of the hon. member for Outremont, made a very formal commitment to bring the retirement age back down from 67 to 65. Again, when the hon. member for Outremont makes a commitment—I am not talking about an election promise because back home we make commitments—he honours it.

Mrs. Sadia Groguhé (Saint-Lambert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I commend my colleague on his speech.

I would remind hon. members that in order to balance their budget, the Conservatives made cuts to the public service. As my colleague mentioned, the Conservatives also siphoned money from the employment insurance fund. By doing so, they really made things tough for middle-class families.

He mentioned the situation of single-parent families, who cannot benefit from income splitting. I would like him to elaborate on that.

Mr. Robert Aubin: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Saint-Lambert.

The Conservative government managed not only to balance its budget—which is not a bad thing in and of itself—but also to generate surpluses where investments are particularly dubious. Of course, it did steal from the employment insurance fund and cut services, but if there is one thing we tend to forget, it is the string of measures the Conservatives announced for various programs where they did not spend the money that was announced so they could claw back some of that money at the end of the fiscal year and put it back into the Treasury's coffers.

In answer to his question, it pretty much goes without saying. When we look at single-parent families in Quebec and Canada, it is very clear that their average income is not among the highest. When a woman is already having a tough time making ends meet and providing for her family, measures like income splitting are not just inappropriate, they are offensive.

Government Orders

•(1650)

Ms. Isabelle Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise today in the House to firmly oppose Bill C-59, An Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on April 21, 2015 and other measures. This bill should be rejected not only because of its content, but also because of how it was presented.

Once again, the Conservative government introduced an omnibus bill. We are accustomed to that, but it still needs to be mentioned. The government's intention is to bring in a number of changes, without considering the need to give the opposition parties and Canadians the time to really analyze all the measures the bill contains. Accordingly, the NDP denounces the undemocratic nature of the debate on this bill in the House.

Bill C-59 is 150 pages long, contains 270 clauses and makes a number of changes, many of which have nothing to do with the budget. The Conservatives are unfortunately no stranger to this practice. Since I first came here in 2011, they have not hesitated to resort to it repeatedly in an effort to suppress any critical voices that might express a different opinion and bring a different point of view.

This proves once again that the government has no problem implementing obstructionist and restrictive measures to serve its own interests. This bill has many flaws and gaps that will undoubtedly be detrimental to society in the short term and the long term. For example, it will not create new day care spaces, provide real support for families in need, or help Canadian workers or the unemployed.

Since I was elected in 2011, and since the government obtained a majority, six companies in my riding have closed their doors, including Aveos, BlueWater Seafoods and Humpty Dumpty. In addition, Tim Hortons' headquarters used to be in my riding, and there have been many job cuts at Bombardier.

In the past four years, I have seen the Conservative government's inability to keep these good jobs in Canada. In Montreal, Toronto and across the country more and more companies are closing. This budget and all the measures announced will not keep well-paying jobs in Canada. That is a great concern.

Bill C-59 as proposed by the Conservatives will implement an unfair tax system and one that is especially advantageous for the rich. It includes measures such as income splitting and the increase in the TFSA contribution limit, which will cost Canadian taxpayers billions of dollars. This budget takes Canadian taxpayers' money and gives it to the rich.

As my colleague said, on October 19 the NDP will offer an alternative. We hope to implement universal and affordable day care, which will reduce the cost from nearly \$1,000 a month to a maximum of \$15 a day.

On the weekend, I was knocking on doors in the village of Saint-Louis in Lachine, a very nice area of my riding, with a volunteer named Jamie. A mother told us that day care was her biggest concern. She was not a poor person. She had her own home in Lachine. However, she told me that she spends \$40 a day per child for day care.

Since she has two kids, it costs her \$400 a week or \$1,600 a month to send her two children to day care. That is a lot of money. She told me that she receives a small amount from the government but that she has to put it aside to pay her income tax in March. The NDP's plan, which seeks to establish \$15 a day child care, is therefore a really good one.

We also want to help families in need by raising the federal minimum wage and developing a national housing strategy, another glaring problem that needs to be addressed as soon as possible.

The NDP is also committed to establishing a job creation tax credit for small and medium-sized businesses and developing a comprehensive strategy to tackle unemployment and recurring structural underemployment among young people. These are also subjects I talk about when I knock on doors and meet with young people who are still in university. That is one of their concerns. They are wondering how they are going to find a job after they graduate.

•(1655)

As a member who is only 30 years old and who graduated from university five years ago, one year before becoming an MP, I have friends who are underemployed. They have a job, but it does not use all of their skills. They are very qualified individuals who could have a better job with better working conditions but who have to settle for less because the government is not doing anything to stimulate the job market. That is a loss to our economy.

With regard to the unfair tax practices that the Conservatives continue to defend, the NDP thinks it would be better to do away with income splitting, a \$2 billion measure. The NDP wants to address the issue of tax loopholes that are depriving the government of a substantial amount of revenue. That includes the stock option deduction, which costs the federal government \$700 million a year. The NDP would allocate that money to eliminating child poverty in Canada, for example.

A New Democrat government will do what is needed to recover the billions of dollars that are estimated to be lost to tax evasion, tax avoidance and tax havens. We will go after tax cheats more effectively and rigorously.

Once again, these are simple and essential measures. My colleague from Rivière-du-Nord did an incredible job and introduced a bill to recover the money invested in tax havens. We lose billions of dollars every year. With better measures, the government could bring in more money.

[English]

Although it is interesting to note that the bill includes some of the good ideas the Conservatives borrowed from the NDP, and while the method and process of their implementation could be improved, the New Democrats are glad to see the government acting on many NDP proposals, such as the small business tax credit and the extension of some workplace protections for interns. The bill also reduces the minimum amount that must be withdrawn from registered retirement income funds and includes the NDP proposal to extend the accelerated capital cost allowance for manufacturing investments in new equipment.

Government Orders

On the other hand, certain sections of the bill do not align with the NDP's views. Such provisions, which would allow the Conservatives to arbitrarily set sick leave and disability plans for employees in the federal civil service, are an affront to the ongoing collective bargaining process. Furthermore, the Conservatives' income-splitting scheme would take billions from the middle class and would give it to the wealthy few. The doubling of the TFSA would only make matters worse.

This makes it all the more clear why the Conservatives resorted once again to cramming inappropriate changes into an omnibus bill to avoid proper scrutiny. In fact, the Conservatives' road to a balanced budget was paved with devastating cuts to the public service, the raiding of the employment insurance fund, and the wasteful fire sale of Canada's share in General Motors. All of these will affect the quality of services that hard-working Canadian families rely on.

This hefty bill fails to address much that is significant, including proper proposals or changes to address the environment, Canadian veterans, or seniors, for example. An NDP government will prioritize these matters over tax cuts to corporations and will give them the full attention they rightfully need.

The NDP believes in building our economy while protecting the environment by working with companies to create sustainable, clean jobs and by ensuring that polluters pay the costs for their environmental mess.

We are committed to finally fixing the broken Veterans Affairs department, implementing the veterans charter, and re-opening the nine veterans service centres across Canada.

In addressing our seniors, we would immediately reverse the federal government's plan to raise the retirement age for old age security and the guaranteed income supplement to 67.

The NDP is set on addressing all Canadians instead of focusing on the wealthy few and misleading the rest of the population. The NDP has a practical plan to boost the economy while helping the middle class, including with the child care option and by raising the minimum wage. The Conservatives, on the other hand, have once again shown their inability to learn from their past mistakes as they continue on their current track with their seventh straight omnibus budget bill.

● (1700)

In the words of Scott Clarke and Peter DeVries, writers for *iPolitics*:

By their very nature such bills are immune to meaningful Parliamentary scrutiny, discussion and debate—they're hot messes, designed to be that way. They're built not only to prevent Parliament from doing what it's designed to do, but to discredit the institution itself.

Such is unfortunately very clear in Bill C-59. It would undermine small businesses by postponing tax relief over several years while offering immediate and extremely costly tax handouts to the wealthiest households. It would hinder the ongoing collective bargaining process by arbitrarily legislating sick leave and disability plans for the public service, and it would offer no help at all for minimum-wage workers who are working full-time but are still far below the poverty line.

[*Translation*]

I had other things to say, but I think I showed why I must oppose this bill.

I will take questions from my colleagues, since I think it is important to discuss this. This is a bill that cannot be passed. It is not in the best interests of Canadians.

Ms. Christine Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to know whether my colleague thinks the budget puts single mothers or single women at a disadvantage. Does the member agree?

Ms. Isabelle Morin: Mr. Speaker, as I said in my speech, it is clear that this bill will help the wealthiest people in our country.

I remember the committee of the whole with the Minister of Finance. I do not remember which Liberal MP asked a question about income splitting, but the minister replied that it would help all families. However, this measure will not help single mothers raising their kids alone. A measure that allows income splitting will obviously not help single mothers and fathers. This measure will help traditional families as defined by the Conservative government: a mother, a father and their children.

The NDP plan will help all families because people want daycare spaces. We will not try to dictate what kind of family people should have. The fact is that people get divorced and there are single-parent families, and this budget will certainly not help them.

Mr. Alain Giguère (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague who talked about a very important phenomenon: the loss of good manufacturing sector jobs. Regions like mine have been especially hard hit by job losses in the aerospace sector.

Can my colleague comment on how this so-called economic recovery plan does absolutely nothing to correct the situation and bring back the good jobs that we have lost?

Ms. Isabelle Morin: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question. Indeed, that is happening in his riding and in mine, and it is a phenomenon that can be seen almost everywhere in Canada. Good manufacturing jobs are disappearing, and this budget does not contain any measures to help keep them here.

Government Orders

Why are these industries closing? It has a lot to do with the free trade agreements that the government signed without ensuring proper protections for our jobs in Canada. Certainly, globalization does not help matters, and we are seeing all these jobs exported to other countries. It is really too bad. We were talking about the auto sector. When we signed the free trade agreement with Korea, we asked the government to ensure that Ontario's auto sector would be protected, because that sector employs a lot of people. I do not know how the government can conduct its business and not protect jobs here. How does it plan to create jobs? Clearly, there are no solutions to be found in this budget.

There are no measures to develop new jobs in the green technology sector, for example. That is an industry of the future that will always work. There are no measures to help small and medium-sized businesses. My partner owns a small business in Lachine. We were talking about this and he said it was too bad because there was nothing in the budget to help him keep his business running. There may be some programs, but the funds are so limited and the red tape involved is so complicated that he could not be bothered to fill out the forms.

This government likes to help large corporations. It gives billions of dollars in tax cuts to large corporations and does not help small businesses or the manufacturing sector. That is so typical of this government.

Canadians will have an important decision to make in October, and I am sure they will make the right choice because they realize how huge job losses are right now. Everyone has someone in their family who has lost their job or for whom things are not going well. Unfortunately, when people lose their jobs they no longer contribute to the economy. We are really going downhill. As I was saying, we have more and more people who are unemployed or underemployed. We need to fix that. Unfortunately, this bill is not going to help.

• (1705)

[*English*]

Ms. Joan Crockatt (Calgary Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with my hon. colleague from Kootenay—Columbia.

Today I will talk about four things. I will talk about ships, storms, rocks, and plotting a course in budget 2015. To put this simply, budget 2015 puts Canada firmly on a new course. Not only does it balance the books, but it also provides us with hope and optimism about our future, and it steers us to success. It is a huge, positive sign on Canada's economic horizon. It puts the wind in our sails as a country.

Let us agree that there is no doubt the financial crisis of 2008 was a setback. It was a setback that tested the entire world, along with this Conservative government, and one that left many Canadians nervous. They have been thinking more about their futures and what their government is doing to ensure that they can continue to work and financially support themselves, their families, their children and their aging parents, both now and into the future.

Our federal Conservative government was tested in this financial crisis, and I am very proud to say that it came out with glowing colours, with the best job growth of the entire G7 and the envy of

much of the world. How did we do that? We implemented rolling efficiency audits in all federal departments to expertly pare costs, and we rolled out a generous infrastructure spending program to bolster job growth and to take Canada to safe waters. Today with this budget, we are pulled into port.

It is important for Canadians to know that many other countries, such as Greece, Ireland, Portugal and Spain, have ended up on the rocks. Canadians today can enjoy peace of mind knowing that their government is focused on their prosperity and our country's economic growth and stability. This government has expertly guided us through the tempest and is now plotting a course for our \$1.9 trillion economy to an even brighter future.

Let me tell the House some examples of what this Conservative government has done to keep its promise to balance the budget and what our sights are set on. We have focused on creating 1.2 million net new jobs, being financially responsible and eliminating government red tape. We have steadily reduced the deficit as a per cent of gross domestic product year after year since the crisis, and we have brought back a surplus, a \$1.4 billion surplus.

That is exactly what my constituents in Calgary Centre have been asking for. They know why balanced budgets are so important, because governments can then provide them with many of the benefits and enhanced services to live comfortable and healthy lives, all without mortgaging their future and without mortgaging the future of their children, because mortgaging the future of their kids is simply not acceptable to Canadians, and so is raising their taxes unacceptable.

Contrary to the Liberals' plans, our Conservative government has cut taxes for families, for seniors, for every single Canadian. We have cut taxes over 180 times since coming into office, and we have brought federal tax down to its lowest level in 50 years.

Canadians also know that a responsible government needs to manage its money like they manage their personal finances, and we are doing that with our balanced budget legislation. Because we will not be piling on more interest payments, this balanced budget actually will allow us to increase our support to a typical Canadian family to \$6,600 per family per year by increasing the universal child care benefits and others they receive.

We have changed the rules so seniors do not have to take money out of their tax-protected RRIFs. If they do not need it, they can leave the money in there a little longer. If they need to upgrade their homes to stay living independently, or if they need to hire a caregiver, they can also earn tax credits.

To kick-start job creation, this budget will further reduce the tax rate for small business from 11% to 9% by 2019. To boost manufacturing jobs and support continued investment in machinery and equipment, constituents in my riding have been asking for an accelerated capital cost allowance to defer taxes in the liquefied natural gas area until it is making money. We have done that.

Government Orders

Members of the NDP are touting a plan for job creation in their mail-outs that sounds an awful lot like ours. We are glad they like it, but perhaps they should be crediting their source. If they had consulted a copy of economic action plan 2015, they would know that this Conservative government is already way ahead of them on creating jobs.

● (1710)

This budget proposes to further harmonize apprenticeship training and certification requirements so that trades professionals can have their credentials recognized in all Canadian provinces and can move from province to province, if need be, to get a job.

I now want to tack over to the west and focus on how this budget specifically benefits the people of Alberta and those in my constituency of Calgary Centre.

To ensure that they continue to live healthy lives, this government is increasing federal transfer payments to record levels by investing \$5.5 billion this year alone for health and social services in Alberta. That is \$3.2 billion more than were invested in Alberta under the Liberal government.

Looking out to the horizon, by balancing the budget now and in the future, we know that we will be able to continue to deliver on our promise to continue to increase health care transfers by 3% per year, plus inflation, this year and into the future. The people in my riding of Calgary Centre also depend on public transit, roads and highways, to get their families from home to work, to school, to get the services they need and also to move goods. That is why we have dramatically increased infrastructure investments to an all-time high. The building Canada plan is the largest and longest infrastructure plan in Canadian history, and Alberta will see more than \$3.2 billion in dedicated federal funding over the next 10 years. This is for building roads, bridges, light rail, recreational facilities and flood mitigation projects.

I met last weekend with my provincial counterpart in Alberta and I know that this funding will be very welcome. It will help the province deal with the shock of low oil prices. I am also encouraging the province and city council to make flood mitigation a priority with these funds.

Public transit is also high on the list. This budget introduces a new public transit fund that will dedicate \$750 million over two years to major city transit projects starting in 2017-18 and up to \$1 billion thereafter. That is a very significant step that the Federation of Canadian Municipalities lauded by saying that this is good news and “has the potential to be transformative for public transit across this country”.

The budget also includes environmental measures that demonstrate to Canadians that we are hearing them, that we are listening and we can continue to develop our resources sustainably. Americans have been aggressively developing their oil and gas industry south of the border and they will not be needing as much of ours. Therefore, to continue to support the thousands and thousands of Canadians who work in the oil and gas industry, we need to be able to get our products to markets in other countries. This budget provides \$80 million over five years to the National Energy Board to contribute to safety and environmental protection and engage

Canadians with new energy transportation infrastructure, such as pipelines that are being proposed. I am proud to tell Canadians we are listening to their concerns regarding the safe transport of oil and gas.

As a member of the Standing Committee on Natural Resources, I worked on drafting Bill C-46, the pipeline safety act, that reinforces the polluter pay principle. It requires companies operating pipelines to be responsible for \$1 billion in liability for any incident without proving fault.

This June marks the second anniversary of the southern Alberta floods and it is a month that keeps many of my constituents on edge. It is a stark reminder of the costliest natural disaster in Canadian history. It also took a huge emotional toll. In addition to our infrastructure program which has been open to being used for flood mitigation, we have also introduced a \$200 million national disaster mitigation program that will help fund flood mapping to allow for the introduction of residential flood insurance in Alberta and Canada.

Finally, this budget reaffirms our Conservative government's commitment to ensuring that low-income families and vulnerable Canadians have access to affordable housing, with \$2.3 billion every year for the next four years. A few weeks ago, I helped open 1010 Centre, a groundbreaking housing first affordable housing facility in my riding, Canada's largest permanent supported housing initiative. It was a very heartwarming and moving ceremony. I heard one resident, Darren, say, “Now I feel like I have a real fighting chance”.

● (1715)

While the opposition chooses to focus on snippets of our government's actions or programs it would find fault with, I ask Canadians to look at the whole picture. We are discussing a balanced budget not by chance, but because this government plotted and planned, and led us to where we are today. With the expert leadership of Stephen Harper at the helm, the budget we present to the House today is the package that will give Canadians and their children the prosperous future they deserve, signed, sealed, delivered.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): I would remind hon. members not to use the given names of other hon. members in the House. I noted it did not create any disorder at all, but just the same, we do try to watch for those things.

Ms. Yvonne Jones (Labrador, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I listened to the member opposite, and I know she speaks with conviction when she speaks to the budget. However, that conviction is hardly portrayed in areas of the country where we have seen tremendous job loss with little or no outreach from the Government of Canada.

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One of those areas happens to be the riding that I represent in Labrador. In Labrador West, in the last year or more, we have seen the closure of Cliffs' Scully mine, an iron ore mine in Wabush. We have seen 150 more laid off in Labrador West at IOC's Rio Tinto mine. We have seen the closure of Labrador Iron Mines. We have seen development shut down at Alderon mines and New Millennium.

In essence, we have seen nearly 1,000 people in a small region of 8,000 who have been thrown out of work. I would like to ask the government what it is prepared to do for those workers who right now are trying to hang onto their homes, hang onto their assets, feed their families and find new employment in this country. It has not been easy for them.

Ms. Joan Crockatt: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the fact that the member opposite is advocating for people in her riding.

All of us understand that these are not perfect economic times, and that is why the leadership we have seen from our Conservative government is so important. This government has kept the top job-creation record in the G7.

We want to make sure that we continue to develop our resources. Newfoundland and Labrador can be a big winner in this. The energy east pipeline could be something that could bring all kinds of jobs. We have seen the cross-Canada benefit of our oil and gas industry.

One of the things we know is that this government and the Prime Minister are the reason that Canada has produced a balanced budget, a blue ribbon budget that sets a new course for this country, that is a beacon of light around the world.

Mr. Jeff Watson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have heard, as we have been talking about the budget, about our continued low-tax plan for jobs and growth, and to make life more affordable for families.

We have heard, however, from the Leader of the Opposition that he would impose a Canada pension plan pay cut on people's take-home pay of about \$1,000 for a family earning \$60,000. We know that the NDP, because big unions have been talking about it, intend to double the amount of money toward CPP which would come off people's take-home pay.

I wonder if the member would be willing to talk about how that makes life more unaffordable in a fragile economic time, having a take-home pay cut of that magnitude in this economy.

● (1720)

Ms. Joan Crockatt: Mr. Speaker, this is something that I fail to understand. We often hear from the Liberals that they want to impose more taxes: tax this, tax that, spend this, and build more government bureaucracy.

For example, the Liberal leader suggested that he would impose a \$1,000 tax hike for a worker earning \$60,000 a year. That is money right out of the pockets of moms and dads. This is money that, if it was kept in their pockets, they would go out and make their mortgage payment, buy groceries, pay the lease on their vehicle, and pay to put their kids in sports programs.

We do not agree with that kind of a strategy. Our plan is to put money back in the pockets of moms and dads. The 180 times our

federal Conservative government has cut taxes since it has been in office has put \$100, on average, back in the pockets of every person in this country every month. That is the kind of tax action that Canadians want. That is the kind of tax action we are delivering.

I think the Liberals would do well to look ahead at what is going to actually improve the lives of Canadian families. It is to let them make choices with their tax money.

Mr. David Wilks (Kootenay—Columbia, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a great pleasure to stand today to speak on Bill C-59, the implementation of budget 2015. It is a budget that benefits all Canadians by creating jobs, giving benefits to families, and providing funding for communities.

In the time that I have today, I would like to focus on the benefits that this budget would bring to Kootenay—Columbia.

Small business is a significant driver in the Kootenays. Tourism forms an important part of the riding. World-class ski resorts in Revelstoke, Golden, Panorama, Kimberley, and Fernie employ thousands of people each year so that people from around the world can come and enjoy great snow.

Every coffee outlet, every gift shop, and many more would benefit from the reduction in the small business tax rate from 11% to 9%. This would put an estimated \$2.3 billion back into the pockets of those people who are the engine of the Canadian economy. It would provide small business owners with the opportunity to invest and to continue to grow their businesses, which in turn would benefit the communities where they live.

Our Conservative government has also reaffirmed the small business job credit, which would lower business payroll taxes by 15% for the next two years.

Unlike the Liberals and the NDP, we believe that lowering taxes for business is beneficial for all, as it drives the economy. In fact, the NDP has voted against every small business tax cut since 2006. The NDP would implement the \$15 minimum wage, which would be devastating for small business. To top it off, the NDP would implement a job-killing payroll tax increase. The Liberals' answer: well, budgets just balance themselves. Tell that to any business owner.

Companies like Canfor and Louisiana-Pacific and the Interior Lumber Manufacturers Association would benefit from the forest innovation fund and the expanding market opportunities program. A lot can be learned from those in the forestry industry. They were able to manage a renewable resource and keep it viable for centuries. However, they also need to be able to market their timber, and programs like these allow them to stay with the times in an ever-evolving global market.

What is the answer from the Liberals and NDP? Raise corporate taxes and let them spend that money, because they know best.

Government Orders

Companies like Teck Resources, Joy Global, Finning, and many others will benefit from the reformed skills training system, which will align the curricula of post-secondary education institutions with the needs of employers through an investment of \$65 million over four years. Post-secondary institutes such as the College of the Rockies and Selkirk College will be able to work with companies to provide courses that will open up opportunities for students in many fields, such as heavy-duty mechanics, welders, electricians, wood forest operations, and many more.

Our Conservative government will continue to work with the provinces to break down internal trade so that goods within Canada can flow freely. In my riding of Kootenay—Columbia, the wine industry and other businesses will benefit. Recently the Minister of Industry announced that he had met with all 13 provincial and territorial counterparts to have an internal trade agreement in place by 2016.

When it comes to families, our government believes that moms and dads should be able to decide what they do with their money and how they save it. That is why we increased the allowable annual contribution to a tax-free savings account to \$10,000 annually. One-third of Canadians, approximately 11 million Canadians, have contributed to tax-free savings accounts.

Let us think about that for a minute. There are 11 million Canadians contributing to a TFSA, and what is the answer from the opposition parties? They will get rid of it.

• (1725)

That would mean that one-third of Canadians would have to find a different way to invest their money because what the opposition really wants to do is raise taxes on hard-working Canadian families.

Another opportunity our government is providing is reducing the minimum withdrawal factors for RRIFs for those over the age of 71. It would provide them with the opportunity to extend their retirement savings.

Moms and dads across our country work hard to provide for their families, and that is why such things as income splitting and the universal child care benefit, which were introduced by our government, are so beneficial. The opposition parties have said they would get rid of these two benefits. Perhaps they would like to tell that to those who hold down the most underrated and lowest-paid positions in all of Canada. Who are they? They are the parents who choose to stay home and raise their children.

I personally do not think there is enough money that could be paid for this position. However, I know income splitting and the UCCB put a little more money into the pockets of those families to save or spend as they choose, and that is the way it should be.

Kootenay—Columbia boasts four of the most magnificent national parks in Canada. Yoho National Park has 28 mountain peaks over 3,000 metres in height. It has Takakkaw Falls, with a free fall of 254 metres, the third-highest waterfall in Canada. There are over 400 kilometres of hiking trails there, spiral tunnels that are an engineering marvel, and much more.

Kootenay National Park has vast valleys and rock formations such as Marble Canyon, Numa Falls, and Sinclair Canyon. The world-famous Radium Hot Springs are found there as well.

Glacier National Park has awe-inspiring mountain peaks and glaciers. A stop at Rogers Pass is jaw-dropping. Of course, there is the final link in our national rail line that connected Canada as a nation.

Finally, Mount Revelstoke National Park comes alive in late August when wildflowers abound.

The staff at Parks Canada do an amazing job at providing a great visitor experience. I was very pleased to see that budget 2015 dedicated \$2.8 billion to national parks and national historic sites. Improvements to the Trans-Canada Highway, hiking trails, and camping facilities, to name a few, will continue to draw people from around the world to our Canadian treasures.

The security of Canada is paramount, and I am proud of our military and police for their ability to promote and protect our values at home or wherever they may be deployed. Our Conservative government will continue to provide our military and police with the tools they need to combat terrorism and aid countries like Ukraine in fighting for their sovereignty.

Also, let us not forget about the valuable contributions of our DART teams, which deploy all over the world to aid after disaster has struck. The most recent example is deployment of DART to Nepal, for which I would like commend Lieutenant-Commander Kelly Williamson, RCN, the spouse of the member of Parliament for New Brunswick Southwest, for her leadership role in the recent deployment.

Whether it is in combat, peacekeeping, or disaster relief, our military is regarded as one of the best in the world.

Now let us look at the record of the Liberals. First they cut funding to the military to the point of non-existence. Then, when they decided to deploy our men and women to Afghanistan, they had the great idea of sending them in green combat fatigues for a brown environment.

The NDP votes against any military action that Canada is involved in, believing that other countries should protect our values while we sit idly by. While the NDP has decided its fight is with CSIS, our focus will be on ISIS and the real terror that exists not only on our home soil but abroad as well.

• (1730)

Our Conservative government, led by Prime Minister Harper, is the only party that can be trusted to lead Canada into the future. We will stay focused upon jobs, the economy, family, and security of our nation, because that is what Canadians want.

The Deputy Speaker: Before I go to questions and comments, I would point out to the hon. member that the use of the Prime Minister's family name is not permitted.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Honoré-Mercier.

Government Orders

[Translation]

Ms. Paulina Ayala (Honoré-Mercier, NDP): Mr. Speaker, many families come to my office. Two weeks ago, I was at the family celebration in Rivière-des-Prairies. The event was organized by Initiative 1, 2, 3 GO!

When we talk with people, we find out that some parents earn \$15 or \$10 an hour. We can all agree that that is not a lot.

I have a question for my colleague across the way, who says it is up to families to decide what to do with their money and to use it as they see fit. Yes, that is great, but they have to have money before they can decide what to do with it.

Can the hon. member explain how Canadians will benefit from these income splitting plans when their income is less than \$44,000 a year or they earn \$15 an hour?

What about couples who earn more than \$44,000 a year but are in the same tax bracket? How will they benefit from being able to split their income? Is there really an advantage to that?

What is more, some families send their children to day care. However, in Ontario, the average cost of sending a child to day care is \$2,000.

Can the hon. member explain to the House how an extra \$100 a month is going to give these families the tax relief they need to make ends meet every month?

[English]

Mr. David Wilks: Mr. Speaker, that was a fairly long-winded one question. There were several questions involved in there, but the reality is that low-income Canadians pay no income tax right now. It is our government that has eliminated income tax for those low-income families so that they can better provide for their families with the income that they do get.

With regard to day care, I believe that each family in Canada should be able to decide how it chooses to provide that. I do not think it should be mandated as the NDP would like to have it, with a mandatory day care system that would be provided to very few.

• (1735)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member said that the Conservative government is committed to putting more money into families' pockets, and then he cited a couple of policies.

Let me indicate to the member that income splitting is actually a \$2 billion promise from which less than 14% of the population would benefit. Let us contrast that with the 7% tax break for the middle class that the Liberal Party is espousing and talking about. That would put more money into the pockets of the middle class.

Then he made reference to the child care program, which he says the Liberal Party is going to get rid of it. That is not true. I think he should be somewhat jealous. Not only will the Liberal Party keep it, but Liberals are going to be adding more money into that particular program. For example, under the Liberal plan a typical two-parent, two-child family earning \$90,000 per year would receive \$490 tax free every month. Under the Prime Minister's plan, the same family would only receive \$275.

I wonder whether the member might want to perhaps look at supporting the Liberal tax fairness plan, which is far better than what his Prime Minister has proposed?

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Kootenay—Columbia. You have a little better than a minute.

Mr. David Wilks: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It won't take me long. I would never support anything the Liberals would do.

Mr. Jeff Watson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his important intervention in discussing the budget.

Of course, in terms of take-home pay for Canadians, our low-tax plan would ensure that they have more. They could do more with it, whether they spend it or invest it.

We have heard from the Liberal leader that they will impose a CPP take-home pay cut of \$1,000 on a family making \$60,000. We have heard, of course, from big unions, which are promoting the NDP's approach. They would double the amount for CPP, so there would be twice as much less to take home than right now.

Would the member comment on what that kind of take-home pay cut would mean to people in his riding?

Mr. David Wilks: Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is that whether it is my riding or any riding across Canada, the implications of taking \$1,000 out of any household's salary is just devastating, and we cannot allow that to happen. That is why our government continues to lower taxes, not only for families but for business as well, to ensure that every Canadian has the greatest opportunity for a good job and to provide a good income for their family.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I wish to inform the House that Tuesday, June 16, 2015 shall be the day designated, pursuant to Standing Order 66(2), for the purposes of completing debate on the 21st report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

ECONOMIC ACTION PLAN 2015 ACT, NO. 1

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-59, An Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on April 21, 2015 and other measures, be read the third time and passed, and of the amendment.

Mrs. Anne-Marie Day (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, NDP) Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Scarborough Southwest.

Government Orders

Today, my speech is going to be very long. I already know that I will be cut short. I want to take the time to thank my constituents, the men and women who were active in my riding, who came to the office and to whom we provided services. I would also like to thank all the people who work in this place, from the pages to the maintenance workers who work through the night to all the food services people and you, Mr. Speaker, as well as the other two Speakers.

Today, I join my colleagues in speaking to the 2015 budget implementation bill. I have many concerns and questions about this bill that we are debating with just a few days left before the end of the parliamentary session. Recently, we have been going over the record of this past year, and I have been thinking about my record in my first term of office.

I want to digress for a moment and talk about how the government is using undemocratic processes to pass this bill. I got into politics because I care about our laws and our democratic process. I became a legislator in 2011 to serve the interests of the people of Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles. However, I have been on Parliament Hill for four years, and it has become clear that the party in power has no respect for this country's democratic processes.

For example, last week the Conservatives issued their 100th gag order since they took power, which is a Canadian record. This undermines the right of Canadians and their elected representatives to democratically debate important legislation.

In addition, we are now debating the seventh consecutive omnibus bill. As the election approaches, this government is trying to rush through hundreds of changes without subjecting them to studies or oversight. However, Canadians are not stupid. In other years this was done because as summer approached we reached the end of the sitting, but we get omnibus bills like this one every year.

The bill is 150 pages long and contains 270 provisions, many of which amend laws that have nothing to do with a budget. They give gifts to the government's friends and the wealthiest members of our society. When the bill was before committee, the government was unreasonable and ignored all of the opposition's amendments, including the very sensible amendments proposed by the NDP.

I would therefore like to say that I will be voting against Bill C-59 because of both its content and the undemocratic process that the Conservatives once again used to push this bill through Parliament. The people of Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles are fed up with this political manoeuvring. We can already tell that a desire for change is sweeping the country.

On a side note, I would like to tell a little story that I am sure my colleagues will find perplexing. It is a tradition in Canada for the finance minister to buy a new pair of shoes to wear when tabling the budget. This year, the minister chose to buy shoes that were made in the United States. That image calls to mind the thousands of jobs that have been lost in Canada's manufacturing sector. It is not surprising that the Canadian economy is in such bad shape when the Conservatives' symbol of job creation involves buying the product from another country instead of creating well-paid jobs in Canada.

Getting back to business, I would like to share with the House some of my concerns with this bill. I would like to talk about eight

elements that the government has neglected but that matter very much to my constituents: the fact that the Conservatives have not done anything about excessive bank fees; the lack of consideration for the decline of French in minority communities outside Quebec; the dismemberment of CBC/Radio-Canada; the growing burden on families and women, particularly those without access to affordable daycare; the end of home mail delivery by Canada Post; the pillaging of employment insurance; poor statistics on employment in Canada; and the tax credit for labour-sponsored funds.

● (1740)

Coming back to the subject of bank fees, the government could have used budget 2015 as an opportunity to enhance protections for consumers and help families who are struggling with excessive bank fees. This is yet another missed opportunity. Canada currently has no regulations to limit bank fees. That is not right. The banks are raking in record profits, while Canadians are having a hard time making ends meet. There are numerous measures that could have been useful: guaranteeing free paper bills, capping credit card interest rates and putting an end to "pay-to-pay", for example.

I encourage the Minister of Finance to carefully read my bill, Bill C-663, which proposes many positive measures for the pocketbooks of Canadians. For example, it proposes requiring banks to issue an annual report that shows all fees charged to customers, capping NSF fees, and giving customers a grace period before charging them for an NSF cheque. NSF fees give people bad credit ratings. The government has a duty to protect consumers through regulations and strong legislative measures.

When it comes to the Francophonie and the French language, I was extremely disappointed in this bill. In 2015 I became the official opposition Francophonie critic. I will take a moment to illustrate how disengaged this government is when it comes to its obligations under the Official Languages Act and the Canadian Constitution. The government does not seem to care that a number of francophone minority communities are at risk of losing more and more services provided in French by federal institutions. The Francophonie, linguistic duality and official languages are not even mentioned in the budget. How shameful.

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We also see that there is nothing to protect the CBC, which is currently going through one of the biggest crises in its history. With the Conservatives making cuts to the tune of \$115 million in three years, the effects are already being felt across Canada. There have been cuts to the length of the newscasts, the number of journalists abroad, sports coverage and documentaries. More important still is the death by a thousand cuts of the local productions that were extremely important to the francophone minority communities. The CBC's French service has been hard hit. Ten positions were cut in Acadia, 15 positions were cut in Ontario and 16 positions were cut in the western provinces.

The NDP is the only party that is promising to cancel the \$115 million in cuts to our public broadcaster and give it stable, predictable, multi-year funding. We want to maintain the vitality and development of our francophone communities across the country.

With regard to the status of women, I am bringing my perspective to this debate as a mother and also as the former president of the Regroupement des groupes de femmes de la région de la Capitale-Nationale in Quebec City. I am disappointed that there are no measures in this bill to create new child care spaces. What happened to the child care spaces the Conservatives promised? They evaporated, much like the Conservatives' other promises. Many experts have said that the Conservatives' income splitting policy could encourage a disproportionate number of women to leave the workforce or not enter it at all. The NDP wants to promote employability, leadership and entrepreneurship among women, not return to the past.

I would like to close by saying that I condemn the government's tactic of dipping into the employment insurance fund to balance the budget. It does not make any sense that fewer and fewer people who contribute to the employment insurance fund are able to access it when they need it most. The NDP will immediately do away with the federal government's plan to raise the retirement age to 67. When it forms the next government, the NDP will reintroduce the tax credit for labour-sponsored funds, which was eliminated by this Conservative government.

● (1745)

[*English*]

Mr. Mike Sullivan (York South—Weston, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I listened with great interest to my colleague's expansive list of all the problems the Conservatives have created over the past six years. One of the ones that was most interesting to me, because I worked there for many years, was the CBC. In fact, the first week I was at the CBC was when the first big budget cuts happened under the Mulroney government. When the Liberals were elected, they promised they would be different, and it turned out that they were not. The Liberals cut even more than the Mulroney government did. Now we face another series of cuts by the Conservative government.

The CBC is a treasure that should be protected, not cut. I wonder if the member would like to comment further on the effects the CBC cuts will have to local programming, particularly in Quebec.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Anne-Marie Day: Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased that the member asked that question. I admire all of the work he does.

I could say that the government is shirking its responsibility with respect to what the crown corporation should receive. I will give the example of regional news. It does not make sense for people in Vancouver to hear news about the Champlain Bridge. It is of interest to me, as is the Quebec Bridge. However, it is important to stop making cuts so that relevant news is broadcast.

The CBC's mandate was to promote communities and let them have their own news service with which they could identify. In terms of culture, we know that the CBC was able to develop and strengthen Canadian culture across the country.

● (1750)

Ms. Christine Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to know what my colleague thinks of the quality of government services. In my riding, many people complain about the continuous cuts to services. For example, when they call Service Canada, they can no longer speak to anyone. They get caught in never-ending red tape every time they need help from their government, at the most crucial times.

I would therefore like to know if the member is also hearing these kinds of comments in her riding. In terms of the budget, does she believe that the government should be able to provide Canadians with basic services of a quality that is representative of this country?

Mrs. Anne-Marie Day: Mr. Speaker, I must congratulate the member, who represents a stronghold in her region and is very much liked by her constituents.

First, I must thank the public servants because they do an excellent job. The Conservative government has cut more than 19,000 jobs, which has led to backlogs. It is essentially a logjam. The files pile up, a logjam forms, and staff have to try to provide more services with fewer people in a shorter period of time.

The problem we are seeing back home mostly has to do with access to Service Canada. It is not so much a problem with how files are processed, because the employees are professionals with unbelievable skills, and we have faith in them. The problem is with the speed and the longer wait times. Staff have been cut and the employees can no longer do the work as quickly as they could when there were twice as many of them.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, does my colleague think it would be good for the middle class to get some tax relief, especially in the form of tax cuts? A more equal society is obviously good for the economy. If people have more money in their pockets, they will be able to spend it. The economy will grow, and even the wealthy will benefit in the long term.

My colleague made a wonderful speech, so could she comment on the merits of tax cuts for the middle class?

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Mrs. Anne-Marie Day: Mr. Speaker, our leader has promised not to raise taxes when we are in power. That is already good news.

With regard to accessibility, when I consider banking fees, the middle class is being overcharged and overtaxed for all sorts of things. The government wants to “lower taxes”, but it was the government that raised the price of a package of cigarettes by 50¢. It was the government that increased the excise taxes charged at the border. The Conservatives may have lowered taxes, but they also increased general fees, such as the fees on cigarettes. Who are the biggest smokers in our society? If we still had the long form census, which provides real data, Statistics Canada would likely tell us that women and the poorest members of our society are the ones who smoke the most. Once again, the Conservatives are attacking the poorest members of our society in a roundabout way and they are increasing overall costs. That means that their much-touted tax cuts are nothing but a major contradiction, since I cannot use the word “lie”.

Mr. Dan Harris (Scarborough Southwest, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague from Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles for her speech and for sharing her speaking time.

[English]

Like my other colleagues on this side of the chamber, we will be opposing the bill at third reading, and the reasons are many. My colleagues have spoken many times today about the reasons why we will not support the bill.

First, we are with another omnibus bill, 150 pages, 270 clauses. When the Conservatives were in opposition, they railed against the then Liberal government for bringing in budget bills that were smaller than this. However, I have to give them credit. This is actually a pretty trim budget bill for the Conservatives. We have had budget bills from the government that are 300, 400 and 500 pages long, and they contained so many clauses that had absolutely to do with the budget. Unfortunately, this one does too, but just a few less than in previous budgets.

The Conservatives have included retroactively changing the Access to Information Act. We heard the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness talk in the House today about the will of Parliament. The will of Parliament exists after Parliament has voted on something. These changes are to retroactively make changes to absolve the RCMP of responsibility for destruction of documents that happened before Parliament exerted its will. I really cannot find a justifiable reason why any government would put that kind of change in place. It really sets a dangerous precedent.

Suzanne Legault, Canada's independent Information Commissioner, has said that the Conservatives has set a perilous precedent against the quasi-constitutional right of Canadians to know. This is not the first dangerous precedent that the government has set.

Then the Conservatives are slipping in some balanced budget legislation into the bill. We only have to look at the previous Conservative government in Alberta to know what happens to balanced legislation. When the Conservatives do not like it, they just change it.

If the government would have had to deal with this kind of legislation being in place when it came into power, the front bench

ministers would owe the Canadian taxpayers over \$3 million for all the deficits they have put in. Adding \$150 billion to Canada's national debt is something our children and grandchildren will likely have to pay off because of many of the decisions made by the government.

The Conservatives have extended the universal child tax credit and they have talked about how much this would help families. We agree that families do need help, because after almost 10 years of a Conservative government, they are struggling. However, time and time again we have heard the Conservatives say that we, the New Democrats, would get rid of that. They are not speaking the truth when they say that. We had committed to keeping that money in the pockets of Canadian families because it is true that families are struggling after a decade of Conservative rule in Canada.

We would go well beyond that. We would not just let Canadians have that money back. We would bring in a national child care plan that would create a million new child care spaces in Canada at \$15 a day.

The thing that the Conservative and Liberals do not want to tell Canadians is that with both of their plans, it leaves child care costs in Canada sky high and unaffordable for many families. For folks in Toronto, many people have to spend over 30% of their annual income for child care. In Toronto, people pay, on average, between \$1,000 and \$2,000 a month, \$1,676 is the figure that is mentioned. The entire amount the Conservative plan gives back to families is only \$1,900. That would pay for a little more than one month of child care for families that need it. What are families supposed to do for the other 11 months of the year?

Many families are unfortunately having to forgo having an income from one of the parents so they will not have to pay for child care. Instead, one of the parents stays home. What does that mean? Families fall further behind, because in a city like Toronto, the vast majority of families need two incomes to make ends meet. If one of the parents has to stay home, that family falls further behind.

● (1755)

It is hurtful to the economy because less people are out there working and making money. Then it hurts the treasury as well because less people are paying taxes and more people need to receive benefits. What the other two parties want to do is completely backward. They are fighting themselves on the wrong issue. What needs to be tackled is the high cost of child care. It is only the NDP that has made a commitment to deal with those high costs.

We do not oppose everything in the budget. As my colleague from Trois-Rivières mentioned, there are several diluted NDP initiatives that are in the budget implementation act. The first one I will mention is the way the Conservatives decided to try cutting small business taxes out of the NDP platform. However, they could not even do that right.

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The NDP committed to reducing small business taxes from 11% to 10% to 9% in two years. The Conservatives are cutting them by 0.5% each year for four years. Small business owners will know who they will be better off under. It will be an NDP government because by the time the Conservatives' full tax cut comes into play, they will already have two full years of the full 9% lower tax rate that an NDP government would bring in.

The Conservatives really only have done this because it is an election year. They know that this has been our long-standing position and that we will not support the budget because of ridiculous policies like income splitting, which would only help the top 15% of income earners yet would cost the federal treasury \$2.5 billion.

The projected surplus for this year is about \$1.8 billion, \$1.4 billion, somewhere in that range. It is well below \$2.5 billion, which means the Conservatives are adding to the deficit and adding to the national debt to pay for a program that will go to the people who need the help the least. The vast majority of people who can take full advantage of income splitting are in the higher, not lower, income brackets. This is the plan of the Conservatives.

Then there is the doubling of TFSA's. Conservative after Conservative have talked about how 11 million Canadians have opened TFSA's. What they again will not tell us is that out of those 11 million accounts that were opened, less than 30% get filled up every year. They forget to talk about that. They talk about 11 million as if one-third of Canadians are maximizing the current TFSA limits of \$5,000 a year. That is not even close. It is less than 30% of the 30% who have opened accounts who are maximizing out the ones that are there.

Canadians need ways to save money for their retirement, but most cannot even put \$5,000 a year because they are paying exorbitant costs for child care, or are sometimes paying more to get prescription medication, or the cost of living has gone up. In a city like Toronto less than half of all the working people in Toronto have a full-time permanent job. The vast majority now are working precarious part-time jobs. The situation gets even worse with young Canadians where 13% are now unemployed.

Some shocking statistics came out. Over the last two decades, the last eighteen years, which is nine years of Liberal government and then nine years of Conservative government, minimum wage workers have skyrocketed. The number of minimum wage workers has increased by 94%. They used to make up 3% of Ontario's workers. Now they make up 12% of Ontario's workers. What those two parties have done is sent us to the bottom just to pay for the tax cuts for corporations. Corporations now have more money squirrelled away in the bank than the total size of our national debt. They are not going to invest that money in Canada. They are going to leave it in the bank. That is dead money. It is money that could be used to improve the economy.

• (1800)

Hon. Michelle Rempel (Minister of State (Western Economic Diversification), CPC): Mr. Speaker, the concept of liquidity is defined as the availability of liquid assets to a market or a company. When a job-creating company has cash on hand or liquidity available, then when there are fluctuations in the market, variations

in commodity prices, or changes in investment certainty, they can do things like retain jobs or invest in R and D, new markets, and new products.

In Canada, when a company has cash on hand, the NDP consistently vilifies this somehow as a bad thing. We have never heard New Democrats talk about ways to leverage this into R and D, which we have done through various incentive programs. Over and over the NDP puts forward these fallacies with regard to how job-creating companies need to spur growth. It talks about increasing taxes and trying to equalize wealth by penalizing job-creating companies. On this side of the House, we do the opposite.

I am wondering if my colleague opposite can reconcile his understanding, or lack thereof, of the concept of liquidity with the NDP's long-standing desire to keep increasing taxes on job-creating companies.

• (1805)

Mr. Dan Harris: Mr. Speaker, maybe the member was not listening at the end of my speech when I talked about the fact that Canadian companies have over \$600 billion of dead money they are not using. They are not using it to improve productivity. They are not using it to increase research and development. They are not using it to employ more Canadians.

We talk about commodity prices. This is a government that put all of its eggs in one basket and bet the farm on the fact that oil prices were going to stay high forever. The member from Alberta should know that commodity prices and oil prices go up and then they go down, and then they go up and then they go down, but the Conservatives banked on their staying high forever.

If she wants to talk about some things New Democrats would do, we would provide stable and predictable funding for a successful aboriginal skills and employment training strategy model and other job programs to help first nations and other aboriginal groups fill job shortages. We would work with the provinces to build long-term skills training to fill the skills shortages in certain provinces. We would fix the temporary foreign worker program. There are lots of things an NDP government would do, but I would like to hear more questions.

Mr. Adam Vaughan (Trinity—Spadina, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I listened with interest as my colleague from Toronto spoke about some of the priorities. One of the issues I did not hear him discuss was infrastructure and housing, but more importantly, transit. I know the party he represents has made a huge commitment to fund transit, and I note that he did not raise the issue. I have two questions for him.

First, the NDP government at Queen's Park in the early 1990s was the first provincial government to cut subsidies for operating agreements with the Toronto Transit Commission. Is the transit money your party is putting on the table for operating, and will it restore those NDP cuts that devastated the TTC in the early 1990s?

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The second question is whether your party supports the Scarborough subway.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Trinity—Spadina twice made reference to “your”. I am not part of this debate. The question is to be directed to me, not to other members in the House.

The hon. member for Scarborough Southwest.

Mr. Dan Harris: Mr. Speaker, he might be a member from Toronto, but I am a member from Scarborough.

It is really funny that we are talking about transportation, because of course that member and several other GTA area Liberals called for the teardown of the Gardiner Expressway two weeks ago, yet the Liberal city councillor in my area, who is the co-chair of the federal Liberal candidate's campaign, voted to keep the Gardiner Expressway. That is an interesting juxtaposition. I do not know how they are going to square that circle.

As for the Scarborough subway, that is a great question. There was a plan in the city, which was fully funded by a provincial government, to provide LRT that would expand transit into the far reaches of Scarborough. It was fully funded. Then the member participated in debates and was part of a city council that actually changed its mind, changed its mind again, and changed its mind again. It ended up deciding to vote for a subway that is going to cost \$1 billion more, which is not funded. Every person in Toronto is now paying an extra \$7 to \$8 of tax every time they get their property tax bills to pay for that subway that does not go any further into Scarborough than existing transit. It is going to cost \$1 billion more, which leaves no money for the Sheppard LRT and which is not going to bring transit out to Centennial College, to the University of Toronto Scarborough campus, or to Malvern or Morningside Heights, where transit is desperately needed. That is what they have done.

● (1810)

The Deputy Speaker: Order. Resuming debate, the hon. member for Mississauga East—Cooksville. I have to advise the member that he will only have five minutes for his speech before we must end this debate.

Mr. Wladyslaw Lizon (Mississauga East—Cooksville, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have been listening to the debate so far. It is interesting that in a debate like this we have learned, and it is a great revelation, that commodity prices go up and down.

I am very honoured to provide my input on Bill C-59, economic action plan 2015. Our government has worked hard, focusing on its commitment to the priorities of Canadians: jobs, economic stability, growth, and long-term prosperity.

By balancing the budget, we can keep our focus on lower taxes to help families and hard-working Canadians. There is something colleagues on the other side did not hear about or forgot about, and that is the fact that the overall federal tax burden is now at its lowest level in more than 50 years.

Our government understands the growing financial pressure parents are facing today. That is why we have enhanced the universal child care benefit. We call it a universal child care benefit because it will be available to all Canadian families with children

under the age of 18, regardless of their income or the type of child care they choose.

We first introduced the universal child care benefit, or UCCB, in 2006. Today it provides direct support to over 1.6 million families with over two million young children.

Let me explain how the UCCB works, how much it provides, and how we are enhancing it. Currently the UCCB provides \$100 per month for each child under the age of six. We are proposing to increase the amount to \$160 per month, which comes to about \$2,000 per year for each preschooler. We also propose to expand the reach of this benefit to include children ages six to 17. Families would receive \$60 per month for each child in this age group, which would amount to \$720 per year.

Once we receive parliamentary approval, the new benefit amounts would take effect retroactively to January 1, 2015. This is great news for many families across the country, including over 20,000 families in the riding I proudly represent, Mississauga East—Cooksville.

I am pleased to also see important improvements for veterans through the veterans services included in this bill. I would like to thank the Minister of Veterans Affairs for taking a major step toward implementing the veterans affairs committee's recommendations in our review of the new veterans charter last year.

Bill C-59 has three new benefits to fill gaps that were identified in veterans services. The retirement income security benefit would provide disabled veterans with a monthly income support payment, beginning at age 65, on top of their existing pension payments to make sure that injured veterans have financial security later in life.

The critical injury benefit would provide a \$70,000 tax-free award for Canadian Armed Forces members and veterans who experience a sudden and severe injury in the line of duty. This recognizes the hardship armed forces members experience as they recover from a traumatic incident.

The next one is the family caregiver relief benefit, which would provide disabled veterans with \$7,000 tax free per year for caregivers, often a spouse or other family member, to use in any way that helps them overcome some of the challenges of caregiver fatigue.

I guess I have to wrap up. I would encourage every member in this House to support this bill.

● (1815)

[*Translation*]

The Deputy Speaker: Order. It being 6:15 p.m., pursuant to an order made on Wednesday, June 10, it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the third reading stage of the bill now before the House.

[English]

The question is on the amendment. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the amendment?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Deputy Speaker: All those in favour of the amendment will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Deputy Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Deputy Speaker: In my opinion the nays have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Deputy Speaker: Call in the members.

• (1840)

(The House divided on the amendment, which was negatived on the following division:)

(Division No. 449)

YEAS

Members

Allen (Welland)	Andrews
Angus	Ashton
Aubin	Ayala
Bélangier	Bellavance
Bennett	Benskin
Bevington	Blanchette
Blanchette-Lamothe	Boivin
Borg	Brahmi
Brisson	Brosseau
Casey	Cash
Charlton	Chicoine
Choquette	Christopherson
Cleary	Comartin
Côté	Crowder
Cullen	Cuzner
Davies (Vancouver East)	Day
Dewar	Dion
Dionne Labelle	Donnelly
Doré Lefebvre	Dubé
Dubourg	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)	Dusseau
Easter	Eyking
Foote	Fortin
Freeland	Garneau
Garrison	Genest
Genest-Jourdain	Giguère
Godin	Goodale
Gravelle	Grogulé
Harris (Scarborough Southwest)	Harris (St. John's East)
Hsu	Hughes
Hyer	Jones
Julian	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Latendresse
Laverdière	LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard)
Leslie	Liu
MacAulay	Mai
Marston	Mathysen
McCallum	McGuinty
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)	Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)
Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)	Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)
Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)	Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)
Mourani	Mulcair
Murray	Nantel
Nash	Nicholls
Nunez-Melo	Pacetti

Papillon	Pécelet
Plamondon	Quach
Rafferty	Rankin
Ravignat	Raynault
Regan	Rousseau
Sandhu	Scarpaleggia
Scott	Sellah
Sgro	Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Wind-
sor)	
Sims (Newton—North Delta)	Sitsabaiesan
Stewart	Stoffer
Sullivan	Toone
Tremblay	Valeriot
Vaughan— 115	

Government Orders

NAYS

Members

Ablonczy	Adler
Aglukkaq	Albas
Albrecht	Alexander
Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)	Allison
Ambler	Ambrose
Anders	Anderson
Armstrong	Ashfield
Aspin	Barlow
Bateman	Benoit
Bergen	Bernier
Bezan	Blaney
Block	Boughen
Braid	Breitkreuz
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)	Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)
Butt	Calandra
Calkins	Cannan
Carmichael	Carrie
Chisu	Chong
Clarke	Clement
Crockatt	Daniel
Davidson	Dechert
Devolin	Dreeshen
Dykstra	Eglinski
Falk	Fast
Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)	Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Fletcher	Galipeau
Gallant	Gill
Glover	Goguen
Goldring	Goodyear
Gourde	Grewal
Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)	Hawn
Hayes	Hiebert
Hillyer	Holder
James	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)	Kennedy (Calgary Southeast)
Kerr	Kerr
Komarnicki	Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)
Lake	Lauzon
Lebel	Leef
Leitch	Leung
Lizon	Lobb
Lukiwski	Lunney
MacKay (Central Nova)	MacKenzie
Maguire	Mayes
McColeman	McLeod
Menegakis	Miller
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)	
Moore (Fundy Royal)	
Nicholson	Norlock
Obhrai	O'Connor
Oliver	O'Neill Gordon
Opitz	O'Toole
Paradis	Payne
Perkins	Poilievre
Preston	Raitt
Rajotte	Rathgeber
Reid	Rempel
Richards	Ritz
Saxton	Schellenberger
Seeback	Shea
Shiple	Shory
Smith	Sopuck
Sorenson	Stanton
Storseth	Strahl
Sweet	Tilson

Government Orders

Toet	Trost
Trottier	Truppe
Uppal	Valcourt
Van Kesteren	Van Loan
Vellacott	Wallace
Warawa	Warkentin
Watson	Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country)
Weston (Saint John)	Wilks
Williamson	Wong
Woodworth	Young (Oakville)
Young (Vancouver South)	Yurdiga
Zimmer— 151	

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the amendment defeated.

The next question is on the main motion.

The hon. deputy government whip is rising on a point of order.

• (1845)

Mr. Dave MacKenzie: Mr. Speaker, I believe that if you seek it, you will find agreement to apply the results from the previous vote to this vote, with the Conservatives voting yes.

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Sadia Groguhé: Mr. Speaker, we agree to apply the vote and the official opposition will vote against the motion.

[*English*]

Ms. Judy Foote: Mr. Speaker, the Liberals agree to apply, and we will vote no.

Mr. Massimo Pacetti: Mr. Speaker, I will be voting no.

Mr. Scott Andrews: Mr. Speaker, I agree to apply and will be voting no.

[*Translation*]

Mr. James Lunney: Mr. Speaker, I am voting in favour of the motion.

Mr. André Bellavance: Mr. Speaker, I am voting against the motion.

Mr. Louis Plamondon: Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois is voting against the motion.

Mr. Jean-François Fortin: Mr. Speaker, we agree to apply the vote and we are voting against the motion.

[*English*]

Mr. Brent Rathgeber: Mr. Speaker, I agree to apply and vote no.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Maria Mourani: Mr. Speaker, I am voting against the motion.

[*English*]

Mr. Bruce Hyer: Mr. Speaker, the Green Party agrees to apply and is voting no.

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

(Division No. 450)

YEAS

Members

Ablonczy	Adler
Aglukkaq	Albas
Albrecht	Alexander
Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)	Allison
Ambler	Ambrose
Anders	Anderson
Armstrong	Ashfield
Aspin	Barlow
Bateman	Benoit
Bergen	Bernier
Bezan	Blaney
Block	Boughen
Braid	Breitkreuz
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)	Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)
Butt	Calandra
Calkins	Cannan
Carmichael	Carrie
Chisu	Chong
Clarke	Clement
Crockatt	Daniel
Davidson	Dechert
Devolin	Dreeschen
Dykstra	Eglinski
Falk	Fast
Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)	Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Fletcher	Galipeau
Gallant	Gill
Glover	Goguen
Goldring	Goodyear
Gourde	Grewal
Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)	Hawn
Hayes	Hiebert
Hillyer	Holder
James	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Kent	Kerr
Komarnicki	Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)
Lake	Lauzon
Lebel	Leaf
Leitch	Leung
Lizon	Lobb
Lukiwski	MacKay (Central Nova)
MacKenzie	Maguire
Mayes	McColeman
McLeod	Menegakis
Miller	Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)
Moore (Fundy Royal)	Nicholson
Norlock	Obhrai
O'Connor	Oliver
O'Neill Gordon	Opitz
O'Toole	Paradis
Payne	Perkins
Poilievre	Preston
Raitt	Rajotte
Rathgeber	Reid
Rempel	Richards
Ritz	Saxton
Schellenberger	Seeback
Shea	Shipley
Shory	Smith
Sopuck	Sorenson
Stanton	Storseth
Strahl	Sweet
Tilson	Toet
Trost	Trottier
Truppe	Uppal
Valcourt	Van Kesteren
Van Loan	Vellacott
Wallace	Warawa
Warkentin	Watson
Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country)	Weston (Saint John)
Weston (Saint John)	Williamson
Wilks	Woodworth
Wong	Young (Vancouver South)
Young (Oakville)	Zimmer— 150
Yurdiga	

Government Orders

NAYS

Members

Allen (Welland)	Andrews
Angus	Ashton
Aubin	Ayala
Bélanger	Bellavance
Bennett	Benskin
Bevington	Blanchette
Blanchette-Lamothe	Boivin
Borg	Brahmi
Brison	Brosseau
Casey	Cash
Charlton	Chicoine
Choquette	Christopherson
Cleary	Comartin
Côté	Crowder
Cullen	Cuzner
Davies (Vancouver East)	Day
Dewar	Dion
Dionne Labelle	Donnelly
Doré Lefebvre	Dubé
Dubourg	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)	Dusseau
Easter	Eyking
Foote	Fortin
Freeland	Garneau
Garrison	Genest
Genest-Jourdain	Giguère
Godin	Goodale
Gravelle	Groguhé
Harris (Scarborough Southwest)	Harris (St. John's East)
Hsu	Hughes
Hyer	Jones
Julian	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Latendresse
Laverdière	LeBlanc (LaSalle—Énard)
Leslie	Liu
Lunney	MacAulay
Mai	Marston
Mathysen	McCallum
McGuinty	McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)
Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)	Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)
Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)	Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)
Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)	Mourani
Mulcair	Murray
Nantel	Nash
Nicholls	Nunez-Melo
Pacetti	Papillon
Péclat	Plamondon
Quach	Rafferty
Rankin	Ravignat
Raynault	Regan
Rousseau	Sandhu
Scarpaleggia	Scott
Sellah	Sgro
Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor)	Stewart
Sims (Newton—North Delta)	Sullivan
Sitsabaiesan	Tremblay
Stoffer	Vaughan— 116
Toone	
Valeriotte	

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

(Bill read the third time and passed)

* * *

JUSTICE FOR ANIMALS IN SERVICE ACT (QUANTO'S LAW)

The House resumed from June 11 consideration of the motion that Bill C-35, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (law enforcement animals, military animals and service animals), be read the third time and passed.

The Speaker: The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at the third reading stage of Bill C-35.

The question is on the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

The hon. deputy government whip is rising on a point of order.

Mr. Dave MacKenzie: Mr. Speaker, I believe that you will find agreement to apply the results from the previous vote to this vote, with the Conservatives voting yes.

The Speaker: Is there unanimous consent to proceed in this fashion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Sadia Groguhé: Mr. Speaker, we agree to apply the vote, and the official opposition is voting in favour of the motion.

[*English*]

Ms. Judy Foote: Mr. Speaker, the Liberals agree to apply and will vote yes.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Massimo Pacetti: Mr. Speaker, I agree to apply the vote, and I am voting in favour of the motion.

[*English*]

Mr. Scott Andrews: Mr. Speaker, I agree to apply and will be voting in favour.

[*Translation*]

Mr. James Lunney: Mr. Speaker, I am voting in favour of the motion.

Mr. André Bellavance: Mr. Speaker, I am voting in favour of the motion.

Mr. Louis Plamondon: Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois is voting in favour of the motion.

Mr. Jean-François Fortin: Mr. Speaker, we agree to apply the vote, and we are voting in favour of the motion.

[*English*]

Mr. Brent Rathgeber: Mr. Speaker, I vote yea.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Maria Mourani: Mr. Speaker, I am voting in favour of the motion.

[*English*]

Mr. Bruce Hyer: Mr. Speaker, the Greens vote yes.

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

(*Division No. 451*)

YEAS

Members

Ablonczy	Adler
Aglukkaq	Albas
Albrecht	Alexander
Allen (Welland)	Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Allison	Ambler

Government Orders

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Sadia Groguhé: Mr. Speaker, we agree to apply the vote, and the official opposition is voting in favour of the motion.

[*English*]

Ms. Judy Foote: Mr. Speaker, the Liberals agree to apply and will vote yes.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Massimo Pacetti: Mr. Speaker, I agree to apply the vote, and I am voting in favour of the motion.

[*English*]

Mr. Scott Andrews: Mr. Speaker, I agree to apply and vote yes.

Mr. James Lunney: Mr. Speaker, I vote no.

[*Translation*]

Mr. André Bellavance: Mr. Speaker, I am voting in favour of the motion.

Mr. Louis Plamondon: Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois votes yes.

Mr. Jean-François Fortin: Mr. Speaker, I agree to apply the vote, and I vote yes.

[*English*]

Mr. Brent Rathgeber: Mr. Speaker, I am voting no.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Maria Mourani: Mr. Speaker, I agree to apply the vote, and I vote yes.

[*English*]

Mr. Bruce Hyer: Mr. Speaker, the Green Party is pleased to apply this vote as yes.

(The House divided on Motion No. 2, which was negated on the following division:)

(*Division No. 452*)

YEAS

Members

Allen (Welland)	Andrews
Angus	Ashton
Aubin	Ayala
Bélangier	Bellavance
Bennett	Benskin
Bevington	Blanchette
Blanchette-Lamothe	Boivin
Borg	Brahmi
Brisson	Brosseau
Casey	Cash
Charlton	Chicoine
Choquette	Christopherson
Cleary	Comartin
Côté	Crowder
Cullen	Cuzner
Davies (Vancouver East)	Day
Dewar	Dion
Dionne Labelle	Donnelly
Doré Lefebvre	Dubé
Dubourg	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)	Dusseau
Easter	Eyking
Foote	Fortin

Freeland	Garneau
Garrison	Genest
Genest-Jourdain	Giguère
Godin	Goodale
Gravelle	Groguhé
Harris (Scarborough Southwest)	Harris (St. John's East)
Hsu	Hughes
Hyer	Jones
Julian	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Latendresse
Laverdière	LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard)
Leslie	Liu
MacAulay	Mai
Marston	Mathysen
McCallum	McGuinity
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)	Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)
Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)	Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)
Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)	Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)
Mourani	Mulcair
Murray	Nantel
Nash	Nicholls
Nunez-Melo	Pacetti
Papillon	Pécelet
Plamondon	Quach
Rafferty	Rankin
Ravignat	Raynault
Regan	Rousseau
Sandhu	Scarpaleggia
Scott	Sellah
Sgro	Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Wind- sor)
Sims (Newton—North Delta)	Sitsabaiesan
Stewart	Stoffer
Sullivan	Toone
Tremblay	Valeriote
Vaughan— 115	

NAYS

Members

Adler
Albas
Alexander
Allison
Ambrose
Anderson
Ashfield
Barlow
Benoit
Bernier
Blaney
Boughen
Breitkreuz
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)
Calandra
Cannan
Carrie
Chong
Clement
Daniel
Dechert
Dreeschen
Egliniski
Fast
Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Galipeau
Gill
Goguen
Goodyear
Grewal
Hawn
Hiebert
Holder
Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Kenny (Calgary Southeast)
Kerr
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)
Lauzon
Leaf
Leung
Lobb
Lunney
MacKenzie

Government Orders

Maguire	Mayes
McColeman	McLeod
Menegakis	Miller
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)	
Moore (Fundy Royal)	
Nicholson	Norlock
Obhrai	O'Connor
Oliver	O'Neill Gordon
Opitz	O'Toole
Paradis	Payne
Perkins	Poilievre
Preston	Raitt
Rajotte	Rathgeber
Reid	Rempel
Richards	Ritz
Saxton	Schellenberger
Seeback	Shea
Shiple	Shory
Smith	Sopuck
Sorenson	Stanton
Storseth	Strahl
Sweet	Tilson
Toet	Trost
Trottier	Truppe
Uppal	Valcourt
Van Kesteren	Van Loan
Vellacott	Wallace
Warawa	Warkentin
Watson	Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country)
Weston (Saint John)	Wilks
Williamson	Wong
Woodworth	Young (Oakville)
Young (Vancouver South)	Yurdiga
Zimmer— 151	

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare Motion No. 2 defeated.

Hon. Peter MacKay (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, CPC) moved that the bill be concurred in.

The Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Speaker: In my opinion the yeas have it.

Mr. Dave MacKenzie: Mr. Speaker, I believe if you seek it you will find agreement to apply the results from the previous vote to this vote, with the Conservatives voting yes.

The Speaker: Is there unanimous consent to proceed in this fashion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Sadia Groguhé: Mr. Speaker, we agree to apply the vote, and the official opposition will vote no.

[*English*]

Ms. Judy Foote: Mr. Speaker, Liberals agree to apply the vote and we will vote no.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Massimo Pacetti: Mr. Speaker, I have no problem with proceeding in this manner, and I vote no.

[*English*]

Mr. Scott Andrews: Mr. Speaker, I agree to apply the vote as well, and vote no.

Mr. James Lunney: Mr. Speaker, I vote yes.

[*Translation*]

Mr. André Bellavance: Mr. Speaker, the member for Richmond—Arthabaska votes no.

Mr. Louis Plamondon: Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois is against this motion.

Mr. Jean-François Fortin: Mr. Speaker, I agree to apply the vote, and I vote no.

[*English*]

Mr. Brent Rathgeber: Mr. Speaker, I am voting yea.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Maria Mourani: Mr. Speaker, I agree to apply the vote, and I vote no.

[*English*]

Mr. Bruce Hyer: The Green Party agrees to apply the vote and votes no.

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

(*Division No. 453*)

YEAS

Members

Ablonczy	Adler
Aglukkaq	Albas
Albrecht	Alexander
Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)	Allison
Ambler	Ambrose
Anders	Anderson
Armstrong	Ashfield
Aspin	Barlow
Bateman	Benoit
Bergen	Bernier
Bezan	Blaney
Block	Boughen
Braid	Breitkreuz
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)	Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)
Butt	Calandra
Calkins	Cannan
Carmichael	Carrie
Chisu	Chong
Clarke	Clement
Crockatt	Daniel
Davidson	Dechert
Devolin	Dreeschen
Dykstra	Eglinski
Falk	Fast
Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)	Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Fletcher	Galipeau
Gallant	Gill
Glover	Goguen
Goldring	Goodyear
Gourde	Grewal
Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)	Hawn

Government Orders

Hayes
 Hillyer
 James
 Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)
 Kent
 Komarnicki
 Lake
 Lebel
 Leitch
 Lizon
 Lukiwski
 MacKay (Central Nova)
 Maguire
 McColeman
 Menegakis
 Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)
 Moore (Fundy Royal)
 Nicholson
 Obhrai
 Oliver
 Opitz
 Paradis
 Perkins
 Preston
 Rajotte
 Reid
 Richards
 Saxton
 Seeback
 Shipley
 Smith
 Sorenson
 Storseth
 Sweet
 Toet
 Trottier
 Uppal
 Van Kesteren
 Vellacott
 Warawa
 Watson
 Sky Country)
 Weston (Saint John)
 Williamson
 Woodworth
 Young (Vancouver South)
 Zimmer— 151

Hiebert
 Holder
 Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
 Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
 Kerr
 Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)
 Lauzon
 Leef
 Leung
 Lobb
 Lunney
 MacKenzie
 Mayes
 McLeod
 Miller
 Norlock
 O'Connor
 O'Neill Gordon
 O'Toole
 Payne
 Poilievre
 Raitt
 Rathgeber
 Rempel
 Ritz
 Schellenberger
 Shea
 Shory
 Sopuck
 Stanton
 Strahl
 Tilson
 Trost
 Truppe
 Valcourt
 Van Loan
 Wallace
 Warkentin
 Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to
 Wilks
 Wong
 Young (Oakville)
 Yurdiga

NAYS

Members

Allen (Welland)
 Angus
 Aubin
 Bélanger
 Bennett
 Bevington
 Blanchette-Lamothe
 Borg
 Brison
 Casey
 Charlton
 Choquette
 Cleary
 Côté
 Cullen
 Davies (Vancouver East)
 Dewar
 Dionne Labelle
 Doré Lefebvre
 Dubourg
 Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)
 Easter
 Foote
 Freeland
 Garrison
 Genest-Jourdain
 Godin
 Gravelle
 Harris (Scarborough Southwest)
 Hsu
 Hyer
 Julian

Andrews
 Ashton
 Ayala
 Bellavance
 Benskin
 Blanchette
 Boivin
 Brahma
 Brosseau
 Cash
 Chicoine
 Christopherson
 Comartin
 Crowder
 Cuzner
 Day
 Dion
 Donnelly
 Dubé
 Duncan (Etobicoke North)
 Dusseault
 Eyking
 Fortin
 Garneau
 Genest
 Giguère
 Goodale
 Groguhé
 Harris (St. John's East)
 Hughes
 Jones
 Lamoureux

Lapointe
 Laverdière
 Leslie
 MacAulay
 Marston
 McCallum
 McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)
 Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)
 Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)
 Mourani
 Murray
 Nash
 Nunez-Melo
 Papillon
 Plamondon
 Rafferty
 Ravignat
 Regan
 Sandhu
 Scott
 Sgro
 Sims (Newton—North Delta)
 Stewart
 Sullivan
 Tremblay
 Vaughan— 115

Latendresse
 LeBlanc (LaSalle—Énard)
 Liu
 Mai
 Mathysen
 McGuinity
 Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)
 Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)
 Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)
 Mulcair
 Nantel
 Nicholls
 Pacetti
 Péclet
 Quach
 Rankin
 Raynault
 Rousseau
 Scarpaleggia
 Sellah
 Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Wind-
 sor)
 Sitsabaiesan
 Stoffer
 Toone
 Valeriot

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

* * *

ZERO TOLERANCE FOR BARBARIC CULTURAL PRACTICES ACT

The House resumed from June 12 consideration of Bill S-7, an act to amend the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, the Civil Marriage Act and the Criminal Code and to make consequential amendments to other acts, as reported (without amendment) from the committee, and of the motions in Group No. 1.

The Speaker: The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motions at report stage of Bill S-7.

The question is on Motion No. 1. A vote on this motion also applies to Motions Nos. 2, 3, 8, and 10.

Mr. Dave MacKenzie: Mr. Speaker, I believe if you seek it, you will find agreement to apply the results from the previous vote to this vote, with the Conservatives voting no.

The Speaker: Is there unanimous consent to proceed in this fashion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[Translation]

Mrs. Sadia Groguhé: Mr. Speaker, we agree to apply the vote and the official opposition will vote yes.

[English]

Ms. Judy Foote: Mr. Speaker, we agree to apply the vote and will vote yes.

[Translation]

Mr. Massimo Pacetti: Mr. Speaker, I have no problem with applying the vote and I will vote yes.

[English]

Mr. Scott Andrews: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Government Orders

Mr. James Lunney: No, Mr. Speaker.

• (1855)

[*Translation*]

Mr. André Bellavance: Mr. Speaker, I vote in favour of the motion.

Mr. Louis Plamondon: Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois is in favour of the motion.

Mr. Jean-François Fortin: Mr. Speaker, I agree to apply the vote and I will vote yes.

[*English*]

Mr. Brent Rathgeber: I am voting nay, Mr. Speaker.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Maria Mourani: Mr. Speaker, I vote yes.

[*English*]

Mr. Bruce Hyer: Mr. Speaker, the Green Party agrees to apply the vote and votes yes.

(The House divided on Motion No. 1, which was negated on the following division:)

(*Division No. 454*)

YEAS

Members

Allen (Welland)	Andrews
Angus	Ashton
Aubin	Ayala
Bélangier	Bellavance
Bennett	Benskin
Bevington	Blanchette
Blanchette-Lamothe	Boivin
Borg	Brahmi
Brisson	Brosseau
Casey	Cash
Charlton	Chicoine
Choquette	Christopherson
Cleary	Comartin
Côté	Crowder
Cullen	Cuzner
Davies (Vancouver East)	Day
Dewar	Dion
Dionne Labelle	Donnelly
Doré Lefebvre	Dubé
Dubourg	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)	Dusseau
Easter	Eyking
Foote	Fortin
Freeland	Garneau
Garrison	Genest
Genest-Jourdain	Giguère
Godin	Goodale
Gravelle	Grogulé
Harris (Scarborough Southwest)	Harris (St. John's East)
Hsu	Hughes
Hyer	Jones
Julian	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Latendresse
Laverdière	LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard)
Leslie	Liu
MacAulay	Mai
Marston	Mathysen
McCallum	McGuinty
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)	Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)
Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)	Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)
Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)	Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)
Mourani	Mulcair
Murray	Nantel
Nash	Nicholls
Nunez-Melo	Pacetti
Papillon	Péclét

Plamondon	Quach
Rafferty	Rankin
Ravignat	Raynault
Regan	Rousseau
Sandhu	Scarpaleggia
Scott	Sellah
Sgro	Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Wind- sor)
Sims (Newton—North Delta)	Sitsabaiesan
Stewart	Stoffer
Sullivan	Toone
Tremblay	Valeriote
Vaughan— 115	

NAYS

Members

Ablonczy	Adler
Aglukkaq	Albas
Albrecht	Alexander
Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)	Allison
Ambler	Ambrose
Anders	Anderson
Armstrong	Ashfield
Aspin	Barlow
Bateman	Benoit
Bergen	Bernier
Bezan	Blaney
Block	Boughen
Braid	Breitkreuz
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)	Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)
Butt	Calandra
Calkins	Cannan
Carmichael	Carrie
Chisu	Chong
Clarke	Clement
Crockatt	Daniel
Davidson	Dechert
Devolin	Dreeshen
Dykstra	Eglinski
Falk	Fast
Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)	Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Fletcher	Galpeau
Gallant	Gill
Glover	Goguen
Goldring	Goodyear
Gourde	Grewal
Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)	Hawn
Hayes	Hiebert
Hillyer	Holder
James	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Kent	Kerr
Komarnicki	Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)
Lake	Lauzon
Lebel	Leef
Leitch	Leung
Lizon	Lobb
Lukiwski	Lunney
MacKay (Central Nova)	MacKenzie
Maguire	Mayes
McColeman	McLeod
Menegakis	Miller
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)	
Moore (Fundy Royal)	
Nicholson	Norlock
Obhrai	O'Connor
Oliver	O'Neill Gordon
Opitz	O'Toole
Paradis	Payne
Perkins	Poilievre
Preston	Raitt
Rajotte	Rathgeber
Reid	Rempel
Richards	Ritz
Saxton	Schellenberger
Seeback	Shea
Shiple	Shory
Smith	Sopuck
Sorenson	Stanton
Storseth	Strahl
Sweet	Tilson
Toet	Trost

Trottier
Uppal
Van Kesteren
Vellacott
Warawa
Watson
Sky Country)
Weston (Saint John)
Williamson
Woodworth
Young (Vancouver South)
Zimmer— 151

Truppe
Valcourt
Van Loan
Wallace
Warkentin
Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to
Wilks
Wong
Young (Oakville)
Yurdiga

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare Motion No. 1 defeated. I therefore declare Motions Nos. 2, 3, 8, and 10 defeated.

Hon. Chris Alexander (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, CPC) moved that the bill be concurred in.

The Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Mr. Dave MacKenzie: Mr. Speaker, I believe, if you seek it, you will find agreement to apply the results from the previous vote to this vote, with Conservatives voting yes.

The Speaker: Is there unanimous consent to proceed in this fashion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[Translation]

Mrs. Sadia Groguhé: Mr. Speaker, we agree to apply the vote and the official opposition will vote no.

[English]

Ms. Judy Foote: Mr. Speaker, the Liberals agree to apply and will vote yes.

Mr. Massimo Pacetti: Mr. Speaker, I have no problem applying. I will be voting no.

Mr. Scott Andrews: Mr. Speaker, I agree to apply and will be voting yes.

Mr. James Lunney: Mr. Speaker, I wholeheartedly agree with the decision to apply, and I will enthusiastically vote yes.

[Translation]

Mr. André Bellavance: Mr. Speaker, I vote in favour of the motion.

Mr. Louis Plamondon: Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois is in favour of the motion.

Mr. Jean-François Fortin: Mr. Speaker, we agree to apply the vote and we will vote against the motion.

[English]

Mr. Brent Rathgeber: Mr. Speaker, I will be voting yea.

[Translation]

Mrs. Maria Mourani: Mr. Speaker, I vote against the motion.

[English]

Mr. Bruce Hyer: Mr. Speaker, the Green Party agrees to apply the vote and is voting no.

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

Government Orders

(Division No. 455)

YEAS

Members

Ablonczy
Aglukkaq
Albrecht
Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Ambler
Anders
Andrews
Ashfield
Barlow
Bélanger
Bennett
Bergen
Bezan
Block
Braid
Brisson
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)
Calandra
Cannan
Carrie
Chisu
Clarke
Crockatt
Daniel
Dechert
Dion
Dubourg
Dykstra
Eglinski
Falk
Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)
Fletcher
Freeland
Gallant
Gill
Goguen
Goodale
Gourde
Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)
Hayes
Hillyer
Hsu
Jones
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)
Kent
Komarnicki
Lake
Lauzon
Leaf
Leung
Lobb
Lunney
MacKay (Central Nova)
Maguire
McCallum
McGuinty
McLeod
Miller
Moore (Fundy Royal)
Nicholson
Obhrai
Oliver
Opitz
Paradis
Perkins
Poilievre
Raitt
Rathgeber
Reid
Richards
Saxton
Schellenberger
Sgro
Shipley
Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor)
Smith
Sopuck
Stanton

Adler
Albas
Alexander
Allison
Ambrose
Anderson
Armstrong
Aspin
Bateman
Bellavance
Benoit
Bernier
Blaney
Boughen
Breitkreuz
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)
Butt
Calkins
Carmichael
Casey
Chong
Clement
Cuzner
Davidson
Devolin
Dreeshen
Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Easter
Eyking
Fast
Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Foote
Galipeau
Garneau
Glover
Goldring
Goodyear
Grewal
Hawn
Hiebert
Holder
James
Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Kerr
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)
Lamoureux
Lebel
Leitch
Lizon
Lukiwski
MacAulay
MacKenzie
Mayes
McColeman
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)
Menegakis
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)
Murray
Norlock
O'Connor
O'Neill Gordon
O'Toole
Payne
Plamondon
Preston
Rajotte
Regan
Rempel
Ritz
Scarpaleggia
Seeback
Shea
Shory
Sorenson
Storseth

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Strahl	Sweet
Tilson	Toet
Trost	Trottier
Truppe	Uppal
Valcourt	Valeriote
Van Kesteren	Van Loan
Vaughan	Vellacott
Wallace	Warawa
Warkentin	Watson
Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country)	
Weston (Saint John)	
Wilks	Williamson
Wong	Woodworth
Young (Oakville)	Young (Vancouver South)
Yurdiga	Zimmer— 182

NAYS

Members

Allen (Welland)	Angus
Ashton	Aubin
Ayala	Benskin
Bevington	Blanchette
Blanchette-Lamothe	Boivin
Borg	Brahmi
Brosseau	Cash
Charlton	Chicoine
Choquette	Christopherson
Cleary	Comartin
Côté	Crowder
Cullen	Davies (Vancouver East)
Day	Dewar
Dionne Labelle	Donnelly
Doré Lefebvre	Dubé
Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)	Dusseau
Fortin	Garrison
Genest	Genest-Jourdain
Giguère	Godin
Gravelle	Groguhé
Harris (Scarborough Southwest)	Harris (St. John's East)
Hughes	Hyer
Julian	Lapointe
Latendresse	Laverdière
LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard)	Leslie
Liu	Mai
Marston	Mathyssen
Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)	Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)
Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)	Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)
Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)	Mourani
Mulcair	Nantel
Nash	Nicholls
Nunez-Melo	Pacetti
Papillon	Péclat
Quach	Rafferty
Rankin	Ravnignat
Raynault	Rousseau
Sandhu	Scott
Sellah	Sims (Newton—North Delta)
Sitsabaiesan	Stewart
Stoffer	Sullivan
Toone	Tremblay— 84

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

● (1900)

[English]

The Speaker: A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Bruce Hyer (Thunder Bay—Superior North, GP): Mr. Speaker, on May 15, I asked once again in the House why the Prime Minister has not kept the promises he made in 2007 and 2009 to create the Lake Superior national marine conservation area, the NMCA, and allocate and spend \$20 million that he promised for that purpose, including a visitor centre and administration building in the town of Nipigon.

While the Prime Minister proclaimed in Nipigon, “there is no goal more worthy than the protection and preservation of Canada's natural environment”, eight years later little has been done.

Two years later, in 2009, the Prime Minister repeated his promise, which encouraged the Town of Nipigon to begin investing heavily in waterfront development. After eight years of waiting, the Town of Nipigon has yet to see a penny of that promised \$20 million. Instead, the Conservatives have actually cut staff in Canada's national parks.

Nipigon is not the only town in Thunder Bay—Superior North that has waited fruitlessly for eight years. Towns and first nations along the spectacular north shore are all still waiting, including Marathon, Terrace Bay, Schreiber, Pays Plat, Red Rock, Dorion, Shuniah, and Thunder Bay. I have been waiting a long time too.

In 1980, when I was a board member for the Wildlands League, we proposed this idea in our publication *Wilderness Now*. Later, Jake Vander Wal and I helped to co-create the Lake Superior Binational Forum and binational program, of which I was the first Canadian co-chair. Then I fought, along with Joanie and Gary McGuffin, for the creation of the Great Lakes heritage coast, which was later killed by the Ontario Liberal government.

There is a lot of blame to go around on why protection has been delayed for 35 years. I re-asked that question of our Prime Minister on Friday exactly a month ago. Five days later, like magic, or should I say like smoke and mirrors, Nipigon received a letter reaffirming that commitment. Then, on June 2, the Minister of the Environment introduced Bill C-61, called the Lake Superior national marine conservation area act.

That is great. However, I ask this question. Was this in response to my once again calling the Prime Minister to task, or is it part of a cynical plan to introduce a whole bunch of bills at the last minute of our parliamentary sitting with no real intent to pass them, or perhaps both?

The government has rammed a lot of dubious and contentious legislation through the House in far less than a month. I urge it to pass this important bill quickly. I doubt that anyone on the opposition side would oppose unanimous consent to create this ecologically important and long-awaited conservation area.

While the Conservatives continue to claim that they are somehow contributing to the preservation of the “world's largest freshwater protected area”, eight years later, north shore towns are still waiting.

Lake Superior is facing the effects of a warming climate. It has reached record low levels, 10 centimetres below the previous low recorded in 1926. The lake is 5° warmer than it was 30 years ago, and ice is down a whopping 80%. Lake Superior is one of the most important bodies of water in the world. It holds about 10% of the planet's fresh water, and biological diversity there is decreasing.

Eight long years ago, the people of Nipigon were told that they were going to receive federal funding for NMCA. Where is it? Will the Prime Minister finally keep his promise?

Mr. Colin Carrie (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to protecting the environment. Since we formed government, we have created two national marine conservation areas, three marine protected areas, three national wildlife areas, four national parks, one urban national park, and a national historic site. The total area of land we have protected is equal to an area about twice the size of Vancouver Island.

[Translation]

Our government announced the creation of the Lake Superior national marine conservation area in October 2007. We committed to investing \$36 million to cover the operating and capital costs of creating the largest freshwater protected area in Canada on Lake Superior's north shore.

• (1905)

[English]

The Lake Superior national marine conservation area, the NMCA, comprises more than 10,000 square kilometres of the lake and includes lakebed, islands, and north shorelands. Establishing an NMCA in Lake Superior contributes to Canada's national conservation plan, the NCP, with concrete action to conserve Canada's lands and waters and connect Canadians to nature, while contributing to the NCP goals of encouraging local initiatives and partnerships that will lead to positive results.

On Tuesday, June 2, Bill C-61, an act to amend the Canada National Marine Conservation Areas Act, was introduced in the House of Commons to formally establish the area. In 2009 Parks Canada announced the township of Nipigon as the selected location for the Lake Superior national marine conservation area administrative centre. We stand by this commitment, and Parks Canada executives have recently met with officials of the township of Nipigon to confirm this commitment.

[Translation]

Our government is also committed to working with the first nations, local communities and other stakeholders to create a world-class tourist destination and attract visitors so that they can discover the beauty of Lake Superior's north shore.

[English]

Bill C-61 concludes almost two decades of work to make this new protected area a reality by formally protecting Canada's spectacular Lake Superior under the Canada National Marine Conservation Areas Act. At the same time, Bill C-61 will open the door to realizing the environmental, economic, and social benefits that many

Adjournment Proceedings

north shore communities along Lake Superior, from Thunder Bay to Terrace Bay, have envisioned throughout the establishment process.

This legislation would formally protect an outstanding example of Canada's marine environment and would provide opportunities for Canadians to experience the nature and culture of this vast marine landscape. This action demonstrates our government's leadership in conservation.

As we complete the establishment phase and foster important partnerships with northern communities, the tourism sector, and aboriginal peoples, we look forward to increased visitation and strengthened local economies in this very special place.

[Translation]

Investments in the region have already helped develop and promote tourism initiatives for the communities, especially with respect to trails, interpretation facilities and community infrastructure, and they will continue to do so in years to come.

[English]

Mr. Bruce Hyer: Mr. Speaker, that is some commitment. More pretty words, but when? This week? This Parliament?

I ask the question again today. I have not heard a straight answer. Will our Prime Minister keep his word? Will he seek unanimous consent by all parties in the House for the legal creation of the Lake Superior national marine conservation area before the House rises? Did the Prime Minister really mean what he said in Nipigon eight years ago, when he said that "There is no goal more worthy than the protection and preservation of Canada's natural environment."?

Where is the promised money? Where is the real legislation, passed in the House, for the Lake Superior national marine conservation area? Those who care passionately about Lake Superior are waiting.

Mr. Colin Carrie: Mr. Speaker, our government will continue to honour our commitments made to the north shore region of Lake Superior. The township of Nipigon will remain as the centre of operations and be marked with a Parks Canada presence that will promote the interpretation of the site's natural and cultural heritage and enhance local economies.

Bill C-61 sets the stage for the legal and formal protection of one of the largest freshwater marine protected areas in the world dedicated to conservation.

[Translation]

EMPLOYMENT

Mrs. Maria Mourani (Ahuntsic, Ind.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to debate a very important issue that I raised in the House regarding an unacceptable situation that affects many Canadians pilots, many of whom are from Ahuntsic.

Adjournment Proceedings

I learned that many airlines, under dubious pretexts, have been hiring foreign pilots, thereby putting qualified and available Canadian pilots out of work. I also learned that this kind of practice is happening in other areas of the aviation industry and it affects flying instructors, helicopter pilots, bush pilots and aerial spraying pilots, just to name a few.

The excuses that the airlines are giving to the government are absolute nonsense. Some companies, for example, require experience on aircraft that they do not even have in their fleet, or require degrees that have nothing to do with the job in question. The purpose of these requirements is of course to give preference to foreign candidates to the detriment of Canadian pilots.

It was also brought to my attention that some companies are posting bogus job offers on sites that no one visits, so they can pretend that they had no applicants to certain jobs.

Although a number of companies may be audited, Sunwing Airlines is the most questionable. Although that company acknowledges that it received 900 resumé of Canadian pilots, it claims it did not find any qualified Canadian pilots.

What is more, Sunwing Airlines apparently filed new applications for temporary foreign workers for its winter season. That is very suspicious since there would be a well-known pool of qualified Canadian pilots available for their category of plane, according to the information I was given.

When I asked the Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform about this, he said, "Before hiring foreign workers, the company must prove that it attempted to advertise the job in question to determine whether or not Canadians were available."

He also said that his government put in place harsh penalties for those who break the rules and that his government's policy is to ensure that Canadians are given priority for jobs in Canada. He said any company that breaks the rules will be punished.

We heard those fine words, now we want action.

Let us ask ourselves this question: will the minister order an audit of Sunwing Airlines' practices and, if necessary, impose the harsh penalties he was talking about? Will the minister audit the practices of all other airlines in order to flush out offending companies?

Canadian pilots want action. If the government continues to do nothing about an issue of such importance to the Canadian economy, it is, in my opinion, condoning these unacceptable practices.

● (1910)

[English]

Mr. Scott Armstrong (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister of Labour, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government is making sure that Canadians are considered first for available jobs. The temporary foreign worker program is there to offer employers an alternative only when those employers cannot find qualified Canadians to fill a job. The program is designed to offer a last and limited resort for employers. Those are not empty words. Our government stands by that statement and stands by that policy.

Last year we overhauled the temporary foreign worker program to make sure jobs went to Canadians first. Jobs have to go to Canadians before employers can hire people from abroad. That is a message that we send strongly to employers from coast to coast to coast. We have put stringent rules in place so that employers would have to follow this policy.

For example, before turning to the program, employers must advertise a job for at least four consecutive weeks through various channels. They must tell us how many Canadians applied for the job and how many they interviewed, and then they must explain why those they interviewed were not hired. They have to explain to the government how those interviewees were not qualified for that position.

These rules are strictly enforced. We are serious about helping Canadians find and keep work. That is why we spoke to our stakeholders in the airline industry. As the hon. member stated, it is not acceptable to reject Canadian pilots for a job just because they are not trained on a specific type of plane. The employer should provide that training if necessary. That is an accepted industry standard. We are holding airlines accountable to that standard.

How are we doing this? Our government has put additional measures in place for airlines as of July 1, 2014, almost one year ago. Before an airline can hire a foreign pilot, it must go through a rigorous process that ensures hiring a non-Canadian is the only option that the airline has. It must meet the minimum advertising requirements for high-wage occupations and it must adhere to specific criteria around job postings.

For example, the maximum number of flight hours it can include as required experience is 4,000 hours for a first officer and 5,000 hours for a captain. The employer must also have a long-term transition plan to move away from hiring foreign workers and toward hiring more Canadian pilots in the future. The Department of Employment and Social Development Canada must approve this transition plan to ensure that employer is making every effort to hire Canadians first.

I want to emphasize that we are taking strong action to keep Canadians employed. The changes we have made over the past year clearly show this commitment. Canadian jobs must go to Canadians first.

● (1915)

[Translation]

Mrs. Maria Mourani: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate what my colleague just said about the criteria and additional measures that the government is bringing in, but I am referring to a specific case today.

Adjournment Proceedings

What I am saying is that there are criteria, but it appears as though some companies are managing to find loopholes. I have been contacted by some Canadian pilots who tell me that they are out of work and that there are many Canadian pilots who are being forced to work for foreign companies because they cannot find work here in Canada. Why? Because companies like Sunwing Airlines are apparently finding loopholes. We know that the company received some 900 resumé, but it still applied to hire foreign workers. This company is apparently using all sorts of tactics to get around the criteria. That is what I am being told.

Will the government and the department look into this company and other companies that could also be finding loopholes? All I am asking is that the government look into this because there are Canadian pilots out of work right now.

[*English*]

Mr. Scott Armstrong: Mr. Speaker, our government believes that Canadians should be considered first for all Canadian jobs. Last year we took decisive action to overhaul the temporary foreign worker program to make sure this principle applied across all industries,

including Canadian airlines. Those new rules are giving Canadian pilots a fair shake at available jobs.

Under the temporary foreign worker program, we are strictly enforcing the reforms that we introduced last year. The penalties if a company violates this are quite severe. Employers must justify the need to hire foreign workers under every single circumstance. I assure the members of the House that the government is strictly enforcing these rules.

The temporary foreign worker program always puts Canadians first. It is intended to be used as a last and limited resort for employers when no qualified Canadian is available for the job.

[*Translation*]

The Deputy Speaker: The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 7:20 p.m.)

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Mr. Goldring	15059
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Member for Elgin—Middlesex—London

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