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(HANSARD)

Tuesday, November 22, 2016

Speaker: The Honourable Geoff Regan

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, November 22, 2016

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayer

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

•(1005)
[English]

INTERPARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS

Hon. Robert Nault (Kenora, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34(1), I have the honour to present to the House, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian section of ParlAmericas respecting its participation at the ParlAmericas annual gathering on climate change entitled, “Parliamentary Action to Stop Climate Change”, held in Panama city, Panama, from August 3 to August 5, 2016.

* * *

PETITIONS

ELECTORAL REFORM

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to table a petition on electoral reform. It is signed by 144 petitioners, who are calling upon the House of Commons to pass a motion affirming the need for a national referendum on any proposal to change Canada's current method of electing members of Parliament before that proposal is implemented into law.

SENIORS

Mr. Gordon Brown (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I tried to present this last Thursday. However, the government used its majority to interfere with routine proceedings. Therefore, today I am delighted to present a petition with respect to seniors. One in six Canadians is a senior. I am pleased to present this petition, signed by Canadians from across Canada, which calls upon Parliament to appoint a minister for seniors and to develop a national strategy for seniors.

FALUN GONG

Mr. Ron Liepert (Calgary Signal Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to table a petition on behalf of the Falun Gong members in my riding, who are asking the federal government to take action on the unethical harvesting of organs.

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all questions be allowed to stand at this time.

The Speaker: Is it agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Hon. Rob Nicholson: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I wonder if we could go back for a moment to presenting petitions. Could I get the consent of the House to do that?

The Speaker: The hon. member has asked for consent to return for a moment to presenting petitions. Is it agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

PETITIONS

DEMENTIA

Hon. Rob Nicholson (Niagara Falls, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today I am pleased to present to the House of Commons a petition with respect to my private member's bill, Bill C-233. The bill supports developing strategies for patients and families of Alzheimer's and dementia victims. It has been certified by the clerk of petitions. I am proud to present this petition.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

CANADA-EUROPEAN UNION COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC AND TRADE AGREEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACT

The House resumed from November 21 consideration of the motion that Bill C-30, An Act to implement the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement between Canada and the European Union and its Member States and to provide for certain other measures, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I had three minutes in my speech yesterday so I will be continuing along today. The point I want to underline is that we in the NDP will be here to provide reasoned and progressive elements to debate in this implementation act for CETA.

Government Orders

As I was saying in my speech on the bill yesterday, it remains a mystery as to why the government is trying to ram the bill through without letting parliamentarians conduct their proper research and oversight. I want to refer all members of this House to the open and accountable government publication from the Prime Minister that ministers were to treat Parliament with respect and provide the necessary information for parliamentarians to do their job. I quote from that document:

Clear ministerial accountability to Parliament is fundamental to responsible government, and requires that Ministers provide Parliament with the information it needs to fulfill its roles of legislating, approving the appropriation of funds and holding the government to account.

The Prime Minister expects ministers to demonstrate respect and support for the parliamentary process. However, if we look at the facts surrounding the introduction of the bill, on October 30 the Prime Minister signed CETA at the EU-Canada Leaders' Summit, and it was only two days later that the implementing legislation, Bill C-30, was introduced in Parliament.

This rushed process violated the government's own policy on the tabling of treaties in Parliament, which requires the government to table a copy of the treaty, along with an explanatory memorandum that outlines the key components of the treaty, at least 21 sitting days before we debate. That was violated, and I would argue that the spirit of open and accountable government was clearly violated by ignoring that process.

Furthermore, we know that the international trade committee has already passed a motion that will restrict written submissions to only those witnesses who are selected to appear. Let me make that clear. No Canadians who do not appear before the committee will be allowed to provide written submissions, and only those who have the means to travel to Ottawa and the time to do so will be allowed to do so. We are in effect closing down exactly from whom we will hear on this.

If we compare that with the government's process on the trans-Pacific partnership, where the committee heard from over 400 witnesses and received written submissions from approximately 60,000 Canadians, there really is no comparison.

The underlying point here is that Parliament is essentially being asked to write a blank cheque with this implementation bill, despite the fact that each of the 28 EU member states will have to ratify CETA for all of the provisions to apply, and it is a process that is expected to take between two to five years.

I ask again, what is the rush? What is the government trying to ram through here? Why is it not letting parliamentarians do due oversight when there is obviously enough time for us to examine the bill?

The next part I want to look at is on the investor-state dispute mechanism. New Democrats support trade deals that reduce tariffs and boost exports, but we will always remain firm that components like investor-state provisions that threaten our sovereignty have no place in trade deals.

The new investor court system still allows foreign investors to seek compensation from any level of government over policy decisions they feel impact their profits. Furthermore, the Liberals

still have not explained how they will ensure that environmental and health and safety regulations would be protected from foreign challenges. Even the joint interpretive statement about the investor court system falls outside the text of the treaty, and therefore does not have full legal weight.

If we look at the quote from the Canadian Environmental Law Association, it states that CETA “will significantly impact environmental protection and sustainable development in Canada. In particular, the inclusion of an investor-state dispute settlement mechanism....” It goes on to say that it will really “impact the federal and provincial governments' authority to protect the environment, promote resource conservation, or use green procurement as a means of advancing environmental policies and objectives.”

The other part I want to examine is particularly important to me, both as the NDP seniors critic and the member of Parliament for Cowichan—Malahat—Langford. It is the impact this deal would have on the cost of pharmaceutical drugs. I take the issue of pharmaceutical costs very seriously, because I have helped enough seniors over the last eight years to know that the high cost of these drugs can have a real impact on the quality of life of our seniors.

The chapter on intellectual property rights goes well beyond Canada's existing obligations. The increased patent protections granted to brand-name pharmaceuticals will have the effect of delaying the arrival of cheaper generics and will increase the cost of prescription drugs to Canadians by between \$850 million and \$2.8 billion per year.

● (1010)

This is a cost that I do not think seniors are prepared to take on. Furthermore, I would argue it would hamper any efforts of bringing in a national pharmaceutical strategy both at the federal level and in what individual provinces are trying to do with their already ballooning health care costs.

I also want to quote Jim Keon, the president of the Canadian Generic Pharmaceutical Association, who said:

A study prepared for the CGPA by two leading Canadian health economists in early 2011 estimated that, if adopted, the proposals would delay the introduction of new generic medicines in Canada by an average of three and a half years. The cost to pharmaceutical payers of this delay was estimated at \$2.8 billion...

Therefore, we do have validators of this opinion, we do have the research to back it up, and it is certainly a very real concern that we should be bringing up.

In conclusion, we are in favour of a trade deal with Europe. As I have stated previously, we have deep historical and cultural ties, and they are some of the most progressive democracies. However, we are concerned with specific measures in CETA as it is negotiated, and it is our job on this side of the House to uphold the interests of Canadians in process.

Government Orders

The Liberals have missed key opportunities to fix this agreement, but the deal is still not done. We will continue to urge them to fix it. Furthermore, if Liberal members of Parliament are not prepared to stand up for the progressive interests of their constituents, we in the NDP are always ready to take on that rein, and we will do so proudly.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I can assure the member that Liberal members of Parliament are quite willing to stand up on the progressive nature of all trade agreements.

I am a bit surprised. From my perspective, it looks as if the NDP is trying to justify voting against yet another trade agreement. It seems to be part of the NDP DNA that trade agreements are bad. NDP members often cite that they supported one, and I think the one they say they supported was with Korea. However, I do not think they ever stood up and voted for a trade agreement.

At the end of the day, CETA is an agreement that the Liberal Party had supported virtually from the beginning. Throughout the election, Canadians understood that the Liberal Party was behind it.

Can the member please indicate to the House why NDP members feel that they can support Korea but not CETA?

• (1015)

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: Madam Speaker, as I stated in my speech, if the Liberals and Conservatives are not going to stand up and raise concerns about the high cost of pharmaceuticals, about the impact of investor-state dispute resolutions, about the abilities of local governments to legislate and make laws in the public interest, then we will bring those issues forward for Canadians.

As I have stated, we support the overall intention of trade with Europe, but as long as these problematic provisions are in the trade agreement, we will give voice to those concerns. Furthermore, we have legitimate questions as to why the government side is rushing this through without due process.

The government member knows very well that he has broken his own government's policies in this regard. They are trying to ram this through and limit the number of witnesses because they want to limit the amount of bad news they receive on the bill. Therefore, I say to the member that he should let Parliament do its job, not rush this process through, and allow the legitimate concerns of Canadians to have voice in the House, because it is not just a one-sided argument. There are many Canadians who have legitimate concerns. I will continue to proudly stand here and give voice to those concerns.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Matthew Dubé (Beloeil—Chambly, NDP): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech.

I would like to talk some more about transparency and how the debate process works because I really want to explain this for the people listening at home. Preventing witnesses and even experts from providing written submissions to the committee is an unprecedented decision. This is deeply troubling.

When a bill goes to committee, we often do not have enough time to hear witnesses because of our schedules and the different bills

before us. Typically, the chair tells the committee members that we will ask for written submissions from experts who cannot attend the meetings, who are not available, or whom we do not have time to hear. That way, the committee can get a sense of all views on a particular subject.

We are not talking about radicals who send us wild and crazy submissions. We are talking about experts, such as university professors, lawyers, and pharmacists, who can tell us about the impact of this agreement on the price of pharmaceuticals.

Can my colleague describe to us how the Liberals are stifling debate with this kind of measure and tell us about how they are doing it even more than the Conservatives used to?

[*English*]

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: Madam Speaker, I thank my hon. friend for bringing that question up, because I have before me a copy of the minutes of proceedings from the Standing Committee on International Trade, meeting No. 42, when it met on November 1st. Paragraph (b) of the motion that was passed at that in camera meeting states that the committee “consider testimony, written submissions and briefs only from the witnesses appearing before it”. That says to me that it wants to limit testimony to organizations that have the means to come forward. The committee is really trying to narrow down the depth of the conversation, so that when it provides its report to Parliament at report stage of the bill, it will seem as if it has the unanimous backing of Canadians, and that is going to be the furthest thing from the truth.

This is yet another example of the Liberals limiting debate on an important issue on which all Canadians deserve to have a say.

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Davenport.

I am pleased to speak on this topic for Canadian agriculture and agrifood. CETA would greatly benefit our agricultural industry. We are talking about an industry that contributes over \$100 billion to the Canadian GDP. It drives over \$60 billion of our trade and creates one in eight jobs. To bring our discussions on CETA into agricultural context, Canadian farmers depend on trade for their livelihoods. On average, about half of the value of Canada's agricultural production is export: three-quarters of our wheat crop, two-thirds of our pork, 80% of our canola and canola products, and 90% of our pulse products.

The EU is Canada's fourth most important export destination. Trade helps secure jobs, growth, and opportunity for Canadian farmers and farm families, and more great food choices for consumers around the world. This is why our government is working hard to open up new markets for our exporting producers around the world.

Government Orders

CETA could drive additional exports up to \$1.5 billion, including \$600 million in beef, \$400 million in pork, and \$100 million in grains and oilseeds, as well as \$300 million in processed foods, fruit and vegetables.

The signing was praised by many agricultural groups, including the Canadian Pork Council, the Canadian Cattlemen's Association, and the Canola Council of Canada.

The European Union is among the world's largest markets for food. CETA would create new market opportunities in the EU for our agricultural producers, processors, and exporters all across Canada.

Increased market access for our world-renowned beef and pork is only one of the many benefits for Canadian agriculture under this agreement. EU tariffs would also be eliminated on grains such as wheat, barley, rye, and oats; oils, such as canola and soybean; fresh and frozen vegetables; maple syrup; processed products, such as sweetened dried cranberries, french fries, and pet food. As well, in the area of confectionary, it includes baked goods, snack foods, and beverages.

CETA would also give duty-free access for over 80,000 tonnes of pork a year, 50,000 tonnes of beef and veal, and 3,000 tonnes of bison. This is a significant improvement.

With the agreement in force, Canada would be one of the only developed countries in the world to have preferential access to the world's two largest economies, the EU and the United States, providing food for one billion people. This is why timely implementation of CETA remains a top priority for our government.

At the same time, we know that some agriculture sectors would be impacted by CETA; namely, our dairy producers under supply management, who would see increased imports of European cheese.

Our government fully supports supply management, and that is something we are very proud of. We recognize the important role Canada's supply management sector plays in ensuring a strong rural economy, accounting for over \$34 billion in overall economic benefit.

We have said all along that our government needs to help dairy producers and processors make the transition when CETA comes into force, and that is exactly what we are doing. I recently announced \$350 million for two new programs that support the competitiveness of the dairy sector, in anticipation of the entry into force of CETA. One of the two new programs is \$250 million over five years for the dairy farm investment program that will help provide targeted contributions to help Canadian dairy farmers update farm technology and systems and improve productivity through upgrading their equipment.

● (1020)

The other new program is over \$100 million over four years for a dairy processing investment fund that will help dairy processors modernize their operation and in turn improve efficiency and productivity as well as diversify their products to pursue new market opportunities.

Dairy farmers have called this an important recognition of the contribution farmers and processors make to the Canadian economy.

The long-term investment in dairy modernization provides a sustainable, strong, and reliable industry and economic growth. I look forward to continuing to speak with the dairy farmers and processors to obtain their views on how the programs are to be designed.

We are also going to have discussions with the supply management sector to address the concerns of import predictability and enforced border controls for supply-managed commodities, while ensuring that Canadian processors who use dairy and poultry inputs can remain competitive in the export markets.

CETA is only one of the government's efforts to open new markets for our farmers and food processors.

Following his recent mission to China, the Prime Minister announced an agreement with China to expand beef access to frozen bone-in beef from animals less than 30 months of age; ensure stable and predictable Canadian exports of canola to China on an uninterrupted basis through early 2020; and support trade in Canada's pork, bovine genetics, and some processed foods. We have set a goal of doubling trade between our two countries by 2025.

I recently completed an agricultural trade mission to China where we showcased Canadian agriculture, agrifood, and fish and seafood products. I was pleased to promote our world-class, high-quality products and contribute to \$37 million in onsite sales, and \$230 million in anticipated sales over the next year. All of this is tremendous news for Canadian agriculture and tremendous news for Canada.

We are also reaching out to other key markets in Asia. Asia is an important market for Canada's agriculture and food products, especially in animal protein. Building on our success in China, we have regained access for Canadian beef in South Korea and Taiwan.

Outside of Asia, we recently announced that Mexico has restored full access for our Canadian beef. The Canadian industry expects that this will eventually boost our beef sales to Mexico to over \$200 million a year. We obtained new access for pork to India and restored access for live swine to Russia and the Ukraine. We achieved the repeal of the U.S. country of origin labelling, levelling the playing field for Canadian beef and pork coming into the United States.

Government Orders

To grow new markets, the first thing we need is a world-class product, and we have that covered, but we also need investment and resources. That is where we can play a role in opening the doors for our agrifood exporters.

Innovation is key to keeping our sector on the cutting edge and to ensuring that we can continue to take advantage of global market opportunities.

CETA would deepen Canada's already close partnership with the EU. Its entry into force would help agriculture and agrifood exports in Canada take advantage of the market access opportunities CETA will offer. At the same time, we will be investing in our dairy industry to help it remain strong and competitive.

I am optimistic about the future of our food-based businesses. Canada's reputation for high-quality, innovative, sustainable agriculture and agrifood products will give the sector a competitive edge on the global markets.

We have the best farmers and ranchers in the world. They can produce the food, and we must make sure we export their products. We are committed to creating growth and opportunity for Canadian farmers and farm families, growing our middle class, and ensuring Canadian agriculture is a global leader in the 21st century.

What we have to do is open the doors and make sure that our great farmers and ranchers are able to export their products.

• (1025)

Mr. Earl Dreeshen (Red Deer—Mountain View, CPC): Madam Speaker, I want to thank the minister for his unwavering support of the great work done by our Conservative government under the leadership of Stephen Harper and, of course, by our amazing agriculture and trade ministers. It just shows that if we work hard and work together, amazing things can happen.

I also had the opportunity to attend a trade mission in London with a bunch of Canadian exporters. We had discussions with distributors that were working in Europe and trying to find different ways we could help our exporters.

Would he maybe go through some of the plans the present government has to help our exporters as we move forward in the future?

• (1030)

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay: Madam Speaker, I appreciate the work that has been done and will be done. In my view, what we have to do is to open the markets.

In my tenure of a little over a year being the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, visiting a number of countries in Asia, what we have found, first, is that we need to establish a rapport, government to government. I think we did that in other areas, for example, with China and Mexico.

We also have to make sure that the governments and the entrepreneurs in these countries understand the quality of the products we have.

It is also a job to make sure, if we can, that the countries have a science-based regulatory system. It is very difficult to export to anyone who does not use a science-based regulatory system. In our

country, our government, and the member's government previously, always pushed to make sure that we used science-based regulations. We cannot argue against science-based regulations.

I think it is important, number one, to have the regulations and, number two, to make sure that we establish a rapport and that people understand exactly the quality of the products we have in this country.

Ms. Tracey Ramsey (Essex, NDP): Madam Speaker, we are talking about dairy farmers. The minister was talking about dairy in his speech. In my riding of Essex, I have dairy farmers. These are small family farms that have been around a very long time.

The minister also spoke about market access and entrepreneurship. Under CETA, family farms will hurt. We will lose family farms in Canada. We will lose dairy farms in Canada.

The Dairy Farmers of Canada have said there will be unpredictability and instability in the Canadian dairy sector, the opposite of what supply management was created to do. They estimate there will be a potential farm income loss of nearly \$150 million per year. The amount of compensation the government has come forward with—it is calling it “investment” not “compensation”—clearly falls far short. It is a drop in the bucket. We will lose family farms in my riding and across this country.

The government talks about the unfettered access that our dairy farmers will have, including our cheese producers. This does not exist for Canadian farmers. The Canadian dairy Farmers of Canada has been very clear that this access will not, in any way, help them with the losses that will occur under CETA.

How does the minister stand in the House, talking about supply management and protecting it, while signing trade deals that will hurt family farms in Canada?

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay: Madam Speaker, I appreciate my hon. colleague's concern.

Being a dairy farmer all of my life until I came to this chamber, I have an understanding of the dairy business.

I also would like to inform the House that we discussed the issue. We met with dairy farmers. We met with processors right across this country. That is where this program we put in place came from. It came from the dairy farmers and processors across the country.

I would remind my hon. colleague across the way that I met with young farmers in her province. What they are concerned about is the next generation of farmers. They wanted to make sure that we had a strong and stable supply management system in this country.

This party put the supply management system in place, and I can assure members that this party will make sure the supply management system remains strong for generations to come.

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz (Davenport, Lib.): Madam Speaker, as the member of Parliament for Davenport, I am pleased to have the opportunity today to speak in support of Bill C-30, Canada's ratification of the Canada-European Union comprehensive economic and trade agreement, more commonly known as CETA.

Government Orders

I know that in my riding of Davenport, a wonderfully diverse riding with the majority of resident families coming from European countries like Portugal, Italy, Spain, and even Greece and France, they are excited at the prospect of this agreement and bill coming into force.

I should note that not all trade agreements are seen equally in my riding. There are many concerns about the TPP, but for CETA there is large support and people are very excited about it. They are excited at the prospect of stronger economic ties with their home countries and the chance to help their home businesses succeed, in addition to all the benefits this agreement will have for Canadians.

The residents of Davenport know that the EU is the second-largest market in the world for Canadians. CETA means more growth, more jobs, a more robust economy, and a stronger economic future for all Canadians. Through CETA, the government is demonstrating its commitment to growing our economy and strengthening the middle class by increasing and expanding Canada's trade.

As a medium-sized economy competing in the global marketplace, Canada has long recognized free and open trade as critical for our economic prosperity. CETA will offer new export opportunities and new consumers for our products. People around the world are hungry for the goods, skills, and services that Canada has to offer. Partners around the world want to do business with Canadians. We are seen as being reliable and committed to providing quality services and products.

The European Union and its 28 member states is an important market for Canada, and CETA will continue to expand the opportunities for Canadian companies in this market. In 2015, our bilateral trade in merchandise with the EU was worth \$99 billion, and trade in services was \$38 billion, making the EU our second-largest trading partner.

Trade has long been a powerful engine for Canada's economy. Canadian jobs and prosperity depend heavily on trade flows with other countries. In fact, one out of every six Canadian jobs is related to exports, and Canadian exports amount to more than 30% of Canada's GDP. It is because trade is so vital to our economy that our government has undertaken to advance a progressive trade agenda.

The concept of progressive trade is what helped us to conclude CETA with our EU partners. I will pause for one minute to say how very pleased I am that at the EU-Canada summit where CETA was signed by the president of the European Council, the president of the European Commission, and our Prime Minister, a joint statement was also issued that outlined our mutual shared values and interests beyond trade.

They signed a statement that included agreement on shared values and goals, like peace and democracy, prosperity, protection of human rights, the rule of law, the environment, and inclusion and cultural diversity. The commitment to and promotion of these values and goals is not only important to me, but I know is also really important to the residents of Davenport.

Canada engages in CETA because we believe that it will lift up all Canadians. We believe that CETA will open up new markets, and it has the potential to significantly increase Canadian wealth. Small and medium-sized enterprises, in particular, are looking to our

government to open up new markets for potential exports, and our government is committed to this goal.

We have heard directly from Canadian businesses, many of them within ethnic communities, like the Portuguese, Italian, and Spanish communities, which are found in ridings across Canada, like Davenport. They have asked us to do more to help them grow. They want us to increase sales, increase profits, reduce risk, lower costs, and reach beyond saturated domestic markets.

For trade in goods, CETA will help foster such opportunities by eliminating virtually all tariffs, and establishing mechanisms to address non-tariff barriers to create more predictable trading conditions. These are some of the things businesses want, and we will help achieve these goals by standing against the protectionist ideology that is unfortunately emerging across the globe.

• (1035)

Stakeholders from across the country in a wide range of economic sectors continue to tell us how trade has positively impacted their business. With our government's continued commitment to trade, we will keep this positive trend alive.

CETA would also provide Canadian companies with a first-mover advantage in the EU market over competitors from markets like the U.S. that do not have a trade agreement in place with the EU. It would allow Canada to establish customer relationships and networks and to join projects first. CETA would offer Canada the opportunity to be part of a broader global supply chain anchored in the EU. Opening up new markets for our manufactured and processed products means that our country would be at an advantage in exporting more automobiles, medical devices, agriculture and agrifood products, machinery, fish, and everything in-between. Opening up new markets in our agriculture and agrifood products would mean more opportunities for abundant and delicious blueberries from Nova Scotia; potatoes from P.E.I.; processed products and pet food from Ontario; prairie grains; ciders, cranberries, and maple syrup from Quebec; and the best pork and beef in the world, just to name a few.

Preferential access to the EU under CETA means that almost all Canadian products would be free from EU tariffs. In some cases, tariffs account for more than 50% of the product price, such as the current EU tariff on Canadian oats.

Government Orders

I have mentioned a few of our vibrant sectors, and there are many more sectors whose exporters would benefit from CETA. But now I would like to highlight another important opportunity that CETA would open up for Canadian exporters of goods and services. CETA would expand access to EU's \$3.3 trillion government procurement market, in many cases for the first time to any trading partner. Thanks to CETA, Canadian firms would now have access to all levels of government procurement. This would especially benefit Canada's producers of world-leading technologies, who would have guaranteed access to European public utilities in the areas of water treatment, electricity, gas, and heat; and to the EU's mass-transit authorities.

Members will note that when discussing procurement, not only have I mentioned exporters of goods but also of services. The EU services market is worth an astounding \$12 trillion. It is in fact the world's single largest importer of services, accounting for 20% of the world's total imports. CETA would give Canadian service suppliers the best market access the EU has ever granted to a free trade agreement partner. Through mechanisms such as national treatment, most-favoured nation provisions, along with the automatic ratchet mechanism, Canada's access to the EU services market would improve over time. This means that not only would CETA open up new markets for Canadian service exporters upon implementation, but it would also guarantee that Canada's access would improve in the future.

In conclusion, I believe it is now evident that CETA is a big deal for Canadian companies. It is a big deal for Canadians, including the businesses and residents of my riding of Davenport. We are making good on our promise to create opportunities for small and medium-sized companies and to generate jobs and economic growth that will benefit all Canadians. This agreement would tear down barriers and create a bridge across the Atlantic for Canadian exporters of goods and services. Through CETA, Canada would receive unprecedented access to the EU and its 28 member states. With CETA, Canada would send a clear signal to the world that not only does it support progressive trade for its own economic well-being, but that it is also a leader in countering the rising protectionist sentiments in Europe and south of the border. The ratification of CETA would be seen as evidence that our nation never gives up on supporting our economic well-being and continues to lead by example in pursuit of prosperity for its citizens.

I support this bill and all the benefits that it would bring to Canadians and to EU citizens. I urge all hon. members to support this bill. It was a pleasure to have the opportunity to speak today.

• (1040)

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Madam Speaker, there are two issues that I would like to ask the member to comment on.

One is the fact that at the committee stage, Canadians will not be able to submit written submissions to the committee for consideration. Does the member agree with that? Why would we close opportunities for Canadians to express their points of view on this important trade deal?

Second is the issue of CETA's implications for pharmacare costs. The trade deal will have a huge implications for our pharmacare

costs with respect to patents. That will have a huge impact on us. Already, in terms of health care costs, we will be dealing with a \$36 billion cut as the hangover from the Harper administration, which the current government is carrying over. How would we handle the impacts on health care costs across the country vis-à-vis patents on pharmacare?

• (1045)

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: Madam Speaker, CETA has been a long time in the making. There has been a lot of negotiation over many years. There have been many consultations. A lot of thoughtfulness has gone into the agreement.

CETA will give Canada access to the EU's more than 500 million consumers. Canadian workers stand to benefit significantly from increased access to this 28-nation market, which generates \$20 trillion in annual economic activity.

On the issue of pharmacare, the rising cost of drugs is a huge concern for people in my riding. It is of great concern to our Minister of Health. It is part of the current discussions and negotiations the minister is having with her counterparts across this country. I have every confidence that we will find good solutions to it moving forward.

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): Madam Speaker, I appreciate the intervention of my colleague with regard to the submissions to committee. It is almost unheard of that this government-paid committee, or more importantly, this taxpayer-paid committee, would be shut off from receiving information. I have never heard of that before. It requires a special procedure. It would mean that we do not want to hear from constituents.

I was on that committee at one point.

Britain is Canada's third-largest trading partner and is one of the secure anchors for Canada in this deal, and it is leaving the European Union. There is going to be quite a difference between what was in the past agreement and how it was arranged versus what we will have now.

Why would we not want to hear from Canadians and businesses on how to deal with that new reality?

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: Madam Speaker, there is large support for CETA right across this country. There is large support in my riding.

The implementing legislation for CETA will be subject to all the stages of the legislative process. I have every confidence that any outstanding questions will be responded to through that legislative process. I look forward to its successful conclusion. People are looking forward to us finalizing CETA and having it in action.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, could my colleague comment on how trade will help Canada's middle class? A healthy middle class means a healthier economy, and we all benefit.

Government Orders

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: Madam Speaker, CETA will not only help the middle class across Canada but will help lift up all Canadians. Canada is a trading nation. We are a small nation. Increasing business and trade around the world will help create more jobs and more prosperity for the middle class and for all Canadians from coast to coast to coast.

Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is a great honour today to speak in support of the comprehensive economic and trade agreement between Canada and the European Union.

I will be sharing my time with the member of Parliament for Richmond Centre. I think she will join me in giving accolades to the previous government and particularly to two members of Parliament, the MP for Abbotsford and the MP for Battlefords—Lloydminster. They worked very hard with the previous government to see this vision move forward. On that note, I would also like to commend the Liberal government for following through on the tireless work of the former Conservative government on the agreement.

It can be refreshing when two different governments share a common vision of how we can build a stronger Canada. We know that rarely happens in this place.

I would like to state some of the reasons I am supporting the CETA deal.

In Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, we have a rather unique perspective on free trade deals. Many in the Okanagan region will recall the days in the 1980s when the Canada-United States Free Trade Agreement was looming on the horizon. As is often the case when a trade deal is imminent, the forces of fear were out in full force.

In fact, many grape growers were threatening to rip out their vineyards, so convinced were they that they would not be able to compete and survive against the vast vineyards and inexpensive wines of California. Then a funny thing happened. A few prominent vineyards said no to defeatist thinking and instead saw opportunity.

Do not get me wrong. It has taken some immense hard work, and at the time, the federal government of the day provided some transitional assistance. We know that today Okanagan vintners, as well as British Columbian vintners, make some of the best wines in the world. Okanagan vintners, I would suggest, have not only survived but have thrived and prospered.

Here is something else to think about. In spite of the fact that seven of every 10 bottles of wine sold in Canada are made outside of Canada, a B.C. vintner still cannot directly sell to a customer in Ontario because of the protectionist policies of the Wynne Liberal government.

We also know that the federal Liberal government has once again failed Canada's vintners, brewers, and distillers alike in the latest round of negotiations on internal trade. In fact, it is the same Liberal government that is so terrified of internal trade it refused to elevate the Comeau decision to the Supreme Court for constitutional clarification.

I struggle with that. We have a Liberal government that will impose a national carbon tax on the provinces but will not impose a

true internal trade regime that well may be a constitutional right. One can only assume that the 142% increase in consultant lobbying under the current Liberal government, as big corporations want to protect provincial monopolies, is part of the problem.

Where does that leave vintners in my riding? Many are now selling wine directly to customers outside of Canada, because they cannot do the same thing legally in Ontario. Nowhere but in the Liberal Party of Canada does this make any sense.

It is easy to understand why I will be supporting trade deals like CETA, because for many vintners in the Okanagan and British Columbia, this is where opportunities are to be found. I predict that when CETA member nations have their opportunity to directly sample some of these B.C. wines, they will be very impressed by the talent of Canadian vintners.

● (1050)

[*Translation*]

Of course, there are other good things in my riding besides wine. We also have many fruit farmers, some of whom have ventured beyond the co-operative model to become independent and discovered that foreign markets offer new opportunities that can be very lucrative.

Through the good work of the Summerland federal research station, which is in my riding, new technologies are extending the shelf life of fruit and other perishable products, like flowers. I think that is great, because with longer shipping times, farmers can use more affordable and more environmentally friendly methods. For example, they ship products by sea, rather than by air, or by rail, rather than in trucks.

These are all positive aspects of CETA that could mean significant new opportunities for fruit farmers.

In addition to farmers and producers, of course, we also have manufacturing and resource firms in my riding. These days, certain private employers that pay some of the best salaries depend on new markets to sell and export their products.

We have to remember that in light of the recent election in the United States, we do not yet know how the new American administration will affect Canadian exports to the U.S. That is why diversifying our markets with new partners is so important.

I think it is also worth noting that Canadians can compete with the best in the world in virtually every domain, and they are already doing so.

I do have some concerns, however, that I would like to share with the House. My biggest concern is that CETA member countries do not, I repeat, do not have the same internal trade barriers that Canada does. It is therefore possible that farmers in CETA member countries will have easier access to certain Canadian provinces than our own farmers.

Government Orders

CETA is not to blame for that. It is our own collective failure, especially here in the House. We should have referred Comeau to the Supreme Court when we had the chance. Even though the Conservatives, the NDP, and the Green Party all supported the motion, the Liberals forced the vote and said no to domestic free trade. We need to recognize that CETA may give preferential access to certain sectors at the expense of Canadian producers who face domestic trade barriers.

My other concern is more administrative in nature. I hope that this Liberal government will provide technical resources so that small farmers and small business owners can benefit from CETA. Many small businesses do not have the resources or the internal capacity to acquire the necessary technical expertise to navigate international markets.

My last concern is more of a reminder. One of the downsides of trade agreements is that the nations with lower costs sometimes end up with a trade surplus relative to those where costs are higher.

We know that these concerns were a major issue during the recent U.S. election, especially in the Midwest. It is therefore important that we, and by we I mean all levels of government, know that a nation can only be competitive if the cost of doing business is low.

Ontario's green policy is giving rise to energy poverty and chasing away manufacturing industries. We must also realize that the United States does not have a carbon tax. The State of Washington recently voted against a carbon tax.

Let us not fool ourselves. We have had a significant excise tax and GST on certain products like gas for quite some time. We have to be careful not to further increase the cost of doing business exclusively for Canadian companies, and forgetting that they are competing with businesses from other countries.

With the exception of the concerns about balance, I am delighted with the opportunities that CETA will create in my riding. I will support this bill and continue to promote the ways in which we can fully benefit from it.

• (1055)

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the member made reference to interprovincial trade. We recognize that the government needs to give attention to interprovincial trade and try to work with provinces to see where we could improve the conditions that would ultimately allow for more interprovincial trade and increase access to foreign markets, especially when we take into consideration the move toward globalization and trade.

Could the member explain to the House why the former Stephen Harper government failed to deal with interprovincial trade issues, or possibly even cite a few examples where he felt that the former Conservative government was actually successful on interprovincial trade?

• (1100)

Mr. Dan Albas: Madame Speaker, I welcome the question.

Simply put, my bill, Bill C-311, opened up free trade of wine between Canadian provinces at the federal level. The federal government of the day later, in budget 2014, supported the same kind of treatment for Canadian beer and Canadian spirits. The previous government made huge leaps in that area, which not only helped that particular value-added sector, it also helped our farmers who feed into the inputs of that.

Again, the former minister of industry, Mr. James Moore, spearheaded an initiative for which the Liberals like to claim total credit, to have a new agreement on internal trade. We know that deals like CETA, which were supported by every single province and territory after extensive consultation by the previous government to get there, allowed for a good process of which we are bearing the fruits today.

Unfortunately, it is the same government that has not led collaboration with the provinces to the point where it would allow for beers, spirits, and alcohol to flow freely. We had a chance with the Comeau case in New Brunswick, where we could have elevated it to the Supreme Court to get that constitutional clarity. That member voted against it.

On this side of the House, we are always proposing ideas on which we can get pan-Canadian agreement and consensus. It is that member and his party who voted that down, and it is that member and his party who now support a carbon tax, which again is at odds. The Liberals say they want to work with provinces, but yet they impose mandatory carbon taxes that make our Canadian businesses less competitive internationally.

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): Madam Speaker, it has been interesting to listen to the debate on trade and what we are putting into it. It is amazing how much time we have spent in this House of Commons on trade, but so very little on economic strategies related to, for example, manufacturing.

This is not a full list, but it is a list of trade agreements, investment promotion agreements, and protection agreements that we have signed over the last number of years. It is Peru, Panama, Romania, Senegal, Nigeria, Slovak Republic, Korea, Kuwait, Tanzania, Liechtenstein, Mali, Jordan, Latvia, Benin, Burkina, Colombia, Ghana, Hong Kong, and Ukraine.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Brian Masse: I hear a lot of cheering, Madam Speaker. I would ask the hon. member, given his party has identified that the Liberals have really created zero jobs given their last year, why then, with all these accolades to these signed agreements, has there not been an increase in jobs related to all these trade agreements? It is a simple measurement system that we need to look at, and I would like to know specifically. We could use Latvia as an example. Where are the Canadian jobs that have come from the trade agreement with Latvia?

Mr. Dan Albas: Madam Speaker, I certainly appreciate the member's concerns, because again, as we said, any time that there is a new trade agreement or investment agreement proposed, some people draw attention to areas with which they do not feel comfortable. I think we need to address them with logic.

Government Orders

We sign FIPAs that basically allow for investor protection and promotions between both countries. Here in Canada we treat everyone the same. In fact, I like to joke that in Canada, we will treat everyone equally unfairly, which is our way of treating everyone the same. When someone invests in Canada, they receive no extra consideration more than anyone else. They are treated completely fairly and have full access to the courts. When we have Canadians investing abroad, they do not always have that, so having these trade agreements that protect Canadian business and Canadian investors is very important.

Hon. Alice Wong (Richmond Centre, CPC): Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak to Bill C-30, an act to implement the comprehensive economic and trade agreement between Canada and the European Union, CETA.

I would like to first acknowledge my Conservative colleagues, the Right Hon. Steven Harper, the hon. member for Abbotsford, and the hon. member for Battlefords—Lloydminster. Thanks to their dedication and hard work over the past few years, this agreement has now been made possible.

CETA will give Canadian firms new and secure opportunities to supply both goods and services to all 28 member states of the European Union. While this trade agreement has many different components, all of which provide immense opportunities for the Canadian economy, I will be focusing my speech on the implications this agreement has on the business and private sectors in Canada.

An early study of this agreement, when it was in the negotiating stage in the last government, indicated that a trade agreement with the European Union would likely result in almost 80,000 new jobs for Canadians. This is exactly what the Canadian economy needs now: jobs. One of the reoccurring aspects of CETA is the agreement to eliminate almost all trade tariffs for Canadian goods and services. It is expected that 99% of tariff lines to the EU will be duty-free once the agreement is fully implemented. By eliminating this type of trade barrier, Canadian producers will have increased access to the EU market and a competitive edge over other global producers who do not have the same kind of trade agreement.

As the critic for small business, I hear this conversation frequently. Business owners want to have better access to global markets. This agreement will help answer that call. What smaller companies will now need to know from the government is how SMEs can become important partners in the supply chain.

To ensure that Canadian businesses are able to effectively operate in the EU market, CETA also includes a regulatory co-operation component. The regulatory co-operation forum will provide Canadian and EU regulators with information to ensure that regulatory measures in both markets are compatible and of mutual interest. This will dramatically diminish the barriers often experienced by businesses entering a new market.

In addition to Canadian-made goods, services such as management, financial, and engineering will have better access to the EU markets. Once CETA has been fully implemented, Canadian service exporters will have the same level of access and be bound by the same regulations as those service providers in the EU.

One of the most important aspects of CETA is the investment provisions. Investment is a critical way to engage with the global economy and stimulate economic growth and job creation. CETA will allow both Canadian and EU investors to capitalize on new opportunities while also ensuring stability and transparency in the market as a means of protecting their investments. There are many reasons why the EU market should wish to invest in Canada, and CETA will encourage such investment.

Although there are many positive and exciting aspects to this agreement, there are also some missing pieces. There have been several unilateral declarations made between member states that have not been agreed to by either Canada or the EU.

● (1105)

Additionally, while there are many positive aspects of the investment chapter of this agreement, there is still some uncertainty. As it becomes clear which provisions in the protection and investment dispute resolution aspect of the agreement will be implemented and which will be removed, I ask that the government be forthcoming on these decisions. It is important that any implications these declarations may have on our industries are explained to Canadian exporters and it is important that the Canadian best interests are maintained.

As a member of Parliament from British Columbia, I would like to also comment briefly on the many opportunities CETA will provide to my home province. Services that are critical to B.C., such as environmental services, communication technology services, and energy services, will have new and unprecedented access to the EU markets and economy.

Just last week I met with a business representative from the aerospace industry and he explained the types of growth CETA will be able to provide to his line of work. B.C. companies understand how important this agreement is and I look forward to hearing of the success they will find in the EU market. As the entire service sector is of critical component of B.C.'s GDP and employs a majority of British Columbians, this sort of competitive edge will greatly benefit the province and my riding of Richmond Centre.

B.C. also represents diverse agricultural and agrifood products from seafood to produce and is known for its high food safety standards. Opening up the market to these producers will encourage further growth and world-class excellence.

Government Orders

I am very pleased that, after all of the hard work done by many over the past few years, an agreement has been made. Although I have noted a few of my concerns on the agreement, I look forward to the many benefits CETA will provide to our Canadian businesses and our country on a national level. Canada will be one of a few countries that has been able to secure such access to the world's two largest economies, the United States and the European Union, and that is something to be extremely proud of.

My next question for the current government is how we are going to deal with the trans-Pacific partnership, which the president-elect of the U.S. has openly declared that he is going to withdraw from. I have had the opportunity of joining our former prime minister, the trade minister, and the minister of agriculture to explore business opportunities in Asia in a good number of years. I certainly hope that even without the U.S., our government is able to go forward with the TPP and open up an even larger market for all Canadians.

• (1110)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, CETA has been achieved over a number of years. Over the last year it has been a high priority of this government. The minister responsible has visited Europe on numerous occasions, along with the parliamentary secretary and other components of government, to ensure that we get the best deal for Canadians. We believe that the deal we have through this legislation is indeed the best deal for Canadians. It would ultimately assist Canada's middle class and those aspiring to become part of the middle class, and as one of my colleagues indicated, all Canadians would benefit by this particular agreement.

It is generally perceived that this agreement is a good thing for Canada. It has had years of being at the table with open discussions, transparency, and accountability. It is an issue of accountability during the election period. Provinces are virtually onside with this agreement. Does the member not recognize that in regard to the TPP, something the Conservatives are really pushing, there is a process? There was an election commitment given by this Prime Minister to look at that agreement because we have a great deal of concern, something Canadians also share.

• (1115)

Hon. Alice Wong: Madam Speaker, that is exactly what I have been looking for: a commitment from our current government to open even more trade markets. However, during negotiations, we should be aware of some of the barriers that might happen. That is why I mentioned a few shortcomings that the current government has not been able to handle. There is still work to do.

I must give credit to the current government for its hard work and to the whole team that has been working over a good number of years to make this a success. What we are looking for right now are the interests of Canada and all Canadians. This is exactly why, no matter what party we come from, our ultimate goal is to make sure that jobs are created and our interests are protected.

Ms. Sheri Benson (Saskatoon West, NDP): Madam Speaker, my riding of Saskatoon West shares some of the same economic indicators as the member's. That is, there is a large service sector, where many of the jobs are. One thing I am trying to do in the debate today is get more than slogans on trade, such as "new jobs, new

prosperity". We do not get a lot of indicators of what kind of impact it is going to have, particularly on jobs.

My colleague talked about 80,000 jobs being created. I wonder if she could let me know in what area those jobs are going to be created, how soon that will happen, and whether it will happen in the service sector. She needs to explain how that will happen. For small and medium-sized businesses to take advantage of trade deals, they need support to scale up to participate. If she would like to comment, I would appreciate it.

Hon. Alice Wong: Madam Speaker, this is exactly why I mentioned in my speech that the government should encourage SMEs to be prepared to go into this large market. At the same time, we would also like to make sure that all the barriers are gone, because there will be certain labour agreements that allow our service providers to provide their services not only in Canada but in the EU market. Usually those services are not easily accessed if we do not have a good agreement.

This is exactly why I applaud the current government for doing a good job. Now it should follow up. For SMEs, this is a very important step. In my own riding, engineers, accountants, and other financial consultants will have good opportunities to expand their businesses to Europe.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Lauzon (Parliamentary Secretary for Sport and Persons with Disabilities, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity today to speak about cultural issues in the context of the Canada-European Union comprehensive economic and trade agreement.

Before getting into the specifics of the agreement, I would like to take a moment to remind members that, as a nation, Canada has developed a vibrant cultural sector. We know that over the years we have established many vibrant cultural institutions, a diversified publishing sector, a talented music industry, a stimulating digital media sector, and renowned film and television industries.

Cultural and creative industries are the engines of development and diversity, create jobs, which we spoke about earlier, and improve the quality of life for all Canadians. The cultural sector is a growing part of the Canadian economy and represents 3% of our GDP, or \$54.6 billion in economic activities. More than 630,000 jobs, or 3.5% of all jobs in Canada, depend on this sector. Come to think of it, the creative industry is bigger than the agriculture, forestry and fishing industries combined.

Government Orders

Over the years, the government has used financial incentives, Canadian content requirements, tax measures, and various tools and policies regarding foreign investment and intellectual property in order to maintain a vibrant Canadian culture. The Government of Canada's cultural policy basically seeks to promote an environment in which Canadian cultural products are created, produced, marketed, preserved, and shared with the public both at home and abroad, thereby contributing to Canada's economic, social, and cultural growth.

Canada's cultural ecosystem has been very effective and successful throughout the world. Here are a few examples. Not only is Canada the third-largest exporter of musical talent in the world, but after a record year for Canadian artists on the 2015 Billboard charts, the success continues with the singles of eight Canadian artists ranked in the top 100 in the United States in 2016. Another example is the 21 Canadian Oscar nominees, including Denis Villeneuve, Rachel McAdams, and the Canadian-Irish co-production *Room*. In 2014-15, Canada's television and film production was valued at over \$7 billion.

In order to create the right conditions for success and meet the objective of its cultural policy, Canada must retain the flexibility it needs to develop policies and programs. As a result, Canada's approach to international trade agreements, such as CETA, has always been to exclude measures affecting our cultural industries.

Although international trade agreements vary in how they deal with cultural policies and programs, Canada's objective in the negotiation of such agreements remains the same: to maintain the policy space required to meet our cultural objectives in order to promote the creation, exchange, and experience of Canadian cultural content; promote cultural diversity in Canada and abroad; and offer new export markets and new opportunities to artists and professionals working in the cultural sector.

CETA is no different, but we have found new ways to preserve our policy space to address cultural priorities. Since the Canada-U.S. free trade agreement was signed in 1987, Canada has included a broad major exception for cultural industries in its free trade agreements. For CETA, Canada adopted a more targeted approach by including exceptions to measures affecting the cultural sector in certain chapters that could have an impact on cultural programs and policies. Both parties agreed that this innovative approach will provide Canada and its trading partners with greater clarity and transparency with respect to future cultural policies.

• (1120)

The new chapter-by-chapter approach provides a much higher degree of protection than the general exception in previous free trade agreements. It will enable Canada to preserve its existing cultural policies and develop new ones without breaking trade rules.

Exceptions to measures affecting cultural industries are included in CETA chapters on cross-border trade in services, domestic regulation, investment, government procurement, and subsidies. These chapters include explicit exceptions for the cultural sector.

In CETA, as in all of Canada's free trade agreements, the definition of cultural industries includes books, magazines, period-

icals, music, videos, films, and broadcasting. CETA sets a new standard for trade agreements with respect to culture.

CETA not only protects all Canadian cultural policies, it also enables us to innovate in promoting our cultural industries to attract new audiences in a rapidly growing international market. Europe is the biggest market in the world with over 500 million people in 28 countries whose combined GDP is \$20 trillion.

CETA's preamble recognizes the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions. As long-time partners that recognize the special role played by culture both economically and socially, Canada and the European Union fully support the principle set out in that convention. Those principles include maintaining the space needed to develop cultural policies, remaining open to foreign content, and ensuring international co-operation to promote the diversity of cultural expressions.

The UNESCO convention also reminds the parties that they need to think about how the commitments made in international trade agreements will affect their ability to achieve their cultural objectives.

Throughout the CETA negotiations, the Government of Canada consulted extensively with the provinces, territories, and stakeholders from a wide range of cultural sectors including books, film, television, music, performing arts, and visual arts. They all welcomed the new approach.

Before I conclude, I just want to reiterate that our government is committed to promoting Canada's cultural interests in the negotiation of all economic agreements as well as protecting and preserving the policy space necessary to pursue cultural priorities.

It is very important that our government enable Canadian creators and artists to take advantage of the opportunities that international markets and foreign audiences have to offer. As others have said, CETA is a top-notch agreement that offers access to the largest market in the world: 500 million people in 28 countries that represent a combined GDP of \$20 billion.

The Minister of Canadian Heritage is currently consulting key cultural partners and stakeholders in order to determine the best way to take advantage of the opening of new markets such as Europe and to support Canadian cultural exporters. That is why budget 2016 included a \$35-million investment over two years to support the promotion of Canadian artists and Canadian cultural industries abroad.

This is just the beginning, an important step in the process to re-establish and enhance Canada's cultural presence on the world stage, in order to ensure the global and lasting success of our cultural industries.

Government Orders

• (1125)

[English]

Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Madam Speaker, I have a specific question for the hon. member about the impacts on the dairy industry.

I have taken the time to stay in touch with the dairy industry, which is deeply concerned about the impact of this agreement. The industry is very concerned that the government is offering substantially less money than it promised during the election. They are grateful that they will be receiving some funding, but it will be matching funding. They have two questions, and I will put them to the member.

One, for this \$350 million, will the money to administer this cost-share program come out of that fund or is it going to be added on to it? They are concerned that there will not be enough money for the dairy producers and processors.

Second, how quickly is this money going to flow so they can adjust to the new market conditions?

[Translation]

Mr. Stéphane Lauzon: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question.

Given everything that was negotiated, the Canada-EU comprehensive economic and trade agreement is multi-faceted and covers sectors such as aerospace, agriculture, and food.

However, today my speech focuses mainly on culture, a sector for which we committed \$35 million over two years to support the promotion of Canadian artists and Canadian cultural industries abroad. That is what we promised and that is what we are going to do.

• (1130)

[English]

Mr. Garnett Genus (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Speaker, I want to follow up with a question that I asked a Liberal member yesterday but do not think I got an answer to.

Certainly, we support this trade deal. We think it is important. However, I am concerned about the global forces of protectionism that are obviously out there. I think it is important for Canada to respond to these and to make strong arguments on the benefits of open trade.

It was disappointing to see the Prime Minister, right out the gate after the election of the new president, basically throw NAFTA under the bus by saying that he would be prepared to completely renegotiate it. This is a deal that has worked very well for Canada. If the government, in the context of this trade deal, understands and appreciates the value of open trade, then why is the Prime Minister and the government not prepared to take a clear stand in support of NAFTA, a trade deal that we have had here for a very long time and that has worked very well for both our countries?

[Translation]

Mr. Stéphane Lauzon: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question, even though it is a bit off topic with respect to my

speech. My speech was about the Canada-European Union comprehensive economic and trade agreement, and today we are focusing on culture.

I understand that members may have questions about our trade agreements with the United States. However, today, we are promoting the Canada-European Union comprehensive economic and trade agreement and discussing how it affects Canadian artists. Artists in the member's riding could benefit from this agreement. This is a good agreement that affects various sectors. It will create jobs and capitalize on the European Union's GDP so that every Canadian working in the cultural community will be able to benefit from it in the future.

[English]

Mr. Garnett Genus: Madam Speaker, first of all, I share the member's concern about supporting culture. I recognize the benefits that come from international trade, not only the economic benefits from our sharing together economically through mutually beneficial exchange, but also the cultural sharing that takes place in the midst of that economic exchange. However, I think it is fair to pose a question in the context of the discussion on international trade about where the current government is going when it comes to trade policy.

We have the continuation of previous trade agreements. We have this inertia, kind of, from the previous government. However, as soon as we had a new president in the United States who has been critical of NAFTA, the Prime Minister of Canada, right out of the gate, said he would be prepared to renegotiate it. I guess I want to know from the member what it says about the principal positions of the government, which on the one hand is supporting this trade deal with the EU, which we certainly agree with, but on the other hand is prepared to tear up a trade deal that has worked very well for Canada for quite a long time.

[Translation]

Mr. Stéphane Lauzon: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his second question.

Obviously, today's goal is to focus on the Canada-European Union comprehensive economic and trade agreement. I understand that the member has questions about the United States.

However, today, I would like to answer only questions regarding the principles that we established with the European Union that seek to maintain our policy space, make Canadian content available abroad, and most of all, maintain support for international co-operation. That also includes co-operation with the United States.

We do trade with the United States. However, today, we are focusing on the European Union.

[English]

Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Madam Speaker, we know that the investment protection portion of the investment chapter in investment-dispute resolution would not be provisionally applied by the EU Commission and member states when CETA comes into force. So the only thing the Liberal government changed in CETA to make it progressive would be rejected right out of the gate.

Government Orders

Will the Liberal member not admit that what has been agreed to between Canada and the EU is essentially the same agreement that was concluded in 2014 by the previous Conservative government?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Lauzon: Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for his question.

Obviously, CETA affects a number of sectors. The member opposite is talking about different bilateral agreements that cover different areas. Today, I would like to talk about all the measures that are good for Canada. Our artists will be able to benefit from our trade with the United States. We can take advantage of a very high GDP and investments in this area, and this agreement will give Canadians access to 500 million people. We have the opportunity to establish a partnership with Europe, and that is what we are doing with this agreement.

• (1135)

[*English*]

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Madam Speaker, with respect to CETA, the new investor court system would still allow foreign investors to seek compensation from any level of government over policy decisions they feel impact their profits, and foreign companies would have access to special courts to challenge Canadian laws without going through their own domestic courts.

Canada is already one of the most sued countries in the world under investor-state dispute settlement provisions. Canadian companies have won only three out of 39 cases against foreign governments and the Canadian government has lost many NAFTA cases while continuing to be subject to ongoing complaints seeking billions of dollars in damages. The existing investor-state dispute settlement measures have contributed to a regulatory chill, in which government has failed to take action in the public interest that it fears may trigger an investor claim.

Given that this is the case, what the government is now asking us to do is to sign a blank cheque saying, “Trust us, it’s all going to be good”. Would the minister sign a blank cheque with his own account in any other circumstance? I think not. If not, why would he ask us to support this?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Lauzon: Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for her question.

This agreement will help create jobs in various areas of publishing, music, digital media, and other areas related to culture and talent. I do not really see why we would be sued because it is a good agreement for industries that create direct and indirect jobs.

In fact, when you move a team to put on a show in Europe, for example, there are direct jobs for the artists, and indirect jobs for the support crew. There are also the manufacturers, the technology, and all the businesses involved directly or indirectly in the arts and culture. This will ensure that CETA will be good for Canada.

[*English*]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The first five hours of debate on this issue has expired, and so the speeches

from now on will be 10-minute speeches with five-minute questions and comments.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan.

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to rise and debate this legislation. I am sure all of my colleagues are disappointed that it will only be a 10-minute speech, especially the member for Winnipeg North.

I would like to talk first about the deal itself and then make a few general comments about the broader context of international trade. I will also make a few points of refutation.

When it comes to the deal itself, we in the Conservative Party are pleased to support this deal put forward in the House by the Liberals, but which reflects work begun long before they took office. This deal was initially signed under the previous Conservative government. We have had some near misses in recent months, but we are glad to see the deal where it is.

I will cite a few numbers that I am sure have been referenced in the House before. Studies have suggested that this deal could lead to a 20% increase in bilateral trade and a \$12 billion annual increase in the Canadian economy. This would be the equivalent of adding \$1,000 to the average Canadian family’s income, or almost 80,000 new jobs to the Canadian economy. This is some of the evidence of the economic benefits of trade that we have heard.

I have spoken about this before, but I would like to be clear about why trade benefits our country. When we sign free trade agreements, we are creating opportunities for mutually beneficial exchanges between individuals and businesses in different countries. This increases efficiency and allows people not only to specialize in things they can be more efficient in for international markets, but also perhaps creates increased efficiency for companies to specialize in areas that reflect their interests and expertise. This in turn creates increased opportunities for general and economic well-being. That is why our Conservative government was bullish when it came to signing international trade agreements and moving forward with different negotiations.

My colleague from Windsor West listed the trade agreements that our previous government signed, and I think he was suggesting it was a bad thing. The many trade agreements he listed that we had moved forward with are agreements that we on this side of the House are proud of.

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The government has talked about the consultations that went on with respect to this agreement. It is important to say that the form of consultations that went on with this deal are similar to those used in other trade deals. It is a bit strange to hear the Liberals talk about the great consultations that happened on CETA but then criticize the alleged lack of consultations in the negotiations on the trans-Pacific partnership. The process the government has followed for consultation and engaging stakeholders is very similar and, at some point, the government may have to reconcile that difference in its opinion. Nonetheless, even though there is some inconsistency from members on the government side, we are pleased to support this important trade deal and hope that the work here will continue.

That said, it is very germane to our discussion today to comment on the broader global environment and how Canada situates itself in the midst of the global trade conversation.

The signing of this deal reflects a certain inertia, in that the government has continued the work done by the previous Conservative government. What we need right now from the government is not inertia, not the continuation of work undertaken by the previous government, but acceleration. We need a government that will respond to the challenges that are happening with respect to the global discussion on trade. We need a government that will respond in a clear and aggressive way with the hope of accelerating and increasing our response, and with the hope of undertaking new trade initiatives that respond to the unique and particular challenges we are facing right now.

That means laying the groundwork for the arguments that we will make. It means working with legislators, with elected governments, with people around the world to make constructive and positive arguments about the benefits of trade. That is what a government should do when going from just inertia when it comes to trade to accelerating our approach to trade for the benefit of Canada economically and socially.

How do we do this in the midst of a global environment where protectionist forces are bubbling? I would argue that things are not as bad as they have been presented by some voices.

• (1140)

This question of bubbling protectionism really started with the Brexit vote in the U.K. There are arguments on both sides of that question, and obviously that is a question for the U.K., not for us here.

However, it is important to acknowledge that many of those who advocated for Brexit were themselves free traders. They were concerned about different aspects of the kind of trading structure that existed in the EU, and more so about the way in which legislative authority has been transferred to sort of a central European organization.

Many of those advocating for an exit, who were ultimately successful, were talking about the importance of the U.K. still having many international trading relations, and in fact they were arguing that they would be more able to sign international trade deals without the stipulations that exist as part of the EU treaty. Again, it is not for me to say whether those arguments are right or wrong, but I think it is incorrect to infer from the Brexit vote that this was a rejection of

the idea of international trade. It was not. It was the reflection of a different set of arguments about international trade.

The rolling forward of the Brexit process will create some issues and questions around Canada's relations with the U.K., given that we are now entering into a CETA agreement that includes the U.K. I suspect there will be a very strong interest in the U.K. to sign a comprehensive free trade deal, maybe an even deeper form of co-operation with Canada, and certainly to have ongoing close trading relationships with the EU.

I hope that what we will see is the following through of what was said during the Brexit campaign, which is both sides committed to the idea of international trade.

Of course the challenge that comes from the United States in the current environment is a little different. Although a lot of the evidence, in terms of polling, suggests that there still is a strong commitment in the United States to free trade at the individual level and among many legislators, the president-elect was able to be critical of trade in a specific way in specific markets. I think it is hard to dispute that the message had an important impact on his electoral success.

We need to see, quite realistically, the challenge that is presented by those arguments that are critical of trade—at least critical of certain trade agreements. How do we respond to that, then, as Canada? We need to be clear and forceful in making arguments about the benefits of the open economy.

I will say that we have a Prime Minister who has been quite willing to make arguments internationally about the importance and benefits of an open society, a society that accepts people from different kinds of backgrounds. When he does that, that reflects universal Canadian values, not just the perspective of one individual party. All of us are committed to the idea of an open and tolerant society.

From my perspective, a commitment to the open economy is very much associated with a commitment to the open society. If we believe that people within a given nation state can co-operate together, can work together, can share common values in the midst of diversity, then it follows as well that people should be able to engage in economic exchange across cultural lines, indeed across national lines. A belief in trade, a belief in the open economy is a corollary of the very same set of principles.

I would ask if the Prime Minister, in the midst of talking about the benefits of open society, of co-operation in the midst of diversity, would also be willing to speak about the benefits of the open economy, benefits that we have seen here in Canada, but also benefits that I think we realize exist around the world.

We can be clear in making those arguments to individuals in the United States at a popular level, but also by working with legislators. It is unfortunate that we have a government that thus far has not been prepared to do that, that again has been carrying forward this inertia; yes, moving forward in some cases, not every case, with trade agreements that were negotiated and signed under the previous government, but not really being willing to talk publicly in a clear, aggressive, positive way about the benefits of international trade.

Government Orders

We really need that right now. Given these forces that are out there, given the debates that are happening internationally, Canada, a country that has benefited so much from international trade, can play a leadership role in speaking about that.

I hope we will see a change in tone, an acceleration in tone from the government. At the same time, we are very pleased about this particular trade deal, and I look forward to supporting it.

• (1145)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, to that end, I am sure the member across the way would acknowledge that what we have seen in the last 12 months is a very progressive, aggressive government dealing with the whole issue of trade.

We can talk about the Prairies and the canola, the beef, and the pork, whether it is China or other countries. We can talk about the formalization of the Ukraine trade agreement. We can talk about the bill we have today, which has been in the works for many years and has been, for the last year, the preoccupation of this particular minister to get the job done. We believe we got the job done well and all Canadians will in fact benefit by it.

I would ask for an affirmation from the member across the way that, when we talk about trade, we are talking about the creation of jobs into the future—good-quality jobs, if we get it right. Would the member not agree that the trade agreements that we are talking about today and yesterday, such as with Ukraine and some of the other discussions to which reference was made a minute ago, are in fact a good thing for all Canadians, in all regions of this country? Would he not agree?

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Madam Speaker, certainly, I would say that this trade agreement, as well as a Canada-Ukraine agreement, are examples of positive inertia. These are cases where the government has continued forward work that was begun under the previous government. We are very glad to see the continuation, in those cases.

I will just say what we have with canola and China is a temporary reprieve. Let us be clear. The problem is by no means fully solved.

Where I think there is a problem, in terms of a lack of leadership on the open economy, has been the statement with respect to NAFTA, as well as the approach taken with TPP.

I think we need to move forward with trade in Asia. Obviously, it is going to take a different form, given the new attitude of the American administration. However, it is important that we pursue free trade in some form with like-minded countries in Asia and with Japan, Australia, and New Zealand, for example.

We could be clearer about the benefits to North America of NAFTA. I have been critical of the Prime Minister's tone on NAFTA so far. We need to be clear in our communications about the benefits that NAFTA has brought to all of the countries here in North America.

• (1150)

Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague from Alberta for his speech.

One of the things that has disappointed me in the last decade of bringing forward trade agreements is the backtracking on certain commitments and opportunities afforded under the side agreement on environment under NAFTA. The member spoke of NAFTA.

Does he think that the agreement could be strengthened if there were provisions similar to NAFTA, which under article 2 prohibited the parties to the agreement from undermining environmental laws for an economic benefit?

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Madam Speaker, this is an important question, obviously: how we protect the environment within the trade agreements we have.

Always within trade agreements there are discussions, specifically of environmental protections, and collaborations in terms of how collectively the best balance would be struck between preserving the environment and protecting the economy.

Personally, I am satisfied with the balance as it is struck within this agreement. I think there can be ongoing debate about how exactly that is done.

I know that members in the NDP, I think certainly with sincere motivation, have been critical of some of the dispute resolution mechanisms around that. However, I will say this. We have to have—and it happens within nation states but also within any trade agreement—dispute resolution mechanisms where there can be some adjudication between competing claims of states, of commercial actors, that tries to resolve those differences according to the text of the agreement.

Our approach has always been to recognize the importance of the environment, to recognize the importance of striking a balance. As I said, I will be voting in favour of this agreement. I am satisfied with where it is, in that respect.

Mr. Francesco Sorbara (Vaughan—Woodbridge, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to rise and speak about this historic agreement. My comments today on CETA will deal with the investor protection section of the agreement. However, before I begin I must comment on the significance, in my opinion, of this agreement to the current global context.

First, as the chair of the Canada-Italy Interparliamentary Group, and as a dual European-Canadian citizen, I must congratulate those who worked on the agreement and acknowledge the judicious and diligent work to complete the deal. *Auguri. Félicitations.* Congratulations to our Minister of International Trade and the minister's entire team. Canada has a small, open economy, and we are trade dependent. Trade generates growth and good middle-class jobs, and this deal would do that.

At a time in world history when it seems that walls are building around us rather than coming down, and populist rhetoric is providing false hope, the importance of CETA is not lost upon me. This view is from both sides of the Atlantic.

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The CETA agreement is a progressive trade agreement that would deliver positive results and opportunities for citizens in the European Union and Canada. In my home province of Ontario, CETA would help drive economic growth and create stable and high-paying jobs for generations. The European Union is already Ontario's second largest export destination and second largest trading partner. Once in force, CETA would eliminate tariffs on almost all of Ontario's exports and provide access to new market opportunities in the EU.

Here are a few simple facts. The EU is Canada's second biggest trading partner after the U.S. and accounts for nearly 10% of its external trade. Trade in goods between the European Union and Canada is worth almost 60 billion euros, roughly about \$80 billion to \$90 billion Canadian a year. In 2013, European investments in Canada were estimated at 225 billion euros, while Canadian direct investment stocks in the European Union amounted to more than 117 billion euros.

Prior to CETA's entry into force, only 25% of the European Union tariff lines on Canadian goods are duty-free. Upon CETA's entry into force, the EU would remove approximately 98% of its tariff lines. Once CETA is fully implemented, this would increase to 99% of all of its tariff lines.

We should be proud of CETA. It is the most progressive trade agreement ever negotiated. It would help redefine what trade can and should be. It would lead to increased prosperity here in Canada, create well-paying jobs, and help strengthen the middle class. It is also a ground-breaking agreement in opening doors to increased access to the EU market for Canadian companies. CETA sets new standards for trade in goods and services, non-tariff barriers, investment, government procurement, as well as other areas, like labour and environment protection.

Just as important, the agreement would also help facilitate investment, a significant factor in achieving prosperity and job creation. Foreign direct investment, commonly known as FDI, is an important driver of economic growth, with new investment by foreign firms having the ability to provide a boost to national income and to create good, middle-class jobs for Canadians. Foreign investment here in Canada and Canadian companies investing in the EU can also promote trade by facilitating value-chain linkages and improving access to new technologies. Not only would CETA help facilitate foreign investment, but it would set a new bar for investment protection.

One of the most important things our government did right after taking office was to listen to the constructive criticism from the critics of CETA, both in Canada and in Europe, and to understand some of the legitimate anxieties people, organizations, and governments had. We heard many concerns regarding the investment protection provisions in CETA, and we have worked with Canadians, including industry and civil society alike, and with our EU partners, to address these issues and to prove that progressive trade policy is possible with CETA. Our government fully seized the opportunity and developed a new and improved approach to investment protection provisions.

A significant innovation in CETA is the transformation of the mechanism for the resolution of disputes between investors and states. CETA marks the first international trade agreement that

establishes a permanent tribunal to hear claims by investors alleging that states have breached investment-related obligations. I repeat, a permanent tribunal. The CETA tribunal would consist of 15 members appointed solely by Canada and the European Union. Ethical requirements would be central to the process leading to their appointments, including not allowing members of the tribunal to act as counsel or expert witnesses in an investment dispute under any international investment agreement. Members would be appointed for a five-year term that may be renewed only once.

●(1155)

Individual cases will be heard before a three-member division of the tribunal, and those members will be selected on a rotation basis, ensuring that the composition of the division is random.

Such innovations address concerns about a perceived lack of arbitrator independence and will give greater legitimacy to the dispute resolution process. Moreover, as the members of a division hearing a specific case will be in a position to consult with the other members of the tribunal, we expect that the coherence of decisions will be much improved as a result.

In addition to the first-instance tribunal, CETA will establish a permanent appellate tribunal, thereby creating another precedent in international investment law. The appellate tribunal will function in a way similar to the first-instance tribunal. Its task will be to review decisions that are contested by either the foreign investor or the respondent state. In time, the first-instance tribunal and the appellate tribunal will develop a body of decisions that will constitute effective jurisprudence. This, in turn, will create greater legal certainty for both foreign investors and governments. It is very important that we have this.

The innovations made to the mechanism for the resolution of disputes are certainly significant ones, and our government is proud of them, but there are other innovations in the CETA investment chapter.

We have closed the door to provision shopping by clarifying that investors cannot seek to import provisions from other Canadian or European trade agreements through CETA's most-favoured-nation treatment article. CETA encourages the use of domestic courts by suspending the timelines for the submission of claims while domestic remedies are being pursued.

Government Orders

We added an article on mediation to encourage early settlement of disputes without recourse to the CETA tribunal. We have provided CETA with a mechanism for the early dismissal of frivolous claims. We have taken small and medium-sized enterprises into consideration and have added provisions that make it easier for them to access the mechanism for the resolution of disputes. We have made it mandatory for an investor who submits a claim while benefiting from third-party funding to be transparent and to disclose the identity of its funder. Importantly, we have established a committee that will provide a forum for the CETA party to consult on difficulties that may arise regarding the implementation of a chapter and on possible improvements to the chapter, especially in light of experiences and developments in other international fora.

It has also been Canada's long-standing practice to prevent so-called mailbox companies from benefiting from Canada's trade agreements. CETA is no different. To be considered an investor under CETA, a European Union enterprise owned by interests of a third party is required to have substantial business activities in the territory of the European Union. It cannot simply establish a mailbox company in the EU with the sole purpose of gaining access to the dispute resolution mechanism of CETA.

Finally, CETA demonstrates Canada's continued leadership with regard to promoting transparency in the dispute resolution process. Under CETA, all hearings will be open to the public, and all documents submitted to or issued by the permanent tribunal will be made available to the public.

The changes we made to CETA in addressing important issues voiced by Canadians and EU citizens alike represent a starting point in the development of a progressive trade agenda between a progressive Canada and a progressive European Union. This is an agenda that is linked to the government's domestic policy focus on reducing inequality and enhancing inclusive growth through such things as investments in infrastructure and increased child benefits. The idea is to ensure that trade policy makes a more meaningful contribution to this overall agenda and to ensure that trade is done in a way that really works for Canadians and our trading partners.

Canada will continue to seek ways to enrich the economic relationships we have with valued partners with the aim of achieving prosperity for all Canadians. However, it is very important to our government that we ensure that this is done in an inclusive and responsible manner. We are seeing this approach realized in CETA.

I am very proud to stand here and speak to this agreement. I believe it is transformational, and in the context of where we are in modern day history, is very much needed.

● (1200)

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the fact that my hon. colleague has focused on the investor-state provisions. When I have an opportunity to speak at length in the House, I will focus on the investor-state provisions.

While it is clear that there is some improved transparency in the investor-state provisions within CETA, I put it to my hon. friend that we have, in this agreement, not provided for the fairness or independence of the adjudicators. In fact, it is quite bizarre, but it is the case, that under CETA, the adjudicators, the so-called judges, will be able to work on the side as advocates. In the words of

Professor Gus Van Harten, from Osgoode Hall Law School, the leading expert on this in Canada:

This last aspect of the revised text...suggests a way has been cleared for the same clubby crowd of investor-friendly arbitrators to dominate ISDS under CETA.

We still have, essentially, a more transparent but nonetheless kangaroo court.

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Mr. Speaker, on the European Union website, it talks in detail about the investment protection system. One of the areas is about the rules that will govern the members who sit on the tribunal. To prevent what is called double-hatting, where a member of the tribunal also works in parallel as a consultant and expert in other investment disputes, this is actually forbidden in the agreement for the entire duration of the member's employment. It is forbidden in CETA.

There are safeguards with regard to the independent investment dispute resolution system. There are rules governing the members of the tribunal. There will be full transparency with regard to the proceedings, and there will be a ban on frivolous claims. I think that is a very strong component of the trade deal, and we need to applaud that and make sure that we state that.

● (1205)

Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal government has been in discussions with the Atlantic provinces regarding the CETA fisheries investment fund. Is the government going to fulfill its commitment to help the Atlantic provinces, with the changes that are made through this agreement to the processing requirements?

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Mr. Speaker, one of the things we need to look at are industries that may be impacted by trade deals. We know that overall, we are better off with trade. We have seen it with NAFTA and other agreements we have in place internationally. We know that trade deals create good-paying jobs, whether it is in services, manufacturing, and so forth. With regard to looking at various industries, we have seen the government step up to the plate and run consultations with the dairy industry. I would conjecture that the same thing would happen with other industries that may be impacted, in this case the fisheries industry on the Atlantic coast.

I grew up in northwest British Columbia. There was a vibrant fishing industry, which has now dissipated somewhat, unfortunately. We need to ensure that when there are losers in trade, they are looked at. We need to get away from just looking at the winners and look at industries and groups that may be impacted and make sure that programs are in place to help those associated industries and geographies.

*Government Orders***Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):**

Mr. Speaker, what a privilege it is to stand in my place today to talk about a very significant piece of legislation that goes a long way in fulfilling the Liberal government agenda in terms of international trade.

Canada is a trading nation. We are dependent on international trade. If we compare our population to other countries, I suspect that we would find that Canada is more dependent on trade than most countries, especially in the developed world.

As we move forward in the years ahead, it is of the utmost importance that the government of the day give special attention to trade. Trade is what generates hundreds of thousands of jobs, good, solid middle-class jobs. We would like to, as much as possible, create the jobs of the future that will assist in Canada's growth and prosperity in the years ahead.

Since we have been in government, the Prime Minister and the cabinet and my caucus colleagues have done a phenomenal job on the trade file. I compliment the current minister and the parliamentary secretary, who have put in so much time to ensure that we have the bill before us today. It has not been an easy feat.

Canada and the EU began negotiating CETA back in 2009. On August 5, 2014, the parties announced an agreement in principle on the negotiated text. In February 2016, the parties announced the completion of the legal review of the English text of CETA. Progressive changes were required and made to the investment chapter of the agreement during the legal review of the text.

Canadians know full well that this was not a done deal. When we took the reins of power just over a year ago, there was a great deal of work done to keep this thing afloat. We owe a great deal of credit to our negotiators and the minister responsible for ensuring that we were able to get all the t's crossed and i's dotted so that we could debate the bill.

It is not to take away from the efforts of the former Conservative government. We acknowledge the efforts of that administration. I think it bodes well that the government has changed and we have been able to pick up the ball and carry it over the goal line. I think that is a positive thing for all Canadians.

Canada and the EU officially signed the Canada-EU agreement at a summit on October 30, bringing this landmark agreement one step closer to entry into force.

Both Canada and the EU now need to take steps to implement the agreement according to their respective domestic procedures. This is just one of those procedures.

The EU market represents an unprecedented opportunity for Canadian businesses. The EU is the world's second-largest economy and Canada's second-largest trading partner, after the United States. It is also the world's second-largest import market for goods, with annual imports worth more than Canada's GDP.

CETA is a comprehensive trade agreement that will cover virtually all sectors in our nation. Once implemented, and this is what I find quite amazing, approximately 98% of the EU tariff lines,

or more than 9,000 tariff lines in total, on Canadian goods will be duty free immediately upon entry into force. That is up from 25%. An additional 1% will be eliminated over a seven-year phase-out period. This is good news for Canadians, no matter what region of the country they live in.

● (1210)

Trade means growth, and more growth ultimately means more jobs. If we want Canada's economy to grow and do well into the future, we need to look at ways in which trade can enhance that.

Canada, as a country, is thrilled that this agreement has been signed. It is a progressive trade agreement with our European partners. It will deliver tangible growth and opportunities for our middle class and those aspiring to be a part of it. As one of my colleagues said earlier today, it is for all Canadians in all regions of our country. This agreement will also provide a strong foundation for Canada and the EU to demonstrate leadership on an inclusive, progressive approach to global trade.

Since being in government, we have taken a very aggressive and progressive approach on the trade file. We can talk about Bill C-13, which dealt with the World Trade Organization, and included 162 countries around the world. This agreement allowed for trade facilitation. It was probably the most significant legislation since the creation of the World Trade Organization. We were able to bring it through and get it out of second reading.

We can talk about another piece of legislation that is not too far down the pike, and that is the issue of trade with Ukraine. Again, we have a very unique situation with a very special partner in the world. It is a country many of us have been following very closely, because of the recent transitions that have taken place in Ukraine over the last four or five years.

I recall vividly the President of Ukraine addressing this chamber. He asked us to come up with a trade agreement, and challenged us to do so. Through the efforts of the previous Conservative government and the current administration under this government, we were able to sign off on that trade agreement. We anticipate seeing that legislation.

We can talk about legislation with these three pieces and, in particular, the one that we are debating today. We can talk about other work that has been done, such as the issues with canola just a few months ago in China, affecting hundreds of millions of dollars. We had a minister working in co-operation with agriculture and international trade, along with the PSs and other departments. We were able to address the issue of canola using science and providing the necessary assurances in Russia, which saved the day for this important commodity, particularly for prairie provinces and my home province of Manitoba.

We can also talk about the increased opportunities through clarification on trade dealing with pork and cattle. Again, the government has addressed all of this within one year.

Government Orders

At the beginning of my comments, I talked about the Liberal government being one of acknowledging the importance of international trade. We are a trading national, and it is imperative we do what we can to ensure Canada is on the right side of trade. Back when Jean Chrétien was the prime minister, as well as Paul Martin, we had healthy trade surpluses, which led to tens of thousands of jobs. However, we inherited a significant trade deficit.

• (1215)

This might take time, but we are prepared to do what we can. Whether it is a manufactured product, an arts product, or a service industry, we have some of the very best in the world and we need to break down barriers where we can. This bill would do that.

Ms. Cheryl Hardcastle (Windsor—Tecumseh, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I listened to my hon. colleagues talk about the investor-state dispute mechanism, which is problematic for a lot of people.

It would be very appropriate for my hon. colleague to explain his understanding of that dispute mechanism because it would tie the hands of local governments for the minimum local investment and local procurement. This means that in some of the initiatives that the governing party campaigned on, such as economic stimulus by investment and creating jobs, its hands would actually be tied under a dispute mechanism such as this and with the confines of CETA.

I am a little alarmed that the positive aspects of trade are being looked at, which we do not deny, but we are not looking at the shortcomings of this agreement. I would like to hear the member explain that so we are assured—

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. parliamentary secretary.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I am somewhat disappointed, but not necessarily surprised, that the NDP appears to be wanting to vote against the CETA. It seems to be in the NDP's DNA to oppose trade agreements. I do not believe that is the best way to approach the debate.

We have seen many European countries deal with this issue, and they feel comfortable with this. We have provinces of all political stripes, even New Democrats at the provincial level, that have recognized this as a positive agreement. We need to continuously monitor and go forward with the investor-state dispute mechanism. If there are ways we can modify it, let us hear what the members might have to say in committee.

• (1220)

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, the investor-state agreement is not actually a dispute resolution in the conventional sense that Canadians would understand. It is not about having a trade dispute and going to a dispute resolution. This is investing in foreign corporations superior rights to what Canadian corporations would have under the circumstances. That is why it is so controversial in Europe and why it may not come to pass. There are many more hurdles in Europe to be crossed.

Has the parliamentary secretary's government actually ever given any thought to taking investor-state out of this altogether? We would still have all the trade provisions. We would eliminate the opposition that remains in Europe. There is no reason whatsoever to include investor-state provisions in this trade agreement.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, unless the leader of the Green Party knows something I do not know, to the very best of my knowledge, we have 28 countries abroad that are a part of this agreement, some of which were no doubt fairly persistent on having this as part of the final agreement.

When we have trade agreements, it means we have to take into consideration both sides. In this case, there are a lot of stakeholders involved, the provinces in Canada and the many countries that are part of the European Union. This is what we were able to come up with, and we need to give it a try. We have far too much to lose to not see the bill pass.

Mr. Scott Simms (Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the reason why we called it comprehensive in the beginning was the involvement of the provinces as stakeholders in this. So much will be within their jurisdiction that they have been brought on board. I give credit also to the opposition for this. When the Conservatives were in government, they were a big part of bringing in the provinces, which we have continued.

There have been successful examples in the past, such as the Rio conference on environment, not so much with Kyoto, and also some good conversations with NAFTA.

By doing this now, we have created a new way of trade partnership that involves provinces. Going forward that would be essential.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, my colleague brings up a good point. There is so much support for this document that goes beyond the national levels of government. Provinces have been a part of this agreement, and it might even be somewhat unprecedented. I do not know that for a fact.

I do know there has been a lot of reaching out by the different stakeholders, and we have come up with a fantastic agreement that will see more jobs being created, better trade, and a better relationship between Canada and the European Union.

I would encourage all members to support it, and for the Greens and the New Democrats to reconsider their position. This trade pact is worth supporting.

Ms. Rachael Harder (Lethbridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to stand in the House today to speak on behalf of CETA and Bill C-30, the Canada-European Union comprehensive economic and trade agreement implementation bill.

Canada is an exporting nation. From the voyagers to the Hudson's Bay Company to the cod fisheries of our east coast, Canada has been a place of abundant natural resources that have been harvested for exports.

As a grand nation that spans the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans, that was united by bands of steel through our national railway, our identity as Canadians has been shaped by our export economy.

Whether it is beaver pelts, cod, grain, beef, minerals, oil and gas, or cars and trucks, all these products helped build our great nation into the prosperous land we call home today.

Government Orders

For those who might be hesitant to support CETA, here are some contextual facts about the importance of exports to Canada, the country we love and serve.

International trade represents more than 60% of Canada's gross domestic product. One in five Canadian jobs is linked to exports. This means there would be three million fewer jobs without international trade, and that is a big deal. This then would drive up Canada's unemployment rate to more than 25% if we were to all of a sudden stop exporting tomorrow.

Clearly our shared prosperity as a nation is very dependent on opportunities to get our goods to international markets, which is why it is so important for us to enter into free trade agreements.

This is why the Canada-EU free trade agreement will give Canada unprecedented access to 500 million EU customers. The size of the European Union's combined economy is \$18 trillion, an economy that Canada's businesses will now have barrier-free access to. The European Union is the world's largest importing market for goods, with annual imports that are worth more than Canada's total GDP. The European Union is already the fourth-largest export market for Alberta agriculture after the United States, China and Japan.

A joint Canada-EU study that supported the launch of negotiations concluded that a trade agreement with the EU could bring a 20% boost in bilateral trade, and a \$12 billion annual increase to Canada's economy. This represents the economic equivalent of adding \$1,000 to every family's income or almost 80,000 new jobs to the Canadian economy.

CETA is in fact good news for our country.

The Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance estimates that when fully implemented, this trade agreement could result in \$1.5 billion in new Canadian agrifood exports to the EU. When this trade agreement comes into force, 98% of EU tariffs on Canadian goods will be entirely eliminated.

Every region of Canada stands to benefit from the opportunities contained in this agreement. Of course I am very interested in my riding of Lethbridge.

Lethbridge is a hub for agricultural exports, from grains and oilseeds, to poultry and beef, the fertile soil of southern Alberta provides an abundance of food that is available to be sold around the world. In conversations with many of my local agricultural processors, I have heard overwhelming optimism and support for the CETA agreement. Traditionally, EU tariffs on agriculture and processed food products have been quite high, particularly on products such as beef, pork and wheat.

Canada has also faced many non-tariff barriers in the European market. This is why the elimination of tariffs and non-tariff barriers creates fantastic opportunities for Canadian agricultural producers, again, particularly affects my riding.

This agreement establishes a joint committee that will ensure that sanitary and phytosanitary measures to protect human, animal, and plant life do not unnecessarily harm trade. This is very important. This body will determine which certifications and standards should be deemed as equivalent. These non-tariff barriers have been the

primary obstacles that in the past have stopped Canadian agricultural exports.

Our Conservative caucus will be paying close attention to the non-tariff barriers and will be holding the present government to account with regard to advocating on behalf of our Canadian producers.

• (1225)

For the grains and oilseeds producers in Lethbridge, this agreement would completely open up a market that was previously blocked by very high tariffs. Here are some examples of the EU tariffs that would be eliminated for grains and oilseeds producers once the agreement is fully implemented: the \$114-per-tonne tariff on grains, including oats; the \$122-per-tonne tariff on low to medium-quality common wheat, a product that currently sells for only \$225 in the EU; the \$120-per-tonne tariff on barley and rye; the tariff of up \$190 per tonne on durum; and the tariff of 9.6% on oils, including canola oil, a crop that currently sells for \$540 a tonne in the EU. All of these tariffs would be eliminated by the CETA agreement. Alberta Barley estimates that an additional \$100 million in grains and oilseeds exports would result from signing CETA.

Lethbridge also has a sugar beet industry and the Rogers Sugar refinery plant is very nearby. The Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance estimates that this agreement would boost exports of sugar-containing products, such as sugar beets, by \$100 million per year. Again, that is excellent news for the producers in my riding.

Canada is also a major meat exporting country, a significant amount of which is produced and processed in southern Alberta. The Canadian Meat Council reports that Canada currently exports \$1.3 billion worth of beef, \$3.2 billion worth of pork, and \$5.7 million worth of bison. Sixty-five thousand Canadians depend on this industry for their job each and every.

For the agricultural producers in my riding, 94% of goods would be tariff-free once CETA is signed, sealed, and delivered.

Lethbridge is also a hub for the Maple Leaf Foods processing plant, which, of course, is processing pork, to a great extent. The Canadian Pork Council has projected that for specific cuts of pork, this deal could create sales of \$400 million per year. This is excellent for the pork producers in Lethbridge.

Lethbridge is also home to a large number of beef producers in Canada. In fact, we are known by the nickname "Feedlot Alley".

Government Orders

Canada has some of the greatest beef genetics in the world and our breeds are known for their excellent quality of meat. Canada has world-leading safety systems, including complete traceability of each and every animal.

Once CETA is fully implemented in three to seven years from now, 65,000 tonnes of beef would be allowed to flow into the European markets duty-free, which would represent more than \$600 million in new exports.

That said, reaching an agreement on the equivalency of phytosanitary measures is absolutely critical for this agreement to benefit the producers in my riding and the producers across this country. Phytosanitary measures is simply a fancy way of saying “measures to protect human and animal health in the farming process”. Because of our different climates and the different scale of industry, Canada uses different methods from the EU to ensure the safety of meat. These methods are backed by the latest science and technology. The challenge for the government in negotiating this agreement would be to ensure that science-based equivalencies are negotiated before this agreement comes into full effect.

In summary, this trade deal is excellent news for Canadian exporters. It would create jobs, it would help to grow our economy, and it would increase Canada's standing on the world stage.

I am thankful for former Prime Minister Harper and the members for Abbotsford and Battlefords—Lloydminster for all the work they did in the previous government to negotiate and seal this deal through to its signature.

The farmers, agricultural businesses, and exporters in my riding would enjoy a more prosperous future because of CETA. Lethbridge

• (1230)

Mr. Scott Simms (Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have been here awhile and have been going through CETA for quite some time, from the time I was in opposition in the third party.

I always knew that it had great benefits for the agriculture industry, so I want to thank the member for her speech because I did not realize how much was involved here, the metrics around some of this, in terms of canola, rye, barley, grains, and oilseeds. I think two examples alone caught my attention: sugar beets, at \$100 million per year; and pork, at \$400 million per year alone. It is a substantial amount of growth that could be achieved through this agreement.

I am from a seafood area and the numbers are similar, though probably not to the same level as pork, but nevertheless the metrics are much the same.

For most of the producers in western Canada right now, what do they need in order to transition toward a much larger market, or is there much transition involved?

I am just trying to get a grasp of some of the difficulties there could be for them to transition to getting that amount of product over to Europe, including transportation from Alberta?

• (1235)

Ms. Rachael Harder: Mr. Speaker, we need to ask what our producers need to get their goods to market. Producers in my riding

are incredibly resilient individuals. They are incredibly innovative individuals. They started their businesses from scratch and grown them to be quite large and quite successful. More than anything else they really need the government to sign, seal, and deliver this deal and then get out of the way.

Ms. Cheryl Hardcastle (Windsor—Tecumseh, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I was listening to one of the member's colleagues yesterday, the member for Battlefords—Lloydminster, and then earlier today to my colleague from Richmond Cove, and they both reflected not just on some of the positive aspects of this trade deal but also the exploitive nature of this deal. Canada has high standards and as far as trade markets opening up for us is concerned, it goes the other way. I am wondering if the member understands that.

Yesterday her colleague said that we need to even out labour standards and regulations across the board. I would like the member's insight. Does she think we should lower our standards, or should other countries raise theirs to meet our existing standards in these markets that we are now saying are threatened and, hence, the need for compensation?

Ms. Rachael Harder: Mr. Speaker, producers in my riding have expressed their concern with regard to standards in the agreement. They want to make sure that the standards are equivalent in both the country of origin and the country their products are being exported to.

The government has a responsibility to make sure that it negotiates well, to make sure that the provisions with regard to standards are included in this agreement. The government has a responsibility to make sure that our producers here in Canada are not put at a disadvantage because of this agreement. The former government did work hard. It was in the process of securing that for Canada. It is my hope that the government now in power would also be able to secure that for our producers here at home.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to have the opportunity to address Bill C-30, the act to implement the comprehensive economic and trade agreement between the European Union and Canada.

It is my intention to focus on the investor-state provisions within CETA. I want the record to show that the Green Party shares the concerns of many that this will drive up pharmaceutical drug prices for Canadians. We really do need pharmacare and we do not need to give pharmaceutical companies more advantages than they now have in terms of patent protection. We do need to protect the rights of municipal governments to put out local bids for tender, and not take away their ability to have local procurement. There are impacts on various economic sectors in Canada, including the dairy industry, that need to be better examined.

I want to focus on why this agreement remains so controversial that it is not yet a done deal in Europe. I think Canadians have been somewhat bamboozled on this point.

Government Orders

Certainly, the Conservatives have made the case that all the Liberals had to do was open up a gift package and it was all ready to go. That is clearly not the case. Why is the comprehensive economic and trade agreement in the EU so very controversial to this day? It is because this is the first time, the first proposed agreement, in which the European Union will be accepting an investor-state clause. That is why it remains controversial. That is why it is still to be ruled on by the European Court of Justice. The provision within CETA that many European parliamentarians think is not legal is the investor-state provision. That is why the European Court of Justice will be ruling on it. If it rules that it is beyond the scope of the jurisdiction of the European Union to take away the rights of states and give foreign corporations superior rights, that will blow a hole through CETA.

The same thing will be true when this trade agreement goes to the whole European Parliament for a vote sometime between December and February. If it clears the European Parliament, it then goes to the various parliaments. There are 38 national and regional governments that will still have to vote on this, which is a process that could take two to five years.

Therefore, my first point is this. Why the rush to put through Bill C-30? Why are we not having proper consultations across Canada, and proper and lengthy efforts to hear witnesses, as the government of the day has done under the TPP? This is being rushed despite the deal not yet even existing on the European side. Certainly, the European commissioners have accepted it, but it is not a done deal, and that is because the next trade agreement Europe is looking at having is with the United States. If members can imagine the European governments at the local and national level having a problem with the idea that Canadian corporations can come and sue them in these phony courts, they can be sure they would be even more worried about that happening with U.S. corporations.

Therefore, the first reason, and the number one reason, this agreement is controversial in Europe is the investor-state provisions. I want to back up and explain what these are.

In debate today we heard them conflated with dispute resolutions systems. Everyone understands that when we have a trade deal, the two or three countries involved, in this case a large trading block like the EU, may end up having disputes on trade issues. We have had enough softwood lumber disputes between Canada and the U.S. to explain dispute resolution on the commercial aspects of trade quite well. This is not that. This is not a process to resolve disputes over trade.

What are investor-state provisions doing in a trade deal? That is a good question. They should not be there at all. They are provisions that initially came into the trade world, I would say, by stealth. In all of the national debate, in all of the concerns that Canadians expressed, no one talked about chapter 11 of NAFTA. It was basically hidden away. I have to say that I have spoken to the negotiators of NAFTA. Even they did not know how this provision would be used. Chapter 11 of NAFTA, they thought, merely said that if a foreign government expropriated the assets of a corporation, like a scenario in Cuba where Fidel Castro has the Government of Cuba nationalize all U.S. assets, it would then owe that corporation money for the expropriation of assets. Everyone understood that. It is common law internationally. What chapter 11 did was put in some language that appeared benign but turned out to be a disaster for

domestic democratic governance. It put in the words “tantamount to...expropriation”.

• (1240)

Therefore, chapter 11 of NAFTA waltzed through without any controversy, and then very clever lawyers got hold of it. This has created a cadre, a term I will use later as well, of global ambulance chasers, lawyers who went out to find corporations.

The lawyers said that when our government passed the rule that we cannot use that toxic gasoline additive, they thought the corporation had a case against the government under this investor-state dispute. Therefore, Canada, under chapter 11 of NAFTA, was sued for getting rid of a gasoline additive. Under chapter 11, there was the Ethyl Corporation case, where we were sued for banning the export of PCB-contaminated waste. AbitibiBowater sued. However, Bilcon is the worst and most recent case. This is a U.S. corporation that opted not to go to Canadian courts to seek a domestic remedy, but went to the secret Chapter 11 tribunal to get a judgment against Canada to overturn a very strong, solid, defensible, reasonable assessment.

There are no trade aspects to any of these cases by the way. These are not trade disputes. These cases are saying that, as a foreign corporation, a domestic decision by democratic governance has cost it money and its expectation of profits, and so it is bringing a case.

Chapter 11 of NAFTA gave rise to a proliferation of bilateral investment treaties. Generally speaking, the larger economic power is doing business in a small developing country, like a Canadian mining company operating overseas, and the international collective of investment treaties has created real hardships on smaller developing countries. The pattern is clear, and it was put forward and documented by a European think tank. It put together a review called *Profiting from Injustice*. There is a pattern: the bigger economic power is going to win.

The arbitration process, in other words, is neither fair nor neutral. The global ambulance chasers are a small cadre of international lawyers who get paid \$1,000 an hour to be an adjudicator or to be a lawyer for a foreign corporation that is suing a domestic government. The larger economic power is going to win. Therefore, if Canada is being sued by the U.S., we lose.

The worst of all of these agreements has to be the Canada-China investment treaty, which Harper brought in and pushed through with a cabinet vote. It was never debated in the House and never voted on in the House, but it will bind Canadian governments until the year 2045, and it is all completely in secret.

Government Orders

We can now look at chapter 11 secret tribunals and the Canada-China secret tribunals. If our yardstick is those regressive anti-democratic trade deals, and we compare them to the European Union's efforts here with Canada to create an investment court, they are doing everything they can to try to take an inherently anti-democratic system of corporate rule over governments and dress it up to look more democratic, but they have not done the job. It is still an anti-democratic notion at its essence that foreign corporations have the right to sue governments for decisions that have been made with no trade motivation whatsoever but to protect health, safety, and environment within a country.

Why should we agree to these at all?

Earlier in the debate today, I said that CETA creates an investment court. It has adjudicators who are semi-permanent. In other words, they are not being paid for one case and the next day they can go out and be an advocate within the CETA process. The hon. member with whom I was discussing this made that point. I was not able to come back and explain that they can be both a judge in the investment court in the EU and a global ambulance-chasing lawyer on a NAFTA case, or on a Canada-China investment treaty case. They can actually be in the pocket of someone who has hired them, because there are corrupt lawyers who work for companies like Bilcon. These lawyers can be in the pocket of a company like that and then sit as an adjudicator at the investment court between the EU and Canada without having to disclose that they have already been working and are already a lawyer for the very corporation that they would rule over in the case at the investment court in the EU.

These provisions are toxic. As Steven Schreiberman, a leading Canadian trade lawyer, said, investor-state agreements are “fundamentally corrosive of democracy”. They have nothing to do with trade.

If Canada wants to get this deal approved in Europe, and if the Liberals want the support of the Green Party in this place, they have to take the investor-state provisions out.

• (1245)

Mr. Robert Sopuck (Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa, CPC): Mr. Speaker, for decades from the Green Party left we have been hearing this anti-trade rhetoric and they are always nitpicking about things that really do not matter, quite frankly. What matters is creating wealth for the world. I am going to read you a quote:

According to a World Bank Study, in the three decades between 1981 and 2010, the rate of extreme poverty in the developing world...has gone down from more than one out of every two citizens to roughly one out of every five, all while the population of the developing world increased by 59 percent.

The next sentence is very important:

This reduction in extreme poverty represents the single greatest decrease in material human deprivation in history.

This is what free trade does for the world's poor. My colleagues in the Green Party left profess to care about the poor. They do not. The people who promote free and open trade and economic development are the ones who truly care about the poor and deliver real results for the poor.

Why does my colleague want to see the third world and most of the world kept in material poverty in perpetuity?

Ms. Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, the member for Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa has just asked such an absurd question. I do not think the third world plays any role in the EU-Canada trade agreement, but perhaps he can correct me.

I did not say in my speech at any point that I opposed the trade provisions. I focused on the investor-state provisions which have nothing to do with trade. I really would wish that at one time in this place we could have a full debate on why Canada entered into chapter 11 in NAFTA and how it has hurt Canada, how we had regulatory chill where ministers have been afraid to bring forward regulations for fear that U.S. corporations will sue us. The effect on developing countries and the poor has been even worse.

• (1250)

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): Mr. Speaker, one of the things that was clear in the member's comments, which were very helpful in this debate, is the unintended consequences with regard to trade deals. It is an extremely relevant point, one that is not just localized in my community, but across this country. When we joined NAFTA, one of the consequences became a challenge from Japan on our auto pact with the United States. An auto pact created tens of thousands of Canadian jobs. We were number two in the world with regard to auto assembly and production. Since that time we have dropped to 10th in the world. One of the reasons was because Japan, after we signed NAFTA, challenged this trade agreement that we had with the United States. We went to the WTO and we lost that trade dispute, so the auto pact was ripped up in Canada and that has caused consequences to this day.

The investor-state provisions are very important and I would ask my colleague to expand about that with regard to say, for example, our water. Water quality is a big issue for me with the Great Lakes and being a critic for that for our party. What can she talk about with regard to water quality and sovereignty?

Ms. Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, of the investor-state cases under chapter 11, so far we have not had one directly related to water quality. If we as a Parliament could pass a law that removed particular contaminants, microbeads companies could decide they want to bring a charge against Canada under chapter 11, from acting to regulate microbeads. Or we could take steps to deal with other toxic contaminants that are affecting the Great Lakes.

Government Orders

One of the biggest water quality issues Canada is facing right now is a rise in eutrophication from runoff from mega hog farm waste such as what is now affecting Lake Winnipeg. If the regulations take effect and if one of those hog farms is owned by a Canadian company, it cannot sue. However, if one of those hog farms is owned by a foreign corporation that has a right to sue under investor-state agreement, it can. It can do so behind closed doors without Canadians having access to even go into the room to argue for water quality.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is my great pleasure to rise in the House to speak about this important step that may be taken by this Parliament and this government, regarding the whole issue of a trade agreement with our European partners.

I will begin with an exercise in semantics. Since the Liberal government was elected, we have seen many instances of a complete reversal of the Liberal Party's positions on decisions made by the previous government, the Conservative government.

This exercise in semantics is quite simple. It is enough to take an agreement that was negotiated, drafted, and approved by the Conservatives and turn it into a progressive agreement. And how is that done? It is marvellous and magical. One need only say that it is the most progressive free trade agreement in the world, when it is in fact a cut-and-paste version of exactly what had been negotiated and approved by the Conservatives. The trick was to add the word "progressive" to the word "agreement", and suddenly there is no longer a problem, and they are promoting what they were criticizing just the other day, namely the process, the content and the secrecy surrounding everything that went on during the negotiations.

Today, there is no longer a problem. The Minister of International Trade can pat herself on the back and call this the most progressive trade agreement around, although it is the same Conservative agreement that the Liberals were denouncing when they were in opposition. Apparently this is not the only thing that has changed since the Liberals moved from the opposition to government.

Let me be clear: we in the NDP agree that Canada is an exporting country. Our domestic market overall is not large enough to support demand for certain products, services, or innovations, and it is important for us to go and sell, all over the world, high-quality products that Canadian artisans, businesses, or producers are capable of creating. Furthermore, this must be done properly.

We also agree that Canadian exports have to be diversified. Canada is highly dependent on our neighbour to the south, the United States, which means that, to use a common expression, when the United States sneezes, Canada catches a cold. Canadian companies and exporters must be allowed easy access to different markets.

When we look at Europe, we see a natural partner with which Canada shares not only democratic values, but also values that are close to us in terms of labour legislation, environmental protection, and certain social and environmental regulations. These values lead us to want to do business with the 28 countries of the European Union. There is less chance of those countries engaging in social dumping or threatening our environmental regulations. The

Europeans generally have good salaries, benefits, and pension plans that may be similar to what we have here, in Quebec and in Canada.

We say yes to a trade agreement with Europe. Europe is an ideal partner. But watch out, for there are problems. We do not want to sign a blank cheque. First of all, the Liberal government is asking us at this time to sign a cheque and trust it, more or less blindly, to do the right thing with it over the coming years. What is more, we and many of our European partners think that the dispute settlement mechanism included in the comprehensive economic and trade agreement between Canada and the European Union is a major obstacle.

Dispute settlement mechanisms allow a company to sue a state or level of government for adopting a rule or law that could eventually harm its future profits. This is not a theoretical scenario, but one that has already played out. Chapter 11 of NAFTA deals with such a mechanism. There have been dozens of legal actions under NAFTA against decisions made democratically here in Canada.

To Europe, we say yes. We will not give it a blank cheque, however. We do not want to give companies the power to sue our governments, because our governments make decisions and take actions designed to protect us. We are also worried about the price of prescription drugs, which is going to increase under this agreement, and we are worried that our cheese producers may be hard hit by this new competition. Once again, the Liberal government is breaking its promise to help out our dairy producers.

• (1255)

The agreement contains several extremely problematic elements, not to mention that the negotiation process began in 2009 and continued in recent years.

The Liberal government is trying to shove a trade agreement with Europe down our throats as quickly as possible. Why is it in such a rush? It has even disregarded its own rules, since the document was not tabled in the House 21 days previously, but rather the following day. In fact, the Liberals tabled the bill in the House before going off to stage a big show in Europe, where the Prime Minister signed the agreement. That is an unacceptable infringement of our parliamentary privileges.

What is more, they are trying to speed up the process as much as possible. There will be only five committee meetings to study an extremely complex, 1,600-page economic agreement. The government has decided to hear only eight witnesses, whereas for the trans-Pacific partnership, dozens of meetings were held to study the bill, and dozens of witnesses were heard. This time there will only be eight witnesses, and they are the only ones who will be able to present a written submission to the committee. This is unheard of.

Government Orders

Then they claim they will be conducting an intelligent, reasonable and reasoned exercise to assess the advantages and disadvantages of the free trade agreement with Europe. It simply does not add up.

Why are we in such a rush when, on the other side of the Atlantic, it will take two to five years for the agreement to be ratified by the parliaments of all 28 member states of the European Union? I do not understand why the Liberal government is in such a hurry. In my opinion, it is trying to pull a fast one on us as it keeps breaking its promises.

Let us return to the question of the cost of prescription drugs, which is extremely worrying for hospital patients and for all of the provinces, which manage our health care systems. It is currently estimated that the cost of prescription drugs will rise from \$850 million to \$2.8 billion per year. The European free trade agreement will delay the entry of generics into the market; generics work to control or lower the cost of drugs, which makes up a large share of the country's health care expenditures, both for governments and for individuals.

A \$2.8-billion increase in the yearly cost of prescription drugs is like every Canadian getting billed \$80. Because of this free trade agreement, there is a real risk that each and every one of us will have to pay \$80 more per year to get our medications. I would add that that is only an average. Remember that this will not be more expensive for those who do not take prescription medications. Those who are ill, however, have cause to worry about the strong likelihood of a major increase in the cost of drugs.

When the Liberals were in opposition, they talked about a plan to compensate the provinces for the rise in the cost of prescription drugs brought on by the European free trade agreement. Where is that promise of restitution or compensation for this extra weight on our health care systems? It is nowhere to be seen.

Disputes are happening. Lone Pine Resources is currently suing Canada because Quebec refused to let it continue its oil and gas exploration activities in the St. Lawrence River. Although we as a society have taken steps to protect our ecosystems and limit pollution, an American company is suing Canada for \$250 million.

With the European free trade agreement, the Liberals are saying that it is all right to give companies the power to prosecute our governments. This is a totally undemocratic vision of trade, for we have legislative assemblies where elected officials make decisions to protect the population.

For the NDP, giving such shameless privileges to private companies which could sue our governments constitutes a major barrier to acceptance of any trade agreement. That is why we are standing up and objecting to the ratification of this free trade agreement.

● (1300)

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, provinces in Canada have been part of this process, provinces of different political stripes, including New Democratic parties and premiers. Is CETA a perfect agreement? I would suggest this is the best we can get at this point in time and that millions of

Canadians directly, and all Canadians indirectly, will benefit from the agreement.

I am bit surprised by the NDP attitude towards the EU and the trade agreement. Given that we have 28 countries, the provinces in Canada, and many different stakeholders saying this is something we should be moving on, why does the NDP want to resist it? All the other stakeholders are saying this is good for Canada. Even some New Democratic governments are saying that. Are they all wrong?

[Translation]

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question.

Many people are strongly opposed to this agreement. Cheese producers, for instance, will be getting a pittance in financial compensation when 17,700 tonnes of European cheese lands on our doorstep. This includes 16,000 tonnes of fine cheeses, year after year. This could be a serious blow to small cheese producers in Quebec. The Liberals' smattering of compensation is not going help. Local businesses back home might end up closing shop. We are worried. We will speak on behalf of these people and share their concerns here in the House of Commons.

In any trade agreement there will be winners and losers, but our cheese producers are not the only ones losing out in this case. Hospital patients and the sick are losing out as well. This agreement compromises our ability to regulate, protect our public markets, and establish clear and strong environmental regulations. We in the NDP have very good reasons to stand our ground.

● (1305)

Mr. Matthew Dubé (Beloeil—Chambly, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for his speech.

I would like to go back to the last point he mentioned in response to the question from our colleague concerning Canadian cheese producers, who are very worried about this agreement. This raises an interesting point. It is fine to support free trade. However, there has to be give and take in the negotiations, as my colleague said so well. Inevitably there will be winners and there will be losers. However, when the divide is too great, that is a problem. There still has to be respect for what we do in Canada when we negotiate on behalf of Canadians.

For example, cheese makers in France are the most highly subsidized in the world. We are going to let them bring in their products and give our producers peanuts in compensation, as my colleague said so well.

According to my colleague, why does the government believe that this is a fair and good agreement for our producers, when we are making so many sacrifices and receiving very little in return?

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice: Mr. Speaker, I very much appreciate my colleague from Beloeil—Chambly's very valid question.

Government Orders

There are not many cheese makers in my riding. However, there are many in Quebec and their numbers are growing. We are very proud of them and we want to help them. Our cheese makers will not receive adequate compensation in the face of a huge influx of fine cheeses from Europe, but the icing on the cake is that the Europeans have cleverly managed to protect certain types of cheese with restricted trade names. The names of 145 products are protected by restricted trade names. That is in the agreement negotiated by the Conservatives and accepted by the Liberals.

Do members know how many cheeses made in Canada are protected by a restricted trade name in the free trade agreement? None, not even one. Thus, it is 145 to 0 for the Europeans when it comes to fine cheeses.

[*English*]

Mrs. Alaina Lockhart (Fundy Royal, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government believes that the Canada-EU comprehensive economic and trade agreement will lead to increased prosperity in Canada, create good-paying jobs, and strengthen the middle class. Most importantly, it will do so in a fair and responsible way.

I believe we can all agree that the opening of new markets has the potential to increase Canadian wealth. Our country's small and medium-sized enterprises, which make up the majority of Canada's exporters, are looking for our government to open up new markets, and our government is committed to this goal.

SMEs employ some 10 million Canadians, or nearly 90% of Canada's total private sector workforce. These businesses can benefit most from better access in international markets, secured through free trade agreements. Stakeholders from across the country and a wide range of economic sectors continue to tell us to help them to grow. New export sales improve economies of scale, thereby reducing risk, lowering costs, and increasing profits.

In my riding of Fundy Royal in New Brunswick, SMEs will benefit significantly from CETA. The EU is already New Brunswick's second largest export destination and fourth largest trading partner. This agreement would eliminate tariffs on almost all of New Brunswick's key exports, in addition to opening up new market opportunities.

New Brunswick's fish and seafood sector is a vibrant and diversified industry. Eliminating tariffs on value-added goods like cooked and peeled shrimp, frozen cod fillets, and processed crab and lobster will make these goods more competitive in the EU, allowing New Brunswick processors to sell more of their goods and create new jobs. By the opening of new markets and increased access within the EU, Canada's world-class fish and seafood industry would have a competitive advantage from CETA that would benefit workers in the fish and seafood sector from coast to coast, including workers in New Brunswick's exceptional fish industry.

Of the EU's more than 9,000 tariff lines, approximately 98% will be duty free for Canadian goods when CETA comes into force. Almost all of the remaining tariff lines will be eliminated when the agreement is fully implemented. This will translate into increased profits and market opportunities for Canadian businesses of all sizes, in all sectors, and in every part of the country.

CETA will provide Canadian companies with a first-mover advantage in the EU market over competitors from markets like the U.S., which do not have a trade agreement in place with the EU. It will allow Canadian businesses to establish customer relationships, networks, and joint projects first. CETA also offers Canadian SMEs the opportunity to be part of a broader global supply chain anchored in the EU.

One of the most important complements to creating these advantageous conditions for SMEs is to encourage companies to pursue these new opportunities aggressively. Our government is committed to developing trade agreement implementation plans to help Canadian businesses take advantage of the opportunities that flow from these agreements. It is because our government realizes that some Canadian businesses are not aware of the potential opportunities provided by CETA that plans have been developed to promote recently concluded agreements, with SMEs specifically in mind. As a small business owner, I know personally that SMEs often lack the time and resources to inform themselves of game-changing international business developments, such as free trade agreements. As a result, they may not pursue the advantages created by the agreements.

The promotion of new FTAs follows a common, three-part approach. First, we are ensuring that information is available through the web and information seminars for business audiences organized with provincial, territorial, and private sector partners. We have recently launched a new CETA web page, geared toward Canadian businesses, which links to information on export opportunities by sector and member state; explains the public procurement processes in the EU; provides a detailed guide to doing business in the EU; and provides information about events and testimonials from businesses that have already had success in the EU, as well as a guide to finding the tariff rate for Canadian goods. Eventually, an FTA tariff finder will provide tariff information for all of Canada's FTA partners.

We are also undertaking proactive initiatives to reach out to Canadian businesses across the country, and from our missions within the EU, in co-operation with our provincial partners, as well as Export Development Canada, and the Business Development Bank of Canada.

We are launching a series of business outreach events featuring technical experts in CETA who can advise business participants in detail about CETA's provisions and the market access improvements it brings.

Government Orders

• (1310)

Second, we are ensuring through training that our team supporting international business development—be they our trade commissioners in Canada or abroad, other federal government departments or agencies, or our provincial and territorial partners—are fully familiar with the free trade agreements, so that they can advise clients of the opportunities they bring.

The Canadian Trade Commissioner Service has 26 points of service based in our diplomatic missions in the EU to support Canadian businesses wanting to access the market. They offer invaluable assistance to those wanting to do so, through market advice and intelligence. Earlier in 2016 we began building the capacity of our trade commissioners to advise their business clients on CETA, through training sessions on the agreement.

Third, following a detailed assessment, we will work with specialized industry associations and identify priority sectors to increase the interest and knowledge among exporters. This more focused, hands-on approach should lead to higher exports in these high-opportunity areas.

We have consulted with a number of sectoral business associations to explore the development of sectoral strategies, which would identify actions needing to be taken by the private sector to advance export growth. This is in addition to sources of assistance from all levels of support for trade missions and trade fairs, market intelligence from the trade commissioners network, and programs from other government agencies to support product development or expansion capacity.

This more intensive engagement with firms to help them pursue opportunities generated by free trade agreements is what we term "FTA aftercare". Consultations with the private sector are continuing, and a limited number of sectors will be identified to develop a pilot approach.

The promotion of CETA's benefits to the Canadian business community is very much the government's priority, given the range of opportunities that the EU and its market of more than 500 million consumers offer. We recognize that the EU market, despite its size and the significant market access improvements CETA delivers, requires a considerable degree of preparation for exporters, particularly for new-to-market SMEs.

CETA is indeed the most progressive trade agreement ever negotiated. It would lead to increased prosperity on both sides of the Atlantic, create well-paying jobs, and help strengthen the middle class. This agreement clearly provides the advantages that our industries are seeking in expanding their footprint internationally and does so in a fair and responsible manner that would benefit Canadian society as a whole. This is why it is so important for Canada to implement the CETA agreement as soon as possible.

• (1315)

Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for her comments about the importance of trade, particularly as it relates to the agricultural sector. We on this side have been standing up for the agricultural sector, whether that is beef and pork or grain and oilseeds.

One of my concerns is that, while we are providing opportunity for trade, the previous Conservative government made it clear that we would support the dairy sector and the fishery sector through some specific investments to protect them.

I am just wondering if my colleague could comment on whether or not the Liberals are totally committed to continuing the support that we promised to the dairy sector and also to the fisheries investment fund that would help the Newfoundland and Labrador fisheries.

Mrs. Alaina Lockhart: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague across the way for his question and for his commitment to the dairy industry.

I think this government has been very clear that we are very invested in the dairy industry and its success. I recently had the opportunity to meet with dairy farmers in my riding of Fundy Royal to talk about what the future looked like. I was very proud that they are very focused on the future of the industry, looking at measures that will strengthen the industry.

In fact, they are very pleased with the investment that this government has committed to, \$250 million for producers and another \$100 million for processors. These are the very things that will improve the dairy industry in Atlantic Canada, and I am pleased with the moves we are making.

Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the member just mentioned dairy farmers. I, too, have spoken with dairy farmers, in Alberta, and they welcome that there will be some compensation. Unfortunately, it is far less than was promised during the election.

They have two questions, though. First, will this sum of money, \$300 million, include the administration of the fund for the cost sharing? If so, they oppose that. It is already a meagre amount of money, and they think it should all go to the advancement of the sector.

Second, when exactly will this money flow, so that the dairy farmers are ready before this agreement comes into effect?

Mrs. Alaina Lockhart: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for her interest in the dairy industry. As members may know, Fundy Royal is considered the dairy centre of the Maritimes and is something in which I am certainly very invested as well.

As I said, the farmers absolutely were pleased that there is a level of commitment toward the dairy industry and progress in the industry in the future. The details of such have not been forthcoming yet, but there certainly has been a show of good will. Over the last several months, the minister has met with many stakeholders in the dairy industry, and they certainly are pleased that their concerns are being heard and addressed.

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to thank my colleague from Fundy Royal for her wonderful presentation.

Government Orders

[*Translation*]

I would also like to take a moment to thank the Minister of International Trade and her staff for all their hard work over the past few months and their continued hard work today.

[*English*]

I was wondering if my colleague from Fundy Royal could elaborate on the benefits this would bring to her riding and especially the Atlantic area.

Mrs. Alaina Lockhart: Mr. Speaker, I spoke specifically in my speech about the impact CETA would have on the fisheries industry. It would also open up opportunities in forestry and wood products, agriculture and agrifood products, as well as professional services. That is important to look at, as well, when we look at the EU procurement process: we do have very strong professionals in Atlantic Canada who have services to offer, and I am very excited for them and the opportunities this would provide.

Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Mr. Speaker, when our colleague from Kitchener—Conestoga asked specifically about dairy and fisheries and how that impact was going to be there, and if the government was going to fulfill its promise in terms of helping those industries transition through to see the opportunities with CETA, the hon. colleague from across the way completely ignored the fisheries portion of the question, so I am going to ask it again.

The Liberal government has been in discussions with the Atlantic provinces regarding a CETA investment fund for the fisheries communities in Atlantic Canada. Will the government fulfill its commitment to the Atlantic provinces for the changes it has made to the processing requirements?

• (1320)

Mrs. Alaina Lockhart: Mr. Speaker, I certainly did not intend to ignore the fisheries industry. In fact, most of my speech was focused on the fisheries industry. What I wanted to focus on was the opportunities that this would provide for them, especially in value-added areas. I talked about frozen and processed shrimp and cod, as well as lobster. These are all very important market opportunities that cannot be overlooked.

Hon. Michelle Rempel (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I wholeheartedly support this agreement. Canada is a trading nation and always has been, and I would be remiss if I did not talk about why that is the case.

If we look at the record of various governments over time in terms of the execution of trade agreements, we would find that our Conservative government signed more than 50 free trade agreements, whereas the previous Liberal regime signed fewer than five. It is the Conservatives in Canada who have seen the vision of Canada in terms of our ability to be a trading nation, and we actually executed those agreements. I want to give thanks to some of my colleagues here in the House, our former trade minister, our former agriculture minister, and former prime minister Stephen Harper for his vision on this agreement. This agreement was negotiated essentially through the blood, sweat, and tears of trade negotiators with whom our party worked within our government. I give a big shout-out to Canada's public service for working with our political leadership on this file. This deal was hand-wrapped, tied with a bow,

and put under the Christmas tree for the Liberals to execute. I will give credit where credit is due on that particular note.

I would like to make a few points on why free trade is important and why it is important right now. I am very worried about the trend toward protectionism and nationalism that we are seeing internationally right now. The reality is that it benefits no one. The global economy is such that we are integrated. The global economy has an integrated supply chain in a lot of different areas, so to think that closing the doors to free trade would somehow bolster an industry within a country, or not have an impact on a nation's consumers, is a fallacy. I say that as a note of caution to colleagues around the world who might be looking at implementing protectionist policy without really thinking about the ramifications in the global economy of 2016. That is not a particularly productive thing.

I strongly encourage our government, when entering into negotiations or into discussions or diplomatic relationships with countries, to vigorously support the notion of trade. There are some in the House who would not support the notion of trade, but there are a lot of people here who would support that notion. Why is it important? I touched on a couple of those things briefly already.

One thing that has not really been talked about is the impact of this agreement on consumers in Canada. The removal of duties and tariffs on the range of products that we would have—specifically duties, in this case—would increase Canadian consumers' purchasing power by a large order of magnitude. When we look at economic downturns in a country and the ability of Canadian families to make ends meet, it is important to have free trade agreements, because the removal of these types of fees and penalties in the right environments can be translated into savings for families. It is also a more diverse set of goods. Consumer purchasing power can sometimes be increased simply by substituting goods for a monopoly product and introducing those substitute goods into the market through free trade agreements. That will also impact the ability of consumers to spend, and that is a fantastic thing.

The big win with this agreement is the job creating opportunities it presents.

If I have time, I will go into some of the specific benefits for Alberta, given that Alberta is in such a problematic situation with the job crisis there right now. I want to speak first about what I think needs to happen next, in order to realize the full benefits of this agreement.

I will transition by saying that opening up new markets for our products is a form of economic diversification. I will use the example of Alberta energy products. Obviously there are energy infrastructure issues associated with that. People often talk about value-added or how we get greater value-added for the extractive industry in Alberta around similar oil and gas products.

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●(1325)

Whenever that discussion comes up, they refer simply to refining or additional refining capacity in Canada. I have read some interesting economic literature that looked at how simply opening up Canada's market access for those products would create a larger delta in ability to capitalize on greater profits from that. That is a very positive thing. If we translate that concept into the market access that is provided by this agreement, which I think is a market of over 500 million, that is a fantastic thing for basically every sector of the Canadian economy.

What do we need to do to capitalize on that? Economic diversification. When I was the minister of state for western economic diversification, one of the key priorities I articulated to my department was to ensure western Canadian companies, small and medium-sized enterprises, etc., were supported in both becoming aware of opportunities through agreements like CETA and also positioning them for success in a global supply chain. What does that mean? In the example of government procurement contracts, specifically military procurement, certainly CETA will open up our markets for us to participate in those kinds of contracts around the world.

How do small Canadian firms become certified such that OEMs in these types of companies would look at a Canadian firm to be part of a larger procurement project? Now that the government has taken a lot of the credit for signing this, the rubber will hit the road on how it programs that type of support service.

I have not heard a lot from the trade minister or from the industry minister as to concrete actions on how the government will look at supply chain development. Certainly, I have not heard a lot about the role of the economic development agencies in that perspective. I think there is already infrastructure within the government that could be utilized and leveraged in order to put that in place, of course with a large asterisk, making sure we are not picking winners or losers in government and that we are not being unwise stewards of taxpayer dollars on trade and promotion initiatives.

I want to give a shout-out to the Saskatchewan Trade and Export Partnership, or STEP, a perfect organization that we used to work with to connect small business producers in western Canada to larger trade and investment opportunities around the world. If we can have a larger market for our products, we will have a more profitable and vigorous economy in Canada. That is the whole point of having a trade agreement.

I also want to touch briefly on the concept of productivity in Canada. In order for Canadian firms to be productive in a post-CETA era, we need to focus on programming and policies that make them productive.

We also need to ensure we are not competitively disadvantaging Canada in a post-CETA era by adding complexity to our regulatory system. I am very worried about the government sending messages like it has been to the energy sector, where it has placed a huge degree of uncertainty on people who would be looking at investing in this sector, by saying it will change the environmental review process six times to Sunday but not saying how or when. It is musing about the coal ban and changing the rules.

When we change the rules without consultation and without understanding the broader economic implications, we hamper the ability of our economy to benefit from trade agreements like CETA. While the government is touting CETA, even though it did not really do anything to finalize it, there is a broader macro policy framework that will impede Canada's ability to be successful in this framework. Therefore, I very strongly encourage the government to stop marginalizing parts of our economy through very punitive and ill-thought-out policies, such as the ones the environment minister has been putting forward today.

While this is an excellent agreement, and I am fully supportive of it, there is much more work to be done. I hope all people in this place, regardless of political stripe, will stand up for Canada in pushing back against nationalist and protectionist rhetoric that hear in other parts of the world. That is very important. We need to push back on the fallacy that somehow closing our borders to trade will instantly bring back manufacturing jobs. We know that is not the case.

●(1330)

We know we need to look at things like the retention and training of skilled labour, ensuring we have an innovative economy where we retain intellectual property that is developed in Canada, ensuring we have a vibrant and robust intellectual property management framework, and that we attract venture capital to our country through regulatory certainty and other positive policies.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to go back to some of the member's opening comments. She talked about Christmas and the fact that this agreement was a gift given to the Liberal government.

I stated earlier that there was no doubt these negotiations began a number of years back. I believe it was in 2009 when it first came up. The Conservative government was able to get a great deal of the job done.

However, to imply to Canadians that it was a signed and sealed agreement is just wrong. In the last year, we have seen a government take the trade file forward in a very significant way. This is but one of the areas on which the government has concentrated a great deal of time.

We recognize the fact that the Conservatives also played a role in this. I wonder if the member might want to reflect on the fact that all the t's and the i's, and there were a lot of them, had to be finalized before we could see this agreement before us today, and before the Prime Minister could actually sign the document.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: Mr. Speaker, since my colleague raised the issue, it is a grand miracle that this agreement was not bungled by the incompetence of the government, given its previous record on trade, five agreements in however long the Liberals were in government as opposed to our record of 50-plus agreements. The proof is in the pudding there.

Canadian businesses and companies are looking to the government to ensure they have policy that will allow Canada to take full advantage of the benefits put in place under CETA.

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Just to re-emphasize, I am very concerned about the government's commitment to putting uncertainty into our regulatory process in a variety of different areas. I am concerned about the government increasing our debt load to the point where it is unmanageable. I am concerned about all of these sorts of things that will send a chill and a message to the rest of the world that despite signing a trade agreement, the government would like to see Canada closed for business.

The government should be focusing on that.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I was a bit taken aback by the member's statement about 50 trade agreements. Fifty plus trade agreements is just not true. Twenty-eight of those agreements are included in the debate we are having today. The 28 countries the member just made reference to are a part of the bill we are debating today. Technically, it was the current Prime Minister who signed off on those 28 of the 50-plus countries for which the member just tried to take credit.

I would ask the member to recognize that the Conservatives did not get the job done, and that has been made evident in the last year. Our Minister of International Trade and other government departmental officials have been overseas, trying to clear up the areas where the Conservatives failed. That is what they need to realize.

The Conservatives should stop saying there were 50-plus agreements under the Harper government because that it just not true.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: Mr. Speaker, even if we used the number 28, 28 minus five is a lot more than the Liberals did.

I believe if we are to talk about not getting it done, those are the exact words the government's trade minister used when she tearfully emerged from a meeting several weeks ago. I would be very careful using those words in the House if I were the parliamentary secretary to the government House leader.

• (1335)

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): Mr. Speaker, since I have been here, there have been several trade agreements signed, or trade investment promotions and protection agreements. They are kind of the precursor to that.

I will name some of the countries involved: Peru, Panama, Romania, Senegal, Slovak, Nigeria, Korea, Kuwait, Tanzania, Liechtenstein, Mali, Jordan, Latvia, Benin, Burkina, Columbia, Guiana, Hong Kong, and Ukraine. The claim by the Conservatives is that the current government has not created a single job. If that is so, why do we have all these trade agreements? Where are the specific jobs? For example, what jobs have been created from the trade agreement with Liechtenstein?

Hon. Michelle Rempel: Mr. Speaker, we never know when we are going to need Liechtenstein. I am so glad we have a trade agreement with it. These types of agreements send a message to the world. They send a message to global capital that Canada is open for business, to invest here, create jobs here and do business with us.

When we think about it, especially in the context of this agreement, Canada is in such a unique position in our capacity for attracting business, given the rhetoric we hear in the U.S. right now, where it sounds like it wants to close its border to trade.

Again, I want to re-emphasize and close by saying this. Our former government delivered this on a silver platters, with some chocolates and caviar, to the Liberal government to sign and take credit for. That is fantastic. I am glad we kicked it over the goalpost.

Now this is about how the government positions Canada to take advantage of this agreement. High debt, high taxes, uncertainty in the regulatory system, no commitment to retrain skilled labourers are all very negative things that will put a chill on the effects of this agreement. That is what we should be focused on.

Ms. Ruby Sahota (Brampton North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, thank you for allowing me this opportunity to speak about the wonderful Canada-EU comprehensive economic and trade agreement, popularly known as CETA.

This landmark initiative will increase prosperity across society in a manner that conforms with important societal values. It is the most progressive agreement Canada and the European Union have ever negotiated. It is also a ground-breaking agreement in opening the doors to increased access to the EU market for Canadian companies. CETA sets new standards in trade in goods and services, non-tariff barriers, investments, government procurement, as well as other areas like labour and environment.

The economic benefits to both Canada and the EU will be significant. Experts predict that once implemented, CETA will increase bilateral trade in goods and services by more than 22%, fostering growth and employment on both sides of the Atlantic.

Just as important, the agreement will also help facilitate investment in each other's territories, a significant factor in achieving prosperity and job creation. Foreign direct investment is an important driver of economic growth, with new investments by foreign firms able to provide a boost to national income and create jobs for Canadians. FDI can also promote trade by facilitating value chain linkages and improving access to new technologies.

A shining example of the benefits that European investment has brought to Canada is Europe's largest engineering company and manufacturer of medical diagnostics equipment, Siemens AG. The German engineering and electronics conglomerate has been operating in Canada for over 100 years. Headquartered in Oakville, Ontario, Siemens Canada has more than 60 facilities across the country and more than 4,800 employees delivering solutions in knowledge-based industries, such as sustainable energy, intelligent infrastructure, health care, and the future of manufacturing.

This includes investments such as the Smart Grid Centre of Competence that was opened in January 2013 in Fredericton to support New Brunswick Power and the modernization of its electricity system in a multi-year partnership.

Government Orders

In February 2014, Siemens became a founding partner of the Advanced Energy Centre, within the MaRS Discovery District in Toronto. This centre's mission is to foster the adoption of innovative energy technologies in Ontario and Canada, and to leverage those successes and experiences into the international markets.

These investments are examples of how investment from the EU, which will be further facilitated by CETA now, will maximize the potential of Canada's highly educated workforce and foster its continued development while working toward the betterment of Canadian and global societies through technology.

Let me give an example. Last year, Canada's direct investment in the EU totalled \$210 billion while European investment in Canada totalled \$242 billion. CETA includes provisions aimed to facilitate increased investments, providing investors with greater openness, stability, transparency, and protection of their investments.

While the agreement helps to promote EU investment in Canada, it also provides advantages and protections to Canadian companies seeking to expand their footprint in the world's second largest economy. CETA includes provisions to facilitate investment, to protect investors against such practices as discriminatory treatment, uncompensated expropriation, arbitrary or abusive conduct, and to ensure that capital may be freely transferred.

CETA's obligations are backed by a mechanism for the resolution of investment disputes, including both a first-instance tribunal and an appellate tribunal. When an investor submits a claim, the permanent and independent tribunals will determine whether a governmental measure is inconsistent with CETA's investment obligations and whether the investor has suffered a loss as a result.

One of the most important things our government did after taking office was to listen to the critics of CETA, both in Canada and in Europe, and to understand some of the legitimate anxieties people had.

● (1340)

We heard many concerns regarding investment in CETA. We have worked with Canadians, including industry and civil society alike, and with our EU partners to address these concerns to prove that a progressive trade policy, like CETA, is needed and possible in Canada.

Our government made changes to the mechanism for the resolution of investment disputes. We established a permanent tribunal and appellate tribunal, whose members are selected by Canada and the EU for fixed terms. We also introduced more detailed ethical requirements for members of those tribunals.

The CETA negotiations provided a great opportunity to innovate, and our government fully seized that opportunity and developed a new and improved approach to investment chapters in Canada's free trade agreements.

The changes we made to CETA in addressing the important issues voiced by Canadians and EU citizens alike represent a starting point in the development of the government's progressive trade agenda. It is an agenda that is linked to the government's domestic policy, focused on reducing inequality and enhancing our inclusive growth through such things as investment in infrastructure and increasing

the child benefit. The idea is to ensure that trade policy makes more meaningful contributions to this overall agenda and that trade is done in a way that Canadians believe works for them.

Canada will continue to seek and implement innovative ways to enrich the economic relationship we have with valued partners, with the aim of achieving prosperity for all. However, it is important to our government that we ensure this is done in an inclusive and responsible manner. We are seeing this realized in CETA before our very eyes. This is a great first step.

Mr. Ziad Aboultaif (Edmonton Manning, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member mentioned innovation and all the good stuff, or maybe the long-term stuff that may or may not be done, but there was nothing on productivity. Could she be specific on the impact this agreement would have on productivity and in putting Canada in a proper competitive position with the other nations we would be trading with?

● (1345)

Ms. Ruby Sahota: Mr. Speaker, my colleague asks a great question. Productivity is at the heart of this agreement. With this agreement, Canada has a lot to benefit from, and so do its businesses. The EU is one of the largest exporters and our second largest trading partner at the moment.

For example, with just the automotive sector in my city of Brampton, we have a Chrysler plant whose production and productivity would benefit greatly from this agreement. Currently, it exports about 14,000 cars to the EU, but this agreement gives us that edge to amp up productivity in these manufacturing sectors, because now, according to CETA, Canada can export up to 100,000 vehicles a year without any tariffs, which our American counterparts cannot. It has a 10% tariff. This will increase productivity among all our small, medium, and large businesses, and will be a great investment for Canada in our businesses.

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague, whom I serve as co-chair of the all party entrepreneur caucus with.

We have heard Conservatives talk about the 50-plus trade deals they have done over the last decade. What we have seen in the last decade in my riding of Courtenay—Alberni and in coastal British Columbia is raw logs not just double or triple, but actually go up 10-fold in 10 years. We have lost thousands of jobs in the forestry sector. We have seen canneries close on the north coast, losing 400 jobs so we can send our fish to China to get filleted and then sent back to be on our grocery store shelves. Most of those lost jobs, 80%, are of indigenous people.

Government Orders

We have seen the Liberals do trade at all costs, removing a 25% barrier to build ferries here in British Columbia and instead shipping those jobs to Poland and Turkey.

Therefore, I want to ask the member, what is this trade deal going to do differently than giving away jobs to other countries? Will it create fair trade and protect Canadian jobs? I ask because we are not seeing that. A lot of people in coastal B.C. have a lot of questions about what this trade deal is going to do for them.

Ms. Ruby Sahota: Mr. Speaker, actually, this agreement does the exact opposite.

I think this is one of the greatest trade agreements that Canada has entered into. As I said earlier, the EU is one of the largest importing countries. The 28 countries that comprise the EU are huge importers, including of Canadian goods. Therefore, we stand to benefit largely from this trade deal. It will increase bilateral trade by 20% annually. It will boost Canada's income by \$12 billion annually.

The economic benefits of this agreement are equivalent to creating 80,000 new jobs and increasing the average Canadian household income by \$1,000. This is going to be a great news story for Canada in the years to come.

Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I first want to address my hon. colleague from the NDP about the raw log exports from British Columbia. If coastal communities did not have that opportunity, those jobs would not be there. Those raw log exports actually support jobs in coastal communities, which have been hardest hit from the downturn in our forestry industry. So those jobs and those raw log exports serve a purpose.

However, we are here talking about CETA, and the Liberal government has been talking to the Atlantic provinces about the CETA investment fund for Atlantic provinces, who will have to adjust some of their processing techniques.

Can the member guarantee that her government is going to fulfill its obligation to the Atlantic provinces and the fishers who will be impacted by this agreement?

Ms. Ruby Sahota: Mr. Speaker, as I stated in my speech, CETA basically includes provisions to facilitate the establishment of investment and to protect investors against discriminatory practices. The provinces that may have had some hesitations initially were all engaged by our minister and have gone through these discussions. This is why these provisions were included in the new improved agreement. This is why we have created these tribunals to address these issues.

Once again, I cannot stop mentioning the fact that the EU is a market of 500 million consumers that Canadians can export to. This is a great victory for Canadian businesses, and it should be seen as such.

• (1350)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Linda Lapointe (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise in the House today to speak to Bill C-30, an act to implement the comprehensive economic and trade agreement between Canada and the European Union and its member states and to provide for certain other measures.

Having had the unique opportunity of sitting on the Standing Committee on International Trade for almost a year now, I can attest that we have dealt with a number of priority issues, including the Canada-European Union comprehensive economic and trade agreement, or CETA.

Personally, I believe that implementing CETA and passing Bill C-30 is a real Canadian success. Many economies were hit hard by the 2008 world economic crisis, and even as we speak, some nations are still dealing with systemic social and economic challenges.

Fortunately, Canada has recovered, and so has the province where I was born, Quebec. During the economic crisis, our policies were applauded, and now we appreciate how lucky we all are to be Canadian.

When I was a member for the riding of Groulx in the National Assembly from 2007 to 2008, I can recall a number of conversations behind the scenes about the possibility of implementing an ambitious and exclusive trade deal between Canada and the European Union.

Back then, the idea was that, once CETA was implemented, Canada would have access to the two largest economic markets in the world: our natural ally, the United States; and Europe's major economies. At the time, the purpose of implementing such a massive trade agreement was to diversify our economy.

Now that it is really happening, I feel very privileged to participate in the debate on Bill C-30 as the member for Rivière-des-Mille-Îles. However, we must be clear-headed about this because we all saw what happened in 2008. The reeling U.S. economy had a major impact on Canada and its provinces and territories too.

The main purpose of the Canada-European Union comprehensive economic and trade agreement is to diversify our economy because it is never a good idea to put all our eggs in one basket. Greater access to European markets is the natural next step because we have similar values and we want to strengthen our ties to our allies.

I am especially proud to be part of a government that will go down in history for building stronger ties with Europe. Our inclusive values, our belief in innovation, our progressive philosophy, and our professionalism have not only charmed Europe but have also secured the implementation of a quality trade agreement that will benefit Canada in many ways. Trade leads to growth, and growth leads to more jobs here in Canada and in our communities.

It was a pleasure for me to see the government officially sign CETA at the Canada-European Union Summit on October 30. This historic signature represents one more step toward implementing CETA. It goes without saying that, behind this treaty, there are men and women who have been standing up for Canada's most profound interests at the negotiating table since 2009. It is vital that we recognize their important work and their passion for implementing an agreement that will demonstrate Canada's and Europe's leadership on an inclusive and progressive approach to international trade.

Statements by Members

I know that this agreement will result in growth and real opportunities to strengthen the middle class. As the world's second-largest economy, the European Union market represents an unprecedented opportunity for Canadian businesses.

The implementation of CETA will have an unprecedented impact on a number of businesses in my riding. The aerospace industry, the parts manufacturing industry, and the innovative technology industry in Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, for instance, will be able to increase their production now that the European markets have opened to them.

As a result of this agreement, more Canadians will be working, the innovation chain will grow, and small and medium-businesses across the country in every sector will thrive.

• (1355)

The agreement has a number of chapters that are worth noting in the House.

First of all, CETA will provide privileged access not only to commodities and processed products, but also to the EU services sector, which is one of the most developed in the world. Conversely, it is our services sector that will benefit the most from the agreement, since the EU is the world's largest importer of services.

CETA also includes an important chapter on the environment and sustainable development, which are values that this government and European governments hold dear. With this trade arrangement, Canada continues to show environmental leadership on the international scene. The European Union understands, just as we do, that in order to leave a healthy planet for our children and future generations, we need to act now.

Furthermore, Canada can take advantage of an important opportunity presented by CETA, which includes a detailed framework for the mutual recognition of professional qualifications. This important provision will help guarantee labour mobility, as well as the mobility of brain power between Canada and Europe. This measure allows not only labour forces to move freely, but also ideas and best practices. Absolutely everyone wins.

As a member of the Standing Committee on International Trade, I would like to reiterate my support for Bill C-30 and for all of the provisions that bring into force one of the most progressive trade deals that has ever been on the table. Canada will benefit in many concrete ways from CETA, which will enable Canadian companies and small businesses to seize new business opportunities and diversify Europe.

Canada is a highly educated nation. We have an extremely skilled workforce, and the knowledge economy is the economy of the future. We can all be proud of signing this agreement and opening new markets with Europe thanks to the Canada-European Union comprehensive economic and trade agreement.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Rivière-des-Mille-Îles will have five more minutes for questions and comments when the House resumes debate on this motion.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*Translation*]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, recently I was in Marrakesh, where I had the honour of representing the Bloc Québécois at COP22.

Canada delivered some very nice speeches there, much like it did in Paris.

I saw the Minister of Environment and Climate Change in conversation with indigenous people, all of whom are concerned about oil and gas development. They were pleased with the nice speeches, but they all emphasized that it is now time for action.

I heard the minister announce new greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets: 80% by 2050. Why not 100%? Why not 110%, since we are picking numbers out of a hat? Why? Because the moment we got off the plane back here, all we heard about was Kinder Morgan, TransCanada, more oil sands development, and billions in fossil fuel subsidies.

Unfortunately, once these major international conferences are over, the pretense drops, and our actions, the things we do and the things we do not do, are what really count.

* * *

[*English*]

RUTH SPENCE

Mr. Michael McLeod (Northwest Territories, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on October 16, Ruth Spence, a long-time northerner, volunteer, women's and children's advocate, and municipal politician passed away just short of her 90th birthday.

I was fortunate enough to have met Ruth Spence several times over the years and knew of her lasting impact on the city of Yellowknife. Ruth was a tireless volunteer who was essential in setting up the Liberal riding association and was a constant force there for decades. She also opened Yellowknife's YWCA and was its first executive director. It was an honour to have known Ms. Spence and to hear her advice.

Our thoughts continue to be with her family as they mourn the passing of their mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother.

* * *

• (1400)

POMEGRANATE FILM FESTIVAL

Mr. Bob Saroya (Markham—Unionville, CPC): Mr. Speaker, every year the Armenian community of the GTA and Markham organizes the Pomegranate Film Festival. This was the festival's 11th year, which successfully showcased 35 outstanding Armenian-inspired films by internationally acclaimed actors and directors.

Statements by Members

I was honoured to attend the premier of four-time Emmy Award winning filmmaker Bared Maronian's documentary film, *Women of 1915*. The film traces the plight of Armenian women during the genocide of 1915 and how American, Canadian, and Scandinavian women flocked to the killing fields and rescued thousands of Armenian women and children.

The Pomegranate Film Festival is the result of a 100% volunteer effort. I would like to congratulate the large group of very dedicated volunteers; the chair of the committee, Mr. Sevag Yeghoyan; and the Armenian community.

* * *

INNOVATION

Mr. Chandra Arya (Nepean, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, during my stint in a small high-tech defence technology company in the manufacturing sector, I witnessed the excellent federal government funding for innovation and research and development through programs such as the scientific research and experimental development program, the industrial research assistance program, and the strategic aerospace and defence initiative. I also saw the lack of funding for manufacturing startups in general and for commercialization in particular.

Governor General David Johnston has said that Canada is a country of innovators and that we need the culture of innovation.

I say that the innovation cycle will not be complete without commercialization. While we have excellent support for innovation and R and D, we need to recognize the lack of support for commercialization. We need to take concrete and targeted steps to rectify this problem. Without commercialization, all the efforts we put into innovation will be in vain. We need to acknowledge this—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Saskatoon West.

* * *

HOUSING

Ms. Sheri Benson (Saskatoon West, NDP): Mr. Speaker, recently I met with housing advocates to discuss recommendations for what must be included in a national housing strategy. Safe, affordable, and adequate housing can fight poverty and improve the quality of life for all Canadians.

In its March budget, the federal government committed \$253 million for new affordable social housing, and provinces and territories were to match that. It would indeed be a wonderful National Housing Day present if these governments were to allocate and mobilize the funding they promised eight months ago, even though it is but a quarter of what is needed each year to alleviate the affordable-housing crisis.

Canada needs a comprehensive, long-term, fully funded housing plan. We cannot achieve the vision of what we want it to be when 13% of Canadians do not have adequate shelter and almost 20% of indigenous peoples have substandard housing.

A roof is a right. Let us celebrate National Housing Day by truly committing to put the needs of low-income and vulnerable Canadians first.

[Translation]

UNIVERSAL CHILDREN'S DAY

Mr. Frank Baylis (Pierrefonds—Dollard, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on November 20 we celebrated Universal Children's Day. It was an opportunity to promote children's rights in order to create a better future for all our children.

In my riding, Pierrefonds—Dollard, the mission of many charitable organizations is to ensure the well-being of children.

[English]

These organizations support children with disabilities, integrate refugee children, and reach out to aboriginal youth. For example, WIAIH is working to support children through the Kizmet Centre. This will be a place where young children will be given the lifelong advantages provided by growing up within a caring community.

It is our moral duty to support children both here in Canada and throughout the world. It is an obligation we should be proud to fulfill.

* * *

TAXATION

Hon. Gerry Ritz (Battlefords—Lloydminster, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal government is putting our economy at even greater risk by making yet another arbitrary decision to save the world by shutting down Canada's coal-fired plants in an effort to rid the world of a little bit of carbon.

Where is the cost-benefit analysis? Where are the consultations with provinces, stakeholders, and individual Canadians? The Liberal seem to have forgotten that in the first five months of 2016, China brought in 25 new coal-fired plants with plans for many more.

When it comes to implementing trade agreements that increase the GDP, the Liberals hold up legislation with ongoing consultations, but they ram through a carbon tax that will hurt Canadians' pocketbooks, no matter what the cost to our economy. What is another \$130 billion in debt? Our great-grandchildren can handle that.

Australia is repealing its failed carbon tax experiment. France, the birthplace of the Paris accord, refuses to implement a carbon tax, as will the United States under President-elect Trump.

I stand with my Premier Brad Wall, who recognizes the destructive nature a carbon tax will have on the Canadian economy, and how negatively it will impact western Canada. When there is no more money for transfer payments to eastern Canada, will the Liberals finally listen?

Statements by Members

●(1405)

EATING DISORDERS

Ms. Yasmin Ratansi (Don Valley East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to advocate on behalf of the National Initiative for Eating Disorders. NIED is a not-for-profit coalition of families whose loved ones suffer from eating disorders. They wish to bring about positive changes in the availability and quality of treatment for people with eating disorders.

Eating disorders affect over 900,000 Canadians, and are 12 times more likely to lead to death than any other mental illness, making them the most lethal and complex of all mental health disorders. Despite the significant number of sufferers, there is a severe lack of health care-covered treatment options.

The NIED works hard to educate Canadians on the challenges and changes needed in the understanding and treatment of eating disorders in Canada. I thank them for their efforts.

* * *

[*Translation*]

LEBANON

Mrs. Eva Nassif (Vimy, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am proud and pleased to be here with you and to inform the House that today is Lebanon's Independence Day, which marks the day when Lebanon threw off the colonial yoke.

Together with people from other countries, on this day the people of Lebanon and proud Lebanese expatriates all over the world celebrate its sovereignty and independence.

I have the honour of being the vice-chair of the Canada-Lebanon Parliamentary Friendship Group, which organized a historic celebration yesterday for the very first time. Together, we placed the Canadian flag on Parliament Hill.

[*English*]

As a proud Canadian of Lebanese origin, I hope all members in the House will join me in wishing all Lebanese across the world a happy 73rd independence day.

* * *

COQUIHALLA HIGHWAY

Mr. Mark Strahl (Chilliwack—Hope, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my riding of Chilliwack—Hope is a piece of heaven on earth, but it also includes the highway through hell.

The scenery through the Cascade Mountains and along the Coquihalla Highway is breath-taking. When the weather turns bad though, this vital transportation link can quickly become one of the most treacherous major highways in the world.

Hope B.C.'s Jamie Davis and his heavy rescue crews regularly risk their lives to save stranded drivers and clear accident scenes in all conditions to keep the road open, because closure is not an option.

With support from the Canada Media Fund, Thunderbird Entertainment created *Highway Thru Hell*, which documents the round-the-clock struggle to keep these highways open. The hit show

is now seen throughout Canada, the U.S., the U.K., Norway, New Zealand, and France. It is a Canadian success story.

Jamie Davis, and one of the show's creators, Mark Miller are here in Ottawa today. They will be at tonight's Canada Media Fund showcase at the Sir John A. Macdonald building, and I invite all of my colleagues to come and meet these true road warriors.

* * *

LEADER OF TIBET

Mr. Arif Virani (Parkdale—High Park, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about Tibetan leader, Dr. Lobsang Sangay. His Holiness the Dalai Lama relinquished political leadership of the Tibetan community in 2011, and Dr. Sangay was the first person ever elected to the post of *Sikyong*, or government leader, that same year. Born in a Tibetan refugee settlement in India, Dr. Sangay is a Fulbright scholar and the first Tibetan to ever receive an S.J.D. degree from Harvard.

Thousands of Tibetans in my riding of Parkdale-High Park and around the world see Dr. Sangay as a strong advocate for the “middle way” approach. The middle way seeks nothing more than greater autonomy for Tibet within China. It is an approach that would peacefully resolve the issue of Tibet and bring about stability and co-existence based on the concepts of equality and mutual co-operation.

I salute Dr. Sangay, as well as Mr. Penpa Tsering, the official representative of his Holiness the Dalai Lama, for their important work in promoting awareness about the middle way approach.

For their vital efforts, I say *Tashi Delek*.

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DIABETES

Ms. Filomena Tassi (Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, according to the Canadian Diabetes Association, 30% of people with diabetes suffer with depression and their rate of bipolar disorder is three times higher.

This week, we are joined on the Hill by members of the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation for Kids for a Cure Day. Twenty-five kids living with type 1 diabetes are coming to Ottawa to explain how type 1 diabetes affects them and how research into the disease has changed lives. Type 1 diabetes is very important to me. My closest friend's son grew up with this disease. When I was a chaplain, I worked to raise money to fund research into the disease.

Our government has improved the lives of many young Canadians by funding type 1 diabetes research, and we can do even more.

Statements by Members

● (1410)

LEBANON

Mr. Ziad Aboultaif (Edmonton Manning, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today is an important day on the world stage as Lebanon celebrates the 73rd anniversary of its independence. There are almost 200,000 Canadians like myself who have some sort of Lebanese ancestry.

The first Lebanese immigrants arrived here 1882, 134 years ago. We Lebanese are a proud people, with strong roots and a wandering spirit. We are to be found in every country of the earth, and wherever we go, we make a positive contribution.

While we often have become citizens of other nations, forming deep attachments, we never forget our roots. We have our homes, but we also have our homeland. This is why we celebrate Lebanon's independence. We are immensely proud of our heritage. We work to maintain close ties to our homeland, while at the same time remaining proud Canadians.

Join with us as we celebrate.

* * *

EMMA PEARSON

Mr. T.J. Harvey (Tobique—Mactaquac, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, a family from my community has demonstrated nothing shy of courage and fortitude since the heartbreaking loss of their daughter, Emma, who was taken from them in July 2015 as a tragic result of an alcohol-related motor vehicle incident.

Emma was not only a light in the lives of her family but to everyone she came in contact with, including my children, who speak of her often and fondly remember the time they shared with her at our home.

She loved her comfy jammies, her onesies in particular. A year ago, her proud parents, Kim and Brent Pearson, started a campaign to honour Emma's memory. The mission is to spread the love they have for Emma around to others, one pair of pajamas at a time. Emma's pajamas are being sent to shelters for women and their children, volunteer family services, food banks, and hospitals in her memory.

Moving into the holiday spirit, I invite members to visit #SpreadLoveAround. They can contribute by visiting Emma's Pjs 2nd annual pajama drive on Facebook or donate locally in Emma's name.

Who we are in the end and how we have touched the lives of others is the legacy we leave behind. I believe Emma Pearson would be very proud of her legacy.

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[Translation]

CARITAS ESTRIE CANDLE FOR PEACE CAMPAIGN

Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault (Sherbrooke, NDP): Mr. Speaker, today I want to acknowledge the launch of Caritas Estrie's 34th annual candle for peace campaign. The purpose of the campaign put on by this not-for-profit organization in Sherbrooke is to promote peace in Sherbrooke and the Eastern Townships and encourage sharing with the ultimate goal of ending poverty.

Funds raised will be distributed among several organizations in the region, such as Sercovie, Eastern Townships Scouts, the *Journal de rue de Sherbrooke*, the Maison des grands-parents, the Résidences Monchénou, the ACEF Estrie, the Maison de la famille, Estrie Aide, and so forth. These organizations provide services directly in their communities to help and support the least fortunate in Sherbrooke and throughout the Eastern Townships.

As honorary chair of the 2016 campaign, I am very proud to rise in the House today to congratulate everyone who is working directly or indirectly on this campaign, but especially to invite the people of Sherbrooke to give generously when they are asked to buy a candle for peace from Caritas Estrie.

* * *

[English]

VENEZUELA

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Mr. Speaker, last week, the Prime Minister travelled to South America, choosing to stop in Cuba but skipping Venezuela.

Venezuelan opposition leaders are unjustly imprisoned by the Chavista regime of Maduro that receives heavy support from the Castros in Cuba.

Sky-high crime rates, vast corruption, chronic food shortages, and spiralling inflation have Venezuela on the verge of collapse. It is a beautiful country shattered by ruinous socialist economic policies and social engineering on a grand scale.

The Prime Minister has shown zero interest in promoting international human rights. That leaves us to wonder if he took the opportunity, when meeting with the Cuban president, to plead for the release of opposition leaders in Venezuela. The word "democracy" did not pass his lips at any of his public comments while in Cuba. Neither did talk of multi-party elections or calls for Cuba to let up on its harassment of democracy activists and political opposition leaders.

We will never know if this trip was about family nostalgia or a quid pro quo vote by Cuba for Canada's seat on the Security Council.

This was a missed opportunity for Canada to speak up and be counted as a defender of international human rights.

* * *

● (1415)

NATIONAL HOUSING DAY

Mr. Adam Vaughan (Spadina—Fort York, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today is National Housing Day. I am proud to stand in this House and say, for the first time in over a decade, we are poised to deliver a national housing strategy for safe and affordable housing for Canadians everywhere, especially, those in need.

Oral Questions

In our government's first budget, we invested \$2.3 billion more back into Canada's housing programs, sending a strong message that on housing the federal government is back in the game as a force for better housing.

For the last year, our government has been seeking input from stakeholders from across the country. Today, we released that report detailing just what we heard.

The report, called "Let's Talk Housing", came from talking to people from every corner of this country, from people with lived experience on the streets and living in precarious housing; the co-op movement; first nations; municipalities; our provincial and territorial partners; and, of course, the builders of housing.

The goal is not just to build housing; the goal is to build stronger neighbourhoods and, through that, stronger communities and, with that, a stronger country.

Let us get on with the job.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[English]

ETHICS

Hon. Rona Ambrose (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to welcome the Prime Minister back to the House for the first time since November 2. We all know that the Prime Minister likes—

The Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition is aware that members do not draw attention to the presence or absence of other members in the House.

Hon. Rona Ambrose: Again, Mr. Speaker, I would like to welcome the Prime Minister to the House.

We all know that the Prime Minister would rather hang out with billionaires than answer questions in Parliament. When he is not mingling with them in Sun Valley or Davos, he is hitting them up for Liberal Party donations back home. In May, in fact, Chinese billionaires paid \$1,500 for exclusive access to the Prime Minister at a Toronto mansion.

Rubbing elbows with millionaires at these cash for access events does not pass the smell test, and the Prime Minister knows it. Why does he keep doing it?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians faced a period of 10 years of lower than needed growth under the previous government. That is why we have committed to engaging positively with the world to draw in investment. I am pleased with the representations we have made in Davos and elsewhere to demonstrate that Canada is a good place to invest.

When we talk about investments like Bell Helicopter in Mirabel with 1,000 more jobs, or the GM research in Markham, or the GE plant down in Niagara Region, we know that drawing in global investment is a great way to grow the economy and create jobs.

Hon. Rona Ambrose (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is not a coincidence that these billionaires the Prime

Minister meets with actually want something from him. One of the guests at the mansion in May wanted government approval for a new bank in Canada—so, an individual pays \$1,500 for exclusive access to the Prime Minister and that individual will get final approval for a bank a few months later.

Not only does this event break the Prime Minister's own ethics rules, but it does not pass the smell test. He could stop this right away. Why does he not?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians can be reassured that the federal level has some of the toughest rules and laws around political fundraising of any level of government in this country. Indeed, we have always followed those rules and the principles that underlie them.

We also find it peculiar that the opposition members are trying to politicize that particular issue since it was their finance minister who approved that bank before they were booted out of office.

* * *

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Hon. Rona Ambrose (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Class act, Mr. Speaker.

The Prime Minister is making a political decision about what fighter jets to buy our pilots. The last time I checked, he is not an expert in fighter jets. He will not be flying them, and it will not be his life on the line.

Instead of telling our fighter pilots what jets they are allowed to have, why does he not let them make the decision?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, after 10 years of a completely botched procurement process, I am pleased to announce today that we are going to be holding an open competition to replace Canada's aging fighter jet fleet.

The fact that the Conservatives botched that procurement process means that we, right now, have a capability gap. We cannot fulfill our NORAD and NATO obligations. Canadians know we need to, and that is why we are moving ahead with an interim process to give the Canadian Forces the equipment they deserve.

• (1420)

Hon. Rona Ambrose (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the only gap here is a credibility gap.

A prime minister who does not even think we should use our jets to bomb ISIS is not the person who should be making this decision for our pilots. Our air force deserves to have the best equipment, and it deserves to make the decision at arm's length from any politician.

Will the Prime Minister drop this plan and stop interfering in something he knows nothing about?

Oral Questions

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I find it the height of irony to get this from members opposite, who demonstrated they had no clue how to get the replacements that our Canadian fighter pilots need.

I will listen to experts. I will listen to the chief of the defence staff, who says we are facing a significant capability gap. We will fix and upgrade our fighters with an open competition, but in the meanwhile we need an interim process to make sure Canada can fulfill its obligations to protect our sovereignty and support our allies.

* * *

JUSTICE

Hon. Rona Ambrose (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday a judge in Ontario struck down a mandatory one-year prison sentence for a 50-year-old man who sexually assaulted a 15-year-old girl. This judge thought that one year in jail was too much.

The Prime Minister is already planning to roll back mandatory jail time for all sorts of serious crimes. Can the Prime Minister guarantee Canadians that sexual assault crimes against children will still require mandatory jail time?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, instead of politicizing crime the way the members opposite have, I can confirm that we will always support our judiciary who make responsible, reasonable decisions about the cases before them.

I do not think it should be something that should become a political football.

* * *

ETHICS

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it seems that rich businessmen can have access not only to the finance minister but to the Prime Minister himself.

In May this year, 30 billionaires paid \$1,500 to gain direct access to the Prime Minister during a Liberal fundraiser event. We also know that, after that, some of the attendees made a big donation to the Trudeau foundation.

Will they continue to hide behind the Conservatives' law, or will the Prime Minister start to respect and enforce his own rules?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians need to know that they can have confidence in the fact that we have some of the strongest rules around political financing in the country, and those rules are always followed.

The fact of the matter is that we need to demonstrate the level of transparency and accountability that we have always shown, and we will continue to.

[Translation]

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, do my colleagues remember the ad that said "There are some things money can't buy. For everything else, there's MasterCard"?

Well, I invite them to get out their cheque books because it seems that the entire Liberal cabinet, including the Prime Minister, can be

bought. In May, about thirty prominent businessmen, billionaires, bankers, and real estate developers paid \$1,500 to attend a private fundraiser with the Prime Minister.

Today, I would like to ask him how he defines the appearance of conflict of interest.

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the reality is that we have some of the strictest political financing regulations in the country, and they are always followed.

Individuals cannot donate more than \$1,500 per year to a federal party. This shows that our system enjoys an unparalleled level of confidence compared to those of other levels of government and other governments in the world. Canadians can be proud of the system we have here in Canada.

* * *

[English]

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Mr. Murray Rankin (Victoria, NDP): Mr. Speaker, when asked yesterday why the government is still spending half a million dollars fighting Cindy Blackstock and first nations children in court, the government repeated talking points about how it welcomed the ruling from the Human Rights Tribunal.

I want to get the Minister of Justice on record on this issue. As the Attorney General of Canada, how can she justify not complying with this order of the tribunal, and what does she have to say to Cindy Blackstock, who is back at the tribunal today?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is that no government has done more to repair the relationship with indigenous Canadians than this one, with \$8.4 billion over the next five years in building infrastructure, supporting young people, and supporting indigenous communities.

The fact is that we recognize there is much more to do, but we also have to recognize that it needs to be in concert with the indigenous communities themselves and with municipal and provincial partners, and that is exactly what we are doing.

● (1425)

[Translation]

Mr. Murray Rankin (Victoria, NDP): Mr. Speaker, let us put aside the rhetoric and talk about the facts.

Since January, this government has received two compliance orders from the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal and has spent nearly \$500,000 on lawyers' fees to fight Cindy Blackstock after voting in the House to stop fighting indigenous children in court once and for all.

Oral Questions

How can the Minister of Justice justify this Conservative-style approach?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the fact is that we are working very hard to ensure that all Canadian children have the same opportunities to succeed. That means we have to make massive investments in indigenous communities and help youth from indigenous communities succeed.

We still have much more work to do, but by investing \$8.4 billion over the coming years, we have started doing the good work that was neglected for far too long by many governments here in the House.

* * *

SOFTWOOD LUMBER

Hon. Denis Lebel (Lac-Saint-Jean, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Justice in Toronto, the Minister of Finance in the Maritimes, the Minister of Natural Resources, and now the Prime Minister.

If the Liberals put as much effort into signing the softwood lumber deal as they do into fundraising, they would be a lot further ahead on that. Thousands of families and 300,000 workers depend on the softwood lumber deal. However, fundraising appears to be more important to the Liberals than reaching a deal.

Will the Liberals finally settle that agreement?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Minister of International Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the softwood lumber agreement expired under the previous government.

As the Prime Minister has said, we look forward to working very closely with the new American administration. Michael Froman and I continued to negotiate last weekend in Lima, and the Prime Minister raised the issue with President Obama. We will continue to work closely with producers, workers, the provinces, and the territories.

* * *

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Hon. Denis Lebel (Lac-Saint-Jean, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our troops are very important to Canadians.

Let us not forget that the Liberals have been known to send Canadian soldiers to a very warm part of the world wearing winter clothing. Let them not make the same mistake with the fighter jets.

The Liberals are sending a mixed message. They are buying planes, but leaning toward an open and transparent competition. Transparency is easier to achieve in word than in deed.

Who recently won international competitions? What planes are our allies flying? What is the best jet for the Canadian Forces? Stop protecting the Prime Minister and start answering those questions.

[English]

Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am very proud to be able to announce today that we will be launching an open competition to finally replace our fighter fleet, a file that has been mismanaged for the last 10 years. In addition, we will be investing in our military to make sure we have an interim fleet that will fulfill this capability gap.

Our government is committed to investing in our Canadian Armed Forces, and that is exactly what we are doing.

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ETHICS

Mrs. Karen Vecchio (Elgin—Middlesex—London, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is at it again with another cash for access event, this time with Chinese billionaires. Not only has he broken his own ethical rules, but he has violated Liberal Party guidelines requiring officials to ban anyone from attending a fundraiser if they have direct business interests before the government. Will the Prime Minister finally show some leadership, enforce his own rules, and stop using his government position for his own personal benefit?

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I have said in this House many times, we have some of the most strict and the strongest fundraising rules across this country. In fact, the Chief Electoral Officer recently stated that Canada's political financing laws are the "most advanced and constrained and transparent" in the world.

[Translation]

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have seen it all with this Liberal government: conflicts of interest and apparent conflicts of interest.

The Prime Minister took the top prize in that regard when he accepted a \$1-million donation for the Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation from a Chinese billionaire. The Liberals have long been masters at skirting ethics rules.

Do the Liberals want Canadians to live in a country where money buys access to the Prime Minister?

● (1430)

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is confusing matters, something we should avoid doing in this place. As the hon. member knows, Canada has some of the strictest fundraising rules.

In fact, as the chief electoral officer said, "political financing laws in Canada are the most advanced and constrained and transparent in the world".

*Oral Questions**[English]*

Mr. Blaine Calkins (Red Deer—Lacombe, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we learned today that 32 people, including Chinese billionaires, paid \$1,500 to meet the Prime Minister at yet another cash for access event. Billionaire real estate developer and bank founder Ted Zhou, actress and real estate investor Jenny Qi, the CEO of Goldenmount Capital International, and even a member of China's Communist Party attended this event. In the last year, more than 80 exclusive cash for access events have been hosted by the Prime Minister and his cabinet, targeting wealthy stakeholders. Absolutely everyone can see the blatant conflicts of interest here. Why can the Prime Minister not?

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, unlike the previous government, Canadians have access to this government. This government committed to working with Canadians. We have committed—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order, please. It is the opposition's responsibility to ask tough questions, but it is also the rules that we do not interrupt the answers or else we could have a shortened question period.

The hon. government House leader.

Hon. Bardish Chagger: Mr. Speaker, our government has embarked on unprecedented levels of public consultation to make sure that this government is responding to the very real challenges Canadians are facing. The member very well knows that we have some of the strictest rules in the country when it comes to fundraising. We will continue to follow the rules. When we follow the rules, no conflict of interest can exist.

Mr. Blaine Calkins (Red Deer—Lacombe, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister was the star attraction at this exclusive cash for access event with Chinese billionaires. Zhang Bin is a political adviser to the Chinese government. After attending the event, he and his partner, Mr. Gensheng, donated \$1 million to the Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation, including \$50,000 to build a statue of the former prime minister.

We know the Prime Minister's love for the Chinese dictatorship, so what exactly did he promise the Chinese for their million dollar donation?

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what we know is that this government is working for Canadians. This government has lowered taxes on middle-class Canadians. This government has given more money to families with children that need it the most through the tax-free Canada child benefit.

This government will continue to work with Canadians. This government will continue to raise the bar on openness and transparency. We are here to help grow the economy and grow the opportunities that Canadians need.

HEALTH

Ms. Tracey Ramsey (Essex, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals are ramming through CETA, while ignoring the fact that it will lead to higher drug costs in Canada.

Health Canada has admitted this, but the Minister of International Trade continues to deny the basic facts. Canadians could be on the hook for an increase of \$1.6 billion a year; that is a 13% increase. I know folks in my riding of Essex are already struggling to cover the costs of expensive prescriptions.

Is the minister not at all concerned that Canadians will be forced to pay more for prescription drugs?

Hon. Jane Philpott (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have been very pleased to work with my counterparts in the provinces and territories to address the cost of prescription drugs. We have worked together on a pan-Canadian pharmaceutical alliance, which is allowing us to save upwards of \$1 billion every year to do bulk purchasing.

In addition to that, I am working with my colleagues to address the regulations associated with the Patented Medicines Prices Review Board to make sure the cost of prescription drugs is affordable and Canadians will have the medications they need.

* * *

*[Translation]***DAIRY INDUSTRY**

Ms. Ruth Ellen Brosseau (Berthier—Maskinongé, NDP): Mr. Speaker, yesterday in the House the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food said that he was very proud of his transition plan for dairy producers because Ontario producers said that they are satisfied. What about Quebec dairy producers? They will be negatively impacted by the Canada-European Union comprehensive economic and trade agreement. According to Quebec dairy producers, the Liberal transition plan is way off base.

Why are Liberal members of the Quebec caucus keeping mum on this file? They never say a word about dairy producers and they never defend supply management. Are they proud when their minister spouts such nonsense?

• (1435)

[English]

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as my hon. colleague is well aware, I have met dairy farmers and dairy processors across the country for the last 10 months. The truth is that the program that was put in place was put in place by what we heard across the country. In Quebec, young dairy farmers are interested in the future of the dairy industry.

This government has committed to supply management and it will make sure supply management lasts for generations—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman.

*Oral Questions***NATIONAL DEFENCE**

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals are pursuing their plan to sole source the CF-18 Super Hornet. They told Canadians during the campaign that they could buy the CF-18 for \$65 million per plane, but Kuwait just bought 40 of them last week for \$335 million apiece. This is a waste of billions of dollars of taxpayer money and is sticking our air force with the wrong plane.

Why is the Minister of National Defence taking five years to hold a competition and punting it down the road until after the next election?

Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the member opposite asked us to launch an open competition, and today I am very proud we have launched the competition. We will be launching this competition once the defence policy review is complete and we will start the process forward.

In the interim, because of the capability gap and because of the 10 years of neglect on this file, we are investing in our Canadian Armed Forces, making sure we can fill this gap and have the right equipment for our Canadian Armed Forces.

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals are propagating the greatest hoax in Canadian defence procurement history. There is no capability gap. Defence Research and Development Canada said that we only needed 65 jets to meet our NORAD and NATO commitments. The commander of the air force said that our CF-18s could fly until 2025. Yesterday, officials from the Department of National Defence confirmed that all 77 CF-18s could be flown right until 2025.

Will the defence minister listen to his officials or will he keep doubling down on the Liberal credibility gap?

Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, right now, we cannot meet our NORAD and NATO commitments simultaneously. I have taken the advice from our chief of the defence staff. We have a capability gap, and the previous government policy was to risk manage that.

Our government's policy is not to risk manage it. We are going to be investing. We are going to make sure we have a permanent fleet replacement, with an open and transparent competition. We are going to have an interim fleet to fill this capability gap as well.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alupa Clarke (Beauport—Limoilou, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the joint strike fighter program has generated hundreds of millions of dollars in investments in Canada's aerospace industry. It would have created thousands of jobs in British Columbia, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, and New Brunswick.

The government says that it will hold an open and transparent process after having awarded a sole-source contract for the Super Hornet today. Its approach lacks credibility.

Why is the government buying CF-18 Super Hornets now given that the capability gap is a complete fabrication?

[*English*]

Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we will be replacing the entire fleet with an open and

transparent competition once the process starts after the defence policy review. There is a capability gap, and we will be buying an interim fleet. We will be staying as part of the joint strike fighter program as well.

Mr. Alupa Clarke (Beauport—Limoilou, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is an open competition for five years, bringing the decision to after the election. All Canadians know that is a joke.

[*Translation*]

Lieutenant-General Hood and Chief of Defence Staff General Vance both confirmed in a committee hearing in Parliament that our current fighter jets do not have a capability gap. They can be flown until 2025.

Why is this government refusing to launch an open and transparent competition right now in order to identify the best contract for our Canadian Forces and provide good jobs in Canada right away?

[*English*]

Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the previous government could not get this done in the last 10 years, and it should have had it done. We should not be flying aircraft that are 30 years old. These aircraft should have been replaced a long time ago.

We will be launching an open and transparent competition once the defence review is complete. We will be putting in an interim capability as well for the gap. We are going to be investing in our Canadian Armed Forces to make sure they have the right tools to fulfill their missions.

● (1440)

The Speaker: Most members are able to get through question period without reacting to what they hear, and all parties. I would encourage the member for Durham, and others to do the same.

The hon. member for Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques.

* * *

[*Translation*]

INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Stephen Harper's Conservatives never dared to go this far. The Liberals want to privatize our airports and are asking for advice from Credit Suisse, which is in the infrastructure-buying business.

The Liberals also want to privatize our ports and are asking for advice from Morgan Stanley, which also happens to be in the infrastructure-buying business.

I think that we can already guess what the Liberals are going to do, and that means that infrastructure that is key to Canada's economic development will be at the mercy of the private sector.

Where in their election platform did the Liberals talk about privatizing Canada's ports and airports?

Oral Questions

Hon. Marc Garneau (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have not made any decisions regarding our ports and airports. I can guarantee that any decisions we make in the future regarding our airports will be in the best interests of travellers. That is our priority. In the case of ports, any decisions will be in the best interest of Canada's economy.

[*English*]

Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill—Keewatinook Aski, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the made on Bay Street infrastructure privatization plan, while good for billionaire investors, is selling out Canadian jobs. The Port of Churchill is a devastating example of what happened the last time the Liberals privatized strategic infrastructure. They virtually gave the port away to an American billionaire who has since shut it down. People have lost their jobs, the community's future is in question, and we are all paying the price.

When will the Liberals stand up for jobs and stop selling us out for the gain of private infrastructure?

Hon. Navdeep Bains (Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first I would like to take this opportunity to wish you a happy birthday before I respond to that question.

[*Members sang Happy Birthday*]

The Speaker: It is hard enough to get order in here. Thank you.

Order, please. The hon. Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development.

Hon. Navdeep Bains: Mr. Speaker I hope that does not go against my time allocation.

I want to take this opportunity again to highlight the very important initiative we put in place with regard to Churchill. We recognized the challenges there. That is why our government, through economic development, invested \$4.6 million to create jobs to help the community before year-end.

We are concerned about economic development, we care about jobs, and we are making investments and growing the economy.

* * *

AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

Mr. Neil Ellis (Bay of Quinte, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada is one of the world's largest pork exporters and represents 20% of the world's pork trade.

Maintaining and opening up new markets to pork is critical to the Canadian hog industry, which drives economic growth in many rural regions across the country.

Could the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food update us on what our government is doing for the Canadian pork industry?

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the concern of my hon. colleague.

Our government is firmly committed to pork producers. We secured repeal of the country of origin labelling, and have signed CETA, which will provide an additional \$400 million in pork exports.

Last week, the Prime Minister made great progress in allowing the export of our pork to Argentina, which will provide even greater benefits for our pork producers.

Our government is committed to working hard to provide economic benefits for all Canadians.

* * *

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Hon. Gerry Ritz (Battlefords—Lloydminster, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the real advantage for pork is in the TPP.

Yesterday, the president-elect stated that the U.S. would withdraw from the TPP on his first day in office. In Canada, we have a Liberal government that does not know what to do about the TPP after the first year in office. The Minister of International Trade loves to espouse the pro-trade mantra, but her actions do not quite match up.

Why will the Liberal government not get beyond consultation and move toward liberalizing trade in the Asia-Pacific with our remaining allies?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Minister of International Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our pro-trade credentials are amply demonstrated by the fact that we got CETA signed, something the previous government did not.

When it comes to the TPP, I welcome this opportunity to educate the member opposite about the technical details of an agreement his own government negotiated. That agreement, as negotiated by the members opposite, stipulates that the TPP can only come into force if it is ratified by the United States. Even if all 11 other countries ratify, there is no TPP.

• (1445)

Hon. Gerry Ritz (Battlefords—Lloydminster, CPC): That is absolutely false, Mr. Speaker. With the U.S. folding on TPP, since the Liberals will not ante up to fill the void, countries like China and Russia will step in.

Japan and New Zealand will ratify the deal this year, with Australia and Mexico not be far behind. They will go it alone without the U.S. Why are we not part of that?

The Minister of International Trade also claims that TPP countries have two years. That is no longer the case. Everything has been moved forward now with the U.S. withdrawal. Therefore, when will the minister finally do her job to promote the TPP and actually implement this vitally important agreement?

Oral Questions

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Minister of International Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I do not like embarrassing the member opposite, but the technical details of the TPP are that this agreement can only come into force if it is ratified by six countries which cover 85% of the GDP of the TPP countries. In practice, that means it must be ratified by the United States to come into force. Even if all other 11 ratify, there is no TPP.

Hon. Ed Fast (Abbotsford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is clearly evident that the Liberal's trade agenda is in absolute chaos. There is no softwood lumber agreement, no TPP, and the Liberals have even undermined the protection of Canadian investors under our free trade agreement with the European Union.

The Liberal government does not even understand the damage it will cause to Canada's economy by imposing a massive carbon tax and increasing the price of electricity across Canada.

Why will the Liberals not champion trade, stand up for Canadian workers and businesses, and grow our economy?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Minister of International Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the utmost personal respect and even great fondness for the member opposite. However, we have delivered on trade time after time when his government did not.

We got the TPP signed. We got the discriminatory COOL measures removed. We secured access to Mexico and China for Canadian beef. Something I am personally proud of as a farmer's daughter, we got our canola sales to China done.

Hon. Ed Fast (Abbotsford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, those were all our Conservative accomplishments.

I can go on and on about how the Liberals are failing Canadian families and workers. Why have they opened up a discussion with the United States on country of origin labelling, when Canada recently won its case at the World Trade Organization? Why did the Prime Minister break his promise to solve the softwood lumber dispute within 100 days of his meeting with President Obama? Do they remember that promise? Do the Liberals not realize how many jobs across Canada and in my home province of B.C. they have put at risk?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Minister of International Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me first clarify a misstatement by the member opposite. We have in no way opened up the COOL issue. In fact, I would like to remind everyone that our right to retaliate on COOL, as granted to us by the WTO, remains in place, and we are ready to use that right.

When it comes to jobs, we have done a tremendous job of getting investment into Canada: Thomson Reuters, up to 1,500 jobs; GE, 200 jobs. The list goes—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Hochelaga.

* * *

[Translation]

HOUSING

Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet (Hochelaga, NDP): Mr. Speaker, today is National Housing Day.

In the summary of the national housing strategy consultations, which was released this morning, the minister mentions the possibility of renewing the operating agreements with current operators that are set to expire. However, he made no mention of the agreements that have already expired. By the time a strategy is introduced in 2017, over 100,000 households will have lost their rent subsidies and may have to pay \$200, \$300, or \$400 more a month for housing.

Does the minister also intend to renew the funding for agreements that have already expired?

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for giving me the opportunity to express just how honoured I have felt in recent months to participate in a consultation process that involved thousands of discussions between the Government of Canada, its partners in other governments, and the people who have been waiting for us for many years. They have been waiting for the federal government to recommit and to show leadership when it comes to helping Canadian families with their housing needs.

* * *

• (1450)

[English]

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is clear that the Liberals' promise of an open competition to replace the CF-18s was not worth the paper it was written on. Instead, they are using the same approach as the Conservatives with the F-35s, this time hand-picking the Super Hornets without an open competition. Same approach, different jet.

Everyone knows sole sourcing is the best way to get the worst price for taxpayers. Once again, the Liberals are breaking another major campaign promise. Does the minister really believe there can be an open competition five years from now after sole-sourcing nearly a third of the fleet?

Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to make sure that the member opposite understands how the process is going to work. After the defence policy is released, the process will begin for the permanent replacement of our fleet. In the interim, because of the capability gap, because we need to invest in the Canadian Armed Forces, we will be purchasing an interim fleet of 18 fighters to fill this gap.

I personally feel that investing in our Canadian Armed Forces is the right thing to do. That is exactly what our government promised to do, and that is exactly what we are doing.

*Oral Questions***INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS**

Mrs. Cathy McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as of this month, 88% of B.C. first nations have filed financial disclosures, because they recognize that empowering their members is the right thing to do, and that means giving them access to information.

Since the Liberals stopped enforcing the act, many more are falling very far behind in their filings, including the Semiahmoo, Popkum, and Skatin. How can the minister defend her disregard for grassroots members, and why will she not start empowering community members and enforce the law?

Hon. Carolyn Bennett (Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again I remind the member that the Kelowna Accord's collaborative approach led to a framework for accountability, which that party's members tore up. Transparency and accountability will only be improved by working in true partnership with first nations.

What the member fails to understand is that top-down approaches do not work. Frankly, since her law was put in place, more first nations, on principle, have objected to reporting. This is not working, and therefore we have to work together to empower those community members she is talking about to be able to be—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo.

Mrs. Cathy McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC): Mr. Speaker, if empowering first nations is like Bill S-3, where they did not even bother to talk to the chief and defendant, that is a very poor example. Band members are having to take their leadership to court to get basic financial information.

On this side of the House, we are with people like Charmaine Stick, who the minister is forcing to go to court for this information. The Liberals should be ashamed. Why is the minister forcing Charmaine to go to court instead of showing some leadership and enforcing the law?

Hon. Carolyn Bennett (Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think the member fails to understand that there are certain things that are within the purview of my department in terms of indigenous affairs. There are other things that are actually own-source revenues of the band.

What that community member is going to court to find are things that we cannot, as a department, determine, because it is not our money. It is the band's money. Therefore, the member needs to go through the regular process to get that information.

Hon. Candice Bergen (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the problem is that every time the Liberals have a chance to empower grassroots first nation people, they do the opposite and give a pass to some unaccountable, all-powerful chiefs.

Liberals opposed guaranteeing women on reserve the right to their own home after divorce. Why? It is because some chiefs did not like it. Now, because some chiefs do not like it, they are blocking the ability of first nations people to hold their leaders to account on what they spend.

Why are the Liberals more focused on protecting the chiefs than on empowering first nations grassroots people?

Hon. Carolyn Bennett (Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we take all allegations of fraud very seriously. However, in the particular situation the member raises, the audit was stopped in July 2015, when the department sought a legal opinion on a jurisdiction matter.

Just as I have explained, it was determined that the department does not have jurisdiction to investigate this matter. As a result, the audit was not completed, and there is no report.

In accordance with the department's usual practice, all complainants were informed of this outcome.

* * *

• (1455)

[Translation]

HOUSING

Mr. Fayçal El-Khoury (Laval—Les Îles, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today is a special day. It is National Housing Day. This is a perfect time to talk about the excellent work that our government is doing to improve Canadians' access to affordable housing.

Can the minister responsible update the House on the development of the national housing strategy?

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank our colleague from Laval—Les Îles for the excellent work he is doing to help families in his community with their housing needs.

We believe that Canadians deserve suitable, affordable housing. In budget 2016, our government invested \$2.3 billion over two years in affordable housing, which will help 200,000 families. The national housing strategy will be launched in 2017 and will ensure stable, predictable funding as part of a respectful, inclusive, and transparent partnership with all of our communities.

* * *

[English]

JUSTICE

Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Justice has said that she has a problem with mandatory jail sentences passed by the previous Conservative government.

Oral Questions

The previous Conservative government passed mandatory jail sentences for child sexual predators. In light of the Prime Minister's defence of the disturbing decision of an Ontario Superior Court judge to throw out a mandatory jail sentence involving sexual interference involving a minor, would the Minister of Justice stand in her place and assure Canadians that the government will not repeal mandatory jail—

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Justice.

Hon. Jody Wilson-Raybould (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I certainly recognize the question. Without a doubt, child sexual assault is wrong. Our government is doing everything it can to ensure that we protect children.

As I have stated many times, and as this House knows, I am conducting a broad review of the criminal justice system, including sentencing reform and including looking at a comprehensive examination of mandatory minimum penalties.

Our government believes that it is important to have all of our laws be effective and meet public safety and to ensure that they are consistent with the Constitution of this country.

* * *

[Translation]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Ms. Hélène Laverdière (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Turkish government has arrested not only professors, students, journalists, and public servants, but also a number of Kurdish MPs who were democratically elected to their national Parliament. This constitutes a direct attack on the principle of parliamentary immunity that is at the core of our democracies. I hope many of my colleagues are driven to action by the news.

What specific action is the minister taking to denounce this situation and defend democracy and human rights in Turkey?

Hon. Stéphane Dion (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for her question and assure her that her concerns are certainly shared by all members of the House and by me, in my capacity as minister.

I have raised this issue several times with my counterpart, the minister of foreign affairs of Turkey, and again just recently. We continue to insist that the Turkish people, who courageously refused to accept a coup d'état, be protected by the rule of law and by democracy, the very principles that were defended in resistance to the coup, and we have very serious concerns about the conduct of the Turkish government at this time.

* * *

[English]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Darren Fisher (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Province of Nova Scotia has been a leader in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and it is deeply committed to a cleaner environment for future generations.

The Minister of Environment and Climate Change has been working very hard with all provinces and territories to make sure that we hit our ambitious targets for reducing GHG emissions.

Can the minister update this House on our support for provinces like Nova Scotia in their fight against climate change?

Hon. Catherine McKenna (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for Dartmouth—Cole Harbour for his excellent question.

Yesterday I was very pleased to join the Premier of Nova Scotia and the President of the Treasury Board to announce that Nova Scotia will implement a cap and trade system that aligns with Canada's approach to pricing carbon pollution. We applaud the leadership of Nova Scotia for tackling climate change and growing a clean economy.

We look forward to continuing to work with all provinces and territories so that we together can create a more prosperous and sustainable future for our children and grandchildren.

* * *

● (1500)

AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

Mr. David Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this morning ranchers in southern Alberta were at the agriculture committee to talk about bovine tuberculosis.

Lives and livelihoods are being destroyed. They need help. They need funding to cover the additional feed costs caused by the CFIA's mandatory quarantine. They need the CFIA to use local vets to speed up testing. They need the CFIA response centre to openly and directly involve producers, but this morning, Liberals stopped us from calling the CFIA to committee.

What are the Liberals afraid of, and why are they failing to address these issues?

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my hon. colleague's concern.

I have asked my department to look into options for providing assistance to ranchers who are under quarantine. I have asked CFIA to expedite payments for affected herds where cattle have to be destroyed.

We have also ensured that CFIA has brought in additional staff to support investigations, including on-farm testing. We have to make sure that we eradicate this disease.

* * *

[Translation]

FINANCING OF POLITICAL PARTIES

Mr. Rhéal Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ): Mr. Speaker, a Liberal crony is a Liberal crony.

Speaker's Ruling

A \$1,500 cocktail party with the Prime Minister for Chinese bankers, another with the Minister of Finance for Bay Street elite—such is the life of the rich and famous. It is no wonder everyone is so cynical.

Everyone knows what the solution is. It is as simple as restoring per-vote public subsidies to political parties and lowering contribution limits.

When are the Liberals going to do something about this, or would that not suit them?

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member knows and as I have said many times, federal fundraising rules are among the strictest in the country, among all levels of government.

The chief electoral officer said that political financing laws in Canada are the most advanced, constrained, and transparent in the world.

Mr. Luc Thériault (Montcalm, BQ): Mr. Speaker, just because it is legal does not make it ethical.

Privileged access to the minister by friends of the Liberals for \$1,500 may be legal, but is not ethical, and it results in cynicism. A private cocktail with the Prime Minister for Chinese investors looking to push their own agendas may be legal, but it is unethical and results in cynicism.

Instead of fuelling voters' cynicism, will the Minister of Democratic Institutions restore per-vote subsidies for political parties, yes or no?

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, many people will respond because this government is working on behalf of Canadians, and we are proud of the work we do.

Our government is committed to conducting unprecedented consultations to ensure it addresses the real challenges Canadians are facing. That is why we have implemented measures such as a 1% tax increase for the wealthy and a tax reduction for the middle class. These are measures Canadians asked for.

* * *

[*English*]

PRESENCE IN GALLERY

The Speaker: I would like to draw to the attention of hon. members, the presence in the gallery of the Honourable Bob McLeod, Premier of the Northwest Territories and Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, and the members of the cabinet of the Northwest Territories.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

● (1505)

PRIVILEGE

MINISTER OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE—SPEAKER'S RULING

The Speaker: I am now prepared to rule on the question of privilege raised on November 3, 2016, by the hon. member for Essex regarding the tabling of treaties in Parliament.

[*Translation*]

I would like to thank the member for Essex for having raised the question, as well as the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and the Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons for their comments.

[*English*]

In raising the question of privilege, the member for Essex contended that the government violated its own 2008 policy on the tabling of treaties in Parliament when, on Monday, October 31, 2016, the Minister of International Trade tabled in the House of Commons a copy of the comprehensive economic and trade agreement between Canada and the European Union and its member states without an explanatory memorandum and, immediately after, introduced implementing legislation for that treaty, Bill C-30, an act to implement the comprehensive economic and trade agreement between Canada and the European Union and its member states and to provide for certain other measures.

In particular, the member indicated that the government's policy in this regard stipulates that a waiting period of at least 21 days be observed before introducing implementing legislation in Parliament and that treaties be accompanied by an explanatory memorandum. In her view, the government's negligence in fulfilling the obligations of its own policy infringed on members' privileges, as it left them unable to scrutinize the voluminous agreement and its implementing legislation.

[*Translation*]

The Leader of the Government in the House of Commons replied that the process governing the tabling of treaties is in fact a government policy and, thus, not a matter of parliamentary procedure.

For his part, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons argued that departmental activities do not fall under the purview of the House or the Speaker and that, in any case, CETA had been granted an exception to the 21-day waiting period pursuant to section 6.3 of the government's policy.

[*English*]

Members may recall, as was mentioned by the Parliamentary Secretary to the government House leader, that the Chair was faced with a very similar point of order regarding the same policy on treaties in the last Parliament. In response, my predecessor concluded on May 12, 2014, on page 5220 of the *Debates*, that:

[*Translation*]

It is clear to me that the policy in question belongs to the government and not the House. It is equally clear that it is not within the Speaker's authority to adjudicate on government policies or processes, and this includes determining whether the government is in compliance with its own policies.

Government Orders

[English]

He went on to say:

...the distinction between governmental procedures and House procedures remains and must be acknowledged.

In fact, the member for Essex acknowledged this very distinction when she stated on page 6557 of the *Debates*:

I am aware that the minister's own policy on the tabling of treaties in Parliament is not governed by the Standing Orders of the House.

[Translation]

It bears repeating my predecessor's explanation that, although many Standing Orders and statutes require that certain documents be tabled in the House, as described on pages 430 and 609 of *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, second edition, there is no mention in our Standing Orders of a specific requirement regarding the tabling of treaties or accompanying explanatory memoranda, nor of any prescribed time limits with respect to the tabling of implementing legislation.

● (1510)

[English]

Thus, it is clear to the Chair that, as was the case in May 2014, this policy cannot be regarded as part of the current body of rules that govern the House's procedures and practices. It is equally clear that when members request redress with respect to rules external to the House, as Speaker I can neither interpret nor enforce them. It has long been the case that the Speaker's role is limited to ensuring that the body of rules and practices that the House has adopted are respected and upheld.

Therefore, the Chair cannot find evidence to support the member's contention that she was impeded in the fulfilment of her parliamentary functions. Accordingly, I cannot find that there is a prima facie question of privilege.

[Translation]

I thank all hon. members for their attention.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

CANADA-EUROPEAN UNION COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC AND TRADE AGREEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-30, An Act to implement the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement between Canada and the European Union and its Member States and to provide for certain other measures, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

The Speaker: We have five more minutes for questions and comments on the speech by the member for Rivière-des-Mille-Îles.

The hon. member for Sherbrooke.

Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault (Sherbrooke, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for the speech on Bill C-30 that she gave before question period. She had good things to say about free trade

agreements but offered no concrete examples of economic and trade agreements having a direct impact on job creation in her riding, in Quebec, or in Canada.

Can the member give an example? Can she do more than just speculate and actually provide some concrete evidence of how this economic and trade agreement with Europe will create jobs? Has the ratification of trade and free trade agreements every really resulted directly in job creation?

Ms. Linda Lapointe (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague from Sherbrooke. It is a pleasure for me to respond to his question.

It is a fact that jobs will be created thanks to this agreement, once it has been implemented by all the parties. In my constituency, Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, there are some very fine companies in the fields of aerospace and robotics, among others. It is a fact that this will open up markets in Europe. I am certain that more jobs will be created. I regret not having any specific figures, but according to the studies that have been provided, it will be one job in five in Canada.

Certainly this is a progressive agreement from which everyone here in Canada will benefit. There will be export opportunities, and hence the increase in jobs here in Canada.

Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased for the opportunity to ask my colleague another question.

I understand that she sees the European trade agreement as an opportunity to increase exports by accessing a market of 500 million people. However, does she understand that trade agreements work both ways, and that the companies in Europe also have access to our market, which is a market of 38 million consumers? Does the hon. member understand that there is a danger of imbalance here, and that European companies can have the same rights as Canadian companies in Europe, and thus invest here and create jobs in Europe, with the aim of filling the Canadian consumer market? Does she understand that trade agreements work both ways?

Ms. Linda Lapointe: Mr. Speaker, earlier I said that, in 2008, we pretty much only had NAFTA, with the United States. All our eggs were in the same basket. Now we want to open up markets and diversify the places where we can export our products by removing tariffs.

This trade agreement is an opportunity from which Canada will be able to benefit. It will offer new opportunities for our small and medium-sized businesses, including those in my riding. Bill C-30 will implement this agreement, and will bring growth for our middle class. I am very happy that our government signed this agreement on October 30.

● (1515)

[English]

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have a specific question I want to ask the hon. member. I think she knows that our party supports this trade deal.

The government has put this deal forward. On the other hand, it has been critical of what it alleges is a lack of consultation in the trans-Pacific partnership. As far as I can understand, the consultation process was the same for this trade deal as for the trans-Pacific partnership.

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I want to understand the government's position. Could the member tell us what was different about the consultation process followed in this trade deal compared to the process followed in the development of the trans-Pacific partnership?

[Translation]

Ms. Linda Lapointe: Mr. Speaker, the consultations were already over by the time I arrived in government. They were completed, and we are now in the process of consulting before the clause-by-clause study, which will begin very shortly.

[English]

Hon. Peter Van Loan (York—Simcoe, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is indeed about time we were debating this agreement in the House of Commons. It has been a long time coming. In fact, when I became minister of international trade, way back in 2010, negotiations on this agreement had already begun, thanks to the leadership of prime minister Harper and my predecessor in that role as trade minister, Stockwell Day.

It has been a long time coming, but it should be acknowledged that at that time, when I became minister, China was kind of all the rage. We hear that it might be all the rage nowadays. However, one of the things that struck me at the time was it seemed to me there were a fair number of inequalities in the trading relationship with China. We were running a severe trade deficit. Our investors in China were having a great deal of difficulty having their legal rights respected. I thought perhaps we should make our number one trading priority the negotiation of the Canada-Europe free trade agreement, as I chose to call it.

It did become the focus of our department's work, and certainly my work as minister. I felt it was an opportunity where we would be bringing together communities with similar values and similar economic approaches. In many cases, there were similar languages and similar legal systems. The opportunities were tremendous, and as we saw, the negotiations proceeded with tremendous success.

Why was it so important? We had a study undertaken to determine whether or not it was worthwhile embarking on negotiations. That study found that there would be a \$12-billion annual boost to the Canadian economy from such an agreement, and that was way before 2010. When we hear that number, and I have seen it bandied about in this debate, it is reasonable to assess that the number that is now almost a decade old would be much higher today as the economies and opportunities have advanced. Therefore, I think we are looking at far more than a \$12-billion boost to the Canadian economy. We will certainly need that. That will be a boost that will be coming as a result of a trade agreement like this.

There were some very special things about how this was negotiated that were different than any negotiation before. One of them was the inclusion of the provinces. Canada is a challenging jurisdiction for the negotiation of trade agreements because much of what is on the table, much of what we will have to implement by way of legislation or regulatory changes, is in provincial jurisdiction, thanks to our Constitution. As a result, we structured a negotiating process that had the provinces at the table for the very first time. I know the narrative, the history, that mainstream academics like to talk about in the media was that we did not have great co-operation. We had better co-operation on trade with the provinces than any

other government ever in history. It was groundbreaking, and very important. It was one of the reasons we were able to succeed in this complex negotiation, never mind the complexities of the many jurisdictions on the other side of the equation in the European Union.

We also had unprecedented consultations with the various stakeholders. Some of it was structural. Some of it was regular briefings. For example, I remember meeting with the municipalities across Canada, and so on, so that they were apprised, because there were issues that were going to affect them. All of these played into it.

One of the things I saw as a tremendous opportunity for Canada was the fact that if we look at all the countries of the European Union, we have here in Canada significant populations from each and every one of those jurisdictions. I thought about the tremendous potential for us to harness the fact that we have people with ties of language, culture, ethnicity, family, and previous business. We have many recent immigrants with those ties back home, and given the opportunity to expand that trade, think of the potential that could be undertaken there.

Canada has had a unique challenge in our trade that is also our greatest strength. We have beside us the United States of America, a country with similar values, similar languages, and similar legal system, and great roots that we have in common. Therefore, for Canadians and Canadian businesses, that has given us a huge potential to trade. We have such a strong trading relationship. As a relatively small country, we depend on the ability to export elsewhere, especially to that huge market in the United States.

However, the problem for Canada became, and I believe still is, that it is almost too easy. It is so much easier to go and form trading relationships with people where we do not have to learn a new language, or a new legal system or jurisdictions. We can talk about the football game we watched on TV, or the sitcom that was on the networks last week, and still have all those ties together.

● (1520)

To make the decision to go somewhere else in the world for our exports, to learn those new markets, to learn the news systems and the local rules, is much more challenging. However, we have this ace in the hole of those populations here.

As trade minister, one of the things I worked very hard to do was work through those various communities in Canada. Almost every single one of them had a Canadian and whatever the country, members can take their pick, German, Belgian, whatever, chamber of commerce that brought together people of those backgrounds and those interests in Canada who were ready and willing to pursue those opportunities. I can say without exception that every single one of them was excited, engaged, and looking forward to the opportunities that would be presented by this remarkable trade agreement, such as the opportunities to prosper, export, create jobs, and the like.

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When we think about it, there were other opportunities on the other side. I remember entertaining many potential foreign investors looking at Canada at the time. What they told me again and again was that there were so many things that were attractive about Canada. Under our Conservative government, we had delivered the lowest level of taxation on new job creators of any comparable jurisdictions. We had the most skilled workforce, the highest proportion of people with post-secondary education, and I could go on. They looked at our debt-to-GDP ratio, and the fact that we were focused on balanced budgets, and said, "As long as there is a Conservative government in place and we see these levels of low debt and deficit, we can have confidence that the numbers we put in our pro forma for taxation will remain for the foreseeable future, and that creates certainty for our investment." They looked at all of those things and then said, "If you get that free trade agreement with Europe, picture it, you will be the only country in the world, the only major developed economy, with trade agreements with the two biggest economies in the world, the United States through NAFTA, and the European Union. If you're looking for a place to invest a platform, a place to create jobs and produce the products that you're going to export into those marketplaces, nowhere would be better than Canada."

We will see if that will remain the case. Hopefully, the government will be able to do a reasonable job, although it has already started unilateral disarmament with the Americans vis-à-vis NAFTA. However, if it can hold its own in those negotiations we will continue to hold that position and this agreement will hold that promise for Canada, and that will continue to be the case. It now looks unlikely that the United States, with its current political direction, will proceed very far with its efforts to negotiate a free trade agreement with Europe. That is a huge potential opportunity for us as a destination for investment in that regard. That is something that, when we look at this agreement, when we look at the potential that Canada has, is one of the things that to me was very promising from a job creation and investment perspective.

However, there are worrying signs. I talked about that unilateral disarmament approach of the Liberal government, where it has already volunteered to look at renegotiating NAFTA. The problem is this. Notwithstanding the perceptions that people have, the Americans are not ideological trade negotiators. They are very much self-interested negotiators and they look to maximize their self-interests. If it were not for the charm of one Brian Mulroney and his ability to connect a relationship with Ronald Reagan, we would never have had a NAFTA that was as fair and beneficial for both countries as it is. Therefore, I am very concerned about the potential to do that.

The Liberals are not natural trade negotiators. In all of their 13 years in power in the previous Liberal government, they only negotiated three trade agreements. Some people said two earlier. It was three. They were with economic behemoth powerhouses: Costa Rica, Chile, and Israel. Those agreements were so unambitious that when I was trade minister we reopened all three so that we could make them into stronger agreements that delivered more benefits to Canada. I am pleased to say that we delivered on those. Therefore, are they natural negotiators? I do not know. Fortunately, they inherited this Canada-Europe trade agreement, and although they did find a way to delay it for a year and put a lot of stuff at risk, I hope

that 90% of it is intact when compared to what we had arrived at in terms of agreements with the Europeans when we left government and that there will be potential there.

I am excited that this agreement is finally here in the House of Commons and that some of that potential can be harnessed. These things take much longer than they should because of the complexity of so many jurisdictions not only here in Canada but, more importantly, in the European Union.

• (1525)

At the end of the day, free trade means less government; free trade means lower taxes; and free trade means more opportunity, more jobs, more economic growth, and more economic development. That is why this Conservative Party has been so associated with all the great advances of free trade throughout the history of the past century or so in Canada. I am very proud to have played a very small role in that, together with my colleagues.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham (Laurentides—Labelle, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when the member refers to the reopening of NAFTA, NAFTA has already been modified something like 11 times. There is nothing wrong with this, bringing it up to date is part of the process.

There is also a chapter of NAFTA called 22, which allows the outright withdrawal of a country. If a country wants to have a discussion, it is probably a good idea to actually sit down and hear what they have to say. There is nothing wrong with that.

The really interesting thing about CETA to me is that we brought 28 countries together, we brought Liberals and Conservatives together, and we brought 10 provinces together. These are countries and provinces that are the far left, the far right, or the middle. They are from all walks of life, all spectrums.

I wonder if the member could address how difficult it is to bring that many people together on one single issue like this?

Hon. Peter Van Loan: Mr. Speaker, someone else who I did not get a chance to pay tribute to here who is perhaps really the godfather of the Canada-Europe Union free trade agreement, and I have not heard his name too much, is Jean Charest. When he was premier of Quebec, this former leader of the Progressive Conservative Party of Canada took the initiative and got the thing kick-started. He deserves real credit for that. I think it is one of the reasons why the provinces, including Quebec, which is sometimes a bit of a challenge on these sorts of agreements, were among the greatest champions of it.

The problems were not really there. The problems are usually with the partners. We were lucky. We had great partners. I know in my travels throughout Europe, especially the eastern Europeans, people who had experienced socialism, who had experienced how terrible it is when the government tries to run every aspect of people's lives, taxing them to death, desperately wanted an agreement that anchored them to the free market model of low taxes that they saw here in Canada. They were very keen to see it. Even there, we had a good opportunity.

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However, my concern is on the other aspect of the hon. member's question, and that is, the government can throw up its hands and negotiate with the Americans anytime it wants in NAFTA. I can tell that the hon. member has never sat down with American trade negotiators. As I said, this is not a question of philosophical, ideological commitment to free trade and small government. That is now how the Americans approach things. They decide, what the interests are they want, how they can help their business, and how they can use the fact that they are biggest market around, with all that power and all the leverage, to get where they want.

The original Canada-U.S. free trade agreement would not have happened if it was not for Brian Mulroney and Ronald Reagan getting beyond that interest approach to negotiating, to doing what was right and fair for both. I really do not like the idea of unilateral disarmament, when people come to the table and say "Hey, guys, what do you want to take from us today?" That is what the Liberal government is doing.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre Nantel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate my hon. colleague from York—Simcoe on his speech. There is no doubt that he knows his stuff where these sorts of international trade deals are concerned.

In my constituency, we have the Union des producteurs agricoles. Obviously, dairy producers are among those who are most worried about this agreement.

My hon. colleague having probably drafted some of the agreement's clauses, does he not find it deplorable that the government is not even trying to compensate the dairy industry for at least half of its annual losses, which stand at around \$116 million?

This is causing much gnashing of teeth in Quebec.

• (1530)

[*English*]

Hon. Peter Van Loan: Mr. Speaker, the short answer, of course, is when our government put together the Canada-Europe free trade agreement, we also put together a package that not only ensured the continuation of supply management for the benefit of those agricultural producers but also gave other opportunities to other agricultural producers.

I am not so sure that the supply managed sector is content that they are as protected under the current government as they were under us, but we will have to wait and see, and hope for the best.

I just want to make a general observation about agriculture and supply management. I never actually found, in all my discussions with trade ministers from over 50 countries, with the exception of one, a guy who was former trade negotiator, that they were concerned about agriculture. Agriculture is a sensitivity in every single country except for Singapore. They all have their own agricultural sector that is not unlike ours, with their own sensitivities and their own concerns. Of course if there is a highly visible sector, making known that they are concerned, then trade negotiators jump on that issue.

Supply management is something that troubles trade negotiators. It does not trouble politicians. That is why we felt confident and

comfortable all the way through in saying that we would protect the future of supply management. We assured that that was indeed the case in the agreement, whether the compensatory aspects for the very small increase in exports of supply-managed products in Canada are adequate. I know that our government had the full support from the sector with what we arrived at. Whether they can count on that with the new government, I am not so sure.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Francis Drouin (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise in the House to join in the debate on Bill C-30, an act to implement the comprehensive economic and trade agreement between Canada and the European Union and its member states and to provide for certain other measures.

I must admit that, at first, I was worried for certain sectors of the economy in my riding, dairy production in particular. I want to congratulate the Minister of International Trade and the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food for their work in responding to the concerns stemming from this agreement. It is only a start, but I will get back to that a little later in my speech.

[*English*]

For the past year, I have met with multiple stakeholders from the agricultural sector and heard various points of view. One consistent point is that food production must increase by at least 50% by 2050. Canada has a unique opportunity to position itself as the go-to supplier for world demand for food. But in order to do that, we will need to provide our farmers, our processors, and the agrifood supply chain a competitive advantage. That is where CETA comes in. While not perfect, it would provide a greater opportunity for our farmers and the agrifood sector to position themselves as key players in the European market. The EU is among the world's largest markets for food. Removing barriers for our agricultural sector would be part of this agreement.

We need to consider these important facts: almost half of the value of Canada's agricultural production is exported; and two-thirds of our pork, 80% of our canola and canola products, and 90% of our pulse crops are exported.

[*Translation*]

Let us consider this, then: tariff barriers currently stand at approximately 14%, on average. That means that Canadian agricultural businesses are at a competitive disadvantage compared with those in the European Union. CETA will allow them to be as competitive as European farm operations. When the agreement comes into force, nearly 94% of tariff barriers will be eliminated. This is good news.

However, I would encourage my colleagues not to take my word for it, but rather that of the experts at Cereals Canada, which includes the Producteurs de grains du Québec and the Grain Farmers of Ontario, the Canadian Cattlemen's Association and the Canadian Pork Council, to name a few. They all support this agreement. This is good news for agriculture.

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What is more, we intend to stay the course. We will continue to fight so that Canadian agriculture can thrive and the supply management system is maintained. It is true that the agreement is not perfect, but the Prime Minister, the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, my colleagues and I have worked relentlessly to ensure that our dairy sector can continue to prosper.

Several meetings were held with Canadian dairy farmers, processors, provincial associations, and many young farmers. Discussions focused on the best way to strengthen the sector so that it can face the national and international challenges that lie ahead, and on the transition assistance in light of new market access under CETA.

Our government has been clear from the beginning regarding the need to help dairy farmers and processors make the transition with respect to CETA. That is why we announced a \$350-million investment in two new programs aimed at enhancing the competitiveness of our dairy industry in anticipation of CETA's implementation. The government is committed to preserving the vitality of the dairy industry by contributing to farmers' and processors' continued ability to innovate and increase productivity.

The first program is the dairy farm investment program. This five-year, \$250-million program will provide targeted contributions to help Canadian dairy farmers update farm technologies and systems and improve productivity by upgrading their equipment.

The second program is the dairy processing investment fund. This four-year, \$100-million program aims to help dairy processors modernize their operations and thereby increase their productivity and efficiency, and also diversify their product lines so as to profit from new market opportunities.

• (1535)

[English]

These programs will complement the dairy sector's ongoing investment efforts, helping both current and future generations of dairy farmers and processors to remain competitive for the long term within a strong supply management system.

We have already seen the positive impact of this announcement. Already, Gay Lea Foods in Ontario has announced an investment of \$140 million to create an ingredient plant.

However, that is not all. We have heard loud and clear about the ongoing problems that negatively impact our supply managed sectors, particularly our dairy and chicken farmers. We need to address the duties relief program and spent fowl. Consultations will be launched with industry stakeholders regarding potential changes to the duty relief program and the import for re-export program.

We are exploring measures regarding inventory reporting in an effort to improve the predictability of these imports. Our government will also look at specific options regarding certification requirements for imports of spent fowl while ensuring that any such requirements would be fully consistent with Canada's international trade obligations. These are key concerns for our supply managed industry, and our government is taking action to support these sectors.

With regard to the allocation of CETA cheese quotas, the government is currently reviewing the results of the public engagement process that concluded at the end of August. The Minister of International Trade's decision will take stakeholders' views and interests into consideration in determining how to allocate the new CETA cheese quotas. The allocation policy for cheese tariff rate quotas will be finalized following the passage of the CETA implementation legislation and before the agreement's entry into force.

[Translation]

These are the actions of a government that is committed to the people it represents. Some will say we are taking too much time, but as my mother used to say, "better late than never". One is better off making the right decision than the wrong one.

Although there are challenges, the Canadian dairy sector continues to be progressive and innovative. Canadian dairy producers are doing an excellent job meeting the needs of consumers, whether in terms of food quality, animal welfare, the environment, or good products with high nutritional value.

Consumers like Canadian dairy products. Production continues to grow every year. Butter consumption increased by 10% over the last decade. Yogurt consumption increased by over 60% during the same period, and should continue to rise.

Canada's dairy producers are among the industry's world leaders with respect to the environment.

Canada's dairy industry has a smaller ecological footprint for carbon, water and earth than most of the other big dairy producers worldwide. This is good news.

Today's dairy producers are able to produce 14% more milk than 20 years ago, thanks to better genetics, better nutrition and better farming practices. They are able to do this with 24% fewer cows, while generating 20% less greenhouse gas. This is reason to be proud of our dairy producers.

The announcement of November 10 contributes to the industry's success by further modernizing our dairy sector. Much progress has been made, but we must always continue to innovate.

The Prime Minister and the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food have heard our dairy producers loud and clear, and they will continue to listen to them, while the government will continue to consult other industry players to get their advice and thereby orient the program's design and help to ensure that these programs meet the needs of producers and processors in tangible ways.

I undertake to do the same, continuing to work closely with producers and processors in Glengary—Prescott—Russell, the riding I represent.

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Supply management is a system that works, and it is through collaboration that we will ensure its sustainability. When I was little, it was “Never without my milk”. I will never forget those who produce that milk.

• (1540)

[*English*]

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, one thing my colleague did not talk about in his speech was prescription drugs, despite 25% of this agreement covering prescription drugs. I am sure that one thing we have in common and that touches us both is that when people, seniors especially, cannot afford to buy their drugs, we recognize the tough choice they have to make whether to buy drugs or food. People have to come out of retirement to pay for their drugs. This is happening in my riding and, I am sure, in his community too. CETA will lead to approximately \$1.6 billion in increased drug costs for Canadians.

When the Liberals were in opposition, they agreed with the NDP that greater analysis was needed, as well as compensation for the provinces. Yet the government has provided no analysis about how much this will cost the provinces, nor has it offered any compensation.

Is the member opposite comfortable signing off on CETA without any further analysis of how these increased drug costs will impact the people in our ridings? These people, whom we care so much about, are suffering.

Mr. Francis Drouin: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his questions, but people back home where I live are concerned about agriculture. CETA provides a \$600 million in potential beef exports, \$400 million in pork exports, \$100 million in grains and oilseeds exports, and a potential of \$300 million in processed foods, fruits, and vegetables exports.

My dairy farmers are extremely happy with the announcements of November 10. I can share my colleague's concerns, but I know that CETA is an extremely important agreement for my riding.

Mr. Earl Dreeshen (Red Deer—Mountain View, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I listened with much interest to the member. Of course, he spoke a lot about agriculture, which is so critical. It is something the previous Conservative government had worked on so much. We want to remain competitive and move forward with all of these trade agreements and make sure there are no hindrances.

I wonder how the imposition of a punitive carbon tax in any way is going to help farmers be more competitive, especially when our major trading partner has no interest in engaging in this ill-conceived, job-killing initiative.

Mr. Francis Drouin: Mr. Speaker, one thing that the European Union and we are concerned about is climate change.

I know my hon. colleagues across the aisle love to quote Kathleen Wynne. If they love to quote the provincial government, I would remind them that Patrick Brown, the leader of the opposition in Queen's Park, is supportive of a price on carbon.

If we are going to talk about carbon pricing and its significance for agriculture, I will give a solid example of beef farmers and Ducks Unlimited working together on wetlands, with the beef farmers able to graze the land. Wetlands are known for carbon sequestration. I do

not believe that carbon and farmers are on a head-on collision course. I believe they can work together and play an important role for the environment.

Ms. Tracey Ramsey (Essex, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am shocked to hear the member across not acknowledge the cost of pharmaceuticals. Is the member telling me that he does not care about health care for the people he represents, about hospitals, about people being able to afford a pathway to health? I find that shocking.

To get back to his point about farming, he spoke about dairy farmers and access to the market. I would like to quote the Dairy Farmers of Canada about the supply management the member speaks of, that unpredictability from the deal “will result in instability in the Canadian dairy sector, which is the opposite of what supply management was created to do”. That is a quote from the Dairy Farmers of Canada about CETA.

The potential farming loss is nearly \$150 million a year. How can the member stand in the House talking about supply management and protecting it while signing trade deals that will hurt dairy farmers?

• (1545)

Mr. Francis Drouin: Mr. Speaker, for a few days now we have heard NDP members talk about how they are suddenly in support of the \$750 million that we have recently seen in the newspaper. However, what they are not telling those dairy farmers and some of these associations is that they would have balanced the budget. I wonder if it was part of their platform. Guess what? We cannot see their platform, because they have removed it from their website. On this side of the House, we have been open and transparent. Our platform is still on our website so that they can contest whether or not we are telling the truth.

At the end of the day, I believe that young farmers in my riding will have an opportunity from the \$250 million program to modernize their farm operations.

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal (Surrey—Newton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today, as the member of Parliament for Surrey—Newton and also a member of the Standing Committee on International Trade, in support of Bill C-30. The comprehensive economic and trade agreement signed between Canada and the European Union's member states represents a new model for the world on what is possible through a well-thought-out comprehensive trading relationship.

It is amazing to think of the scope of opportunity available to Canada as a result of this agreement. The numbers cannot lie: 28 European Union member states with more than 500 million people and GDP of more than \$19 trillion. This is the world's largest single marketplace and, according to a joint report released by Canada and the European Union, this kind of partnership is estimated to increase the value of bilateral trade by 22.9% and increase annual growth of our GDP by approximately \$13 billion. In fact, the CETA would establish Canada as the only G8 country and one of the only countries in the world to have preferential access to the world's two largest markets, the U.S. and the European Union.

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Numbers are often thrown around without context, so while they are very impressive, they are often unable to translate their impact into communities like my riding of Surrey—Newton. I want to spend a few minutes speaking about exactly that aspect of this historic bill, because ultimately it is just another piece of this government's focus to strengthen Canada's middle class and to provide more opportunities for those wishing to join it. The elimination of trade barriers means lower prices on everything from food to cars that are imported from Europe. However, it is bigger than that because, for Surrey—Newton and other communities across British Columbia, our new preferential market access would represent great opportunity.

The European Union is already B.C.'s fifth largest export destination and our fourth largest trading partner. The elimination of the tariffs I just referred to would apply to almost all of the province's current exports and would provide B.C. a competitive advantage when compared to some of our major competitors who do not have the benefit of such an agreement. For our forest products, our metal and mineral resources, our aquaculture exports, and our information and communication technologies, the possibilities for growth are endless. For B.C.'s service suppliers, who represent 76% of the province's total GDP and comprise a sector that employs 1.7 million British Columbians, the CETA would represent greater security and predictability to the new opportunities that would now be available.

For small and medium-sized businesses, European Union procurement opportunities would now also be available with a new capability to supply goods and services to EU-level institutions like the European Commission and the European Parliament, but also to EU member state governments and thousands of regional and local government entities. This is a procurement market that is estimated to be worth about \$3.3 trillion annually, which is a staggering figure.

I do not want to get caught up in just trumpeting the benefits of CETA without considering the work we have in front of us to make the agreement a reality.

● (1550)

This is what Bill C-30 is all about. In addition to formally approving the deal and outlining the ongoing administrative and operational costs that Canada is responsible for, it would also amend several pieces of legislation in order to ensure that our country is able to live up to the obligations to which we signed on. The numerous changes needed to the acts that govern import and export, patents, and investment, both from and to Canada, represent adjustments to our laws to ensure that Canadians and Canadian businesses are able to enjoy the maximum amount of benefit from this agreement.

These changes also present an opportunity for opponents of CETA, and indeed opponents of all multilateral trade agreements, to spread misinformation and create fear and confusion.

The reality is that it has taken more than seven years to ensure that we had a deal that protected public services for Canadians; that the government continued to have oversight on regulating environmental, labour, health care, and safety standards; that our public health care system and the quality of care that Canadians have come

to expect are not threatened; that our water resources and the standards to which they must adhere are protected and maintained; that Canadian laws and regulations cannot be compelled to be changed by foreign investors or corporate interests; and most importantly, that Canadians continue to have access to information and complete transparency on the terms of this agreement.

These are the considerations that Canadian negotiators fought for, to ensure that Canadian sovereignty was not just given away.

Over the past year, I have listened to the testimony of many organizations that have presented their comments and concerns. I stand here today to state that the Minister of International Trade and all of our members of the Standing Committee on International Trade carefully considered each and every piece of testimony.

CETA is not a threat to the public interest. In fact, it is always with the best interests of Canadians that the government has engaged in negotiations over the past year. This means that compromises were always balanced with benefits and that, once again, the powers of the Canadian government and of our provincial and municipal counterparts are not at risk.

I want to conclude by stating that our sovereignty is more valuable than any trade figure, and CETA is not a threat to it, as many of the fearmongers would have Canadians believe. Canada remains as strong as ever and, as a result of this agreement, we are poised to enter a new era of prosperity and opportunity that would bring benefits to all British Columbians and to all Canadians.

● (1555)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault (Sherbrooke, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his speech. However there is one important point that was not mentioned and that I have not heard in today's debate, but which might cause him to take off his rose-coloured glasses which he seems to have worn all through his speech.

The fact is that 42% of Canadian exports to the European Union go to the United Kingdom. Considering that the United Kingdom is presently in the process of withdrawing from the European Union, Canada has still not re-evaluated its net economic benefits under this free trade agreement with Europe.

Would my colleague be prepared to give us the new figures estimating the economic benefits to Canada in light of the fact that the United Kingdom will no longer be part of the economic agreement once it completes the withdrawal process it has already begun?

[*English*]

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for Sherbrooke for bringing forward how this would help Canadians.

As I mentioned earlier in my speech, this is a landmark opportunity for Canadians to access 28 European nations with more than 500 million people and a GDP of more than \$19 trillion.

As I mentioned earlier, this would mean an annual growth of our GDP by approximately \$13 billion. I am certain this would help British Columbians, Quebeckers, and all Canadians.

Government Orders

Ms. Karen Ludwig (New Brunswick Southwest, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate my hon. colleague, not only on his speech but also on his work on the international trade committee.

My question is this. With the U.S. not being a signatory to CETA, what would the advantages and benefits be to Canada as the gateway between the European Union and the United States?

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal: Mr. Speaker, first, I would like to thank the hon. member for New Brunswick Southwest for her input and her work on the international trade committee and her past experience, being a professor and an educator in international trade.

As the hon. member mentioned, the U.S. is not a signatory to CETA. In fact, Canada is the only G8 nation now that has the advantage of having a trade relationship with the U.S. and also would have a trade relationship with the European Union. We would be the only country that would have access to the biggest open markets possible.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre Nantel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I know that my colleague across the way was not here at the time, but I can assure him that many MPs and many of those who watch the debates remember where the Liberals stood on this. They were quite concerned about the secretive nature of the negotiations and the content of the agreement.

How can they let the free trade agreement go through today, especially considering the speech by Mr. Magnette in Wallonia? I encourage my colleague to watch that speech. Those people took a stand to make sure that the interests of their fellow citizens were well served.

I would like to know what the hon. member thinks about the position the Liberals took when they were in the opposition.

[*English*]

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal: Mr. Speaker, I want to make it very clear. Liberals always believed in free trade because free trade creates opportunities, it creates employment, and it makes the lives of Canadians better.

When it comes to transparency, all I can say is that the government and the Prime Minister have always been open and transparent in the past year. On the international trade committee, we are consulting many organizations to make sure we are still open and transparent to those people who are concerned.

• (1600)

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Mr. Speaker, at risk of repeating what has been said so many times in the House today, New Democrats support trade deals that reduce tariffs and boost exports, but we remain firm that components like investor-state provisions that threaten sovereignty have no place in trade deals.

In our view, the job of government is to pursue better trade, that is, trade that boosts human rights and labour standards, protects the environment, and protects, above all, Canadian jobs. A final trade deal must be based on its net costs and benefits. We have always been clear on this and have opposed trade deals in the past that

would have a net negative impact on Canadian jobs and the environment.

To repeat what my colleagues have said, particularly the member for Essex, who has been so strong on this file, trade with Europe is too important to get wrong. The NDP supports deepening our Canada-EU trading relationship to diversify our markets. However, there remain significant concerns and unanswered questions about the proposed CETA deal.

First, changes in CETA will increase drug costs for consumers. Second, there are concerns about local procurement, particularly for local governments. Third, investor-state provisions will have to be removed before this deal is ratified, and fourth, the Liberals have not properly compensated dairy farmers for their loss of market share under CETA.

With respect to the first, increasing drug costs are a significant and known downside of CETA, yet the Liberals have not delivered on their promised compensation to the provinces and territories for the increased cost of prescription drugs to provincial taxpayers and consumers. Changes to intellectual property rights for pharmaceuticals under CETA are expected to increase drug costs by more than \$850 million annually.

Quoting Jim Keon, the president of the Canadian Generic Pharmaceutical Association, he said:

A study prepared for the [Canadian Generic Pharmaceutical Association] by two leading Canadian health economists in early 2011 estimated that, if adopted, the proposals would delay the introduction of new generic medicines in Canada by an average of three and a half years. The cost to pharmaceutical payers of this delay was estimated at \$2.8 billion annually, based on generic prices in 2010.

The Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions has also warned that it could be more difficult to bring down drug prices through a national pharmacare program if CETA comes in.

In opposition, the Liberals demanded that the Conservatives present a study of the financial impact on provinces and territorial governments, both on their health care systems and on prescription drug costs. Now that they are in government, they are telling the provinces that they will cut health care transfers, while pursuing agreements that risk increasing drug costs for the provinces.

According to the Canadian Health Coalition, the delayed arrival of cheaper generics will increase the cost of prescription drugs for Canadians by between \$850 million and \$2.8 billion a year.

Government Orders

CETA is the first Canadian bilateral free trade agreement since NAFTA that includes a chapter on intellectual property rights. It goes well beyond Canada's existing obligations. The increased patent protections granted to brand name pharmaceuticals were an EU priority, but they are not a Canadian priority. We heard this all the time during the election campaign. When door-knocking in all kinds of neighbourhoods, we heard from Canadians who were splitting their pills, skipping prescriptions, not taking their full prescribed drugs each day, and having to make the terrible choice between buying food and taking the medication their doctor had prescribed. That is a terrible situation, and to think that the current government would risk exacerbating that problem for consumers is unimaginable to me and is certainly not consistent with its campaign promises.

My second area of concern is local procurement. When I was elected to local government, TILMA, the Trade, Investment and Labour Mobility Agreement, was proposed. It was very controversial in British Columbia.

These days, local governments are encouraged, when they raise taxes on property owners, to then spend those taxes in the local community as much as they can. The local government will contract someone to put up a website, for example, or if it needs catering for a government operation or public function, it might bias that procurement toward local providers and maybe even pay a premium. This has been done more and more. However, the local procurement restrictions increasingly threaten and intimidate local governments from doing those fantastic things that are good for local business and good for the local economy.

● (1605)

We hear that above a certain threshold, minimum local content policies will be outlawed, even for municipal and provincial government procurement. Companies will also have an expanded ability to use temporary foreign workers, without a study of the impact on Canadians.

My third area of concern is the investor-state provisions. These are mechanisms that allow foreign corporations to sue our government if they feel that our regulations have impeded their ability to profit. We know this too well in Canada. Canada is already one of the most sued countries in the world under investor-state dispute mechanisms. Canadian companies have won only three of 39 cases against foreign governments, and our government continues to get new complaints seeking billions of dollars in damages.

One example currently before the courts is Lone Pine Resources, an oil and gas developer that had obtained an exploration permit to look for shale gas under the St. Lawrence River. The Quebec government took the very bold step of revoking the permit in response to constituents' concerns about fracking, but Lone Pine sued the Canadian government, under its U.S. affiliate, under NAFTA chapter 11 and sought \$250 million in compensation.

What other province is going to be as brave as the Quebec government and take a stand against something like fracking if there is this kind of chill? This is a real problem. Existing investor-state dispute provisions have also resulted in a regulatory chill where governments have failed to take action in the public interest when they have feared that it may trigger an investor claim.

The Canadian Environmental Law Association said:

[CETA] will significantly impact environmental protection and sustainable development in Canada. In particular, the inclusion of an investor-state dispute settlement mechanism, the liberalization of trade in services, and the deregulation of government procurement rules will impact the federal and provincial governments' authority to protect the environment, promote resource conservation, or use green procurement as a means of advancing environmental policies and objectives.

That worries me, every piece of it.

In February 2016, during CETA's legal scrubbing phase, the minister announced changes to the ISDS provisions that are supposed to improve transparency and strengthen measures to combat the conflicts of interest of arbitrators. However, the new court system still allows foreign investors to seek compensation from any level of government for any policy decision they feel would impact their profits.

The Liberals still have not explained how they would ensure that environmental health and safety regulations would be protected from foreign challenges.

Fourth, the Liberals have not properly compensated dairy farmers for loss of market share under CETA. Quoting the Dairy Farmers of Canada:

CETA will result in an expropriation of up to 2% of Canadian milk production; representing 17,700 tonnes of cheese that will no longer be produced in Canada. This is equivalent to the entire yearly production of the province of Nova Scotia, and will cost Canadian dairy farmers up to \$116 million a year in perpetual lost revenues.

We cannot afford to be making and processing less of our own food. We cannot afford to be undermining dairy farmers, who are at the foundation of the way our country and our rural economies have grown. We cannot let this go.

The Liberals also have not explained whether and how they will compensate Newfoundland and Labrador for fish processing losses. Again, this is a time we should be adding value to our natural resources, not trading them away.

Given all these concerns and all these unresolved issues, I will quote Maude Barlow, from the Council of Canadians:

Given the process could take another five years in Europe, what's the rush here other than another photo op? There needs to be a fuller public consultation process on CETA, just as the government has done with the Trans-Pacific Partnership.

I will leave, finally, by saying once again that New Democrats want better trade, trade that boosts human rights and labour standards, protects the environment, and protects Canadian jobs. This is not a progressive trade deal until those measures are implemented. If the Liberal government will not stand up for progressive trade deals, New Democrats surely will.

Government Orders

•(1610)

Ms. Karen Ludwig (New Brunswick Southwest, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, at the international trade committee, we heard from the chief trade negotiator, Steve Verheul. Regarding the cost of drugs, he said specifically that it is very difficult to conduct a specific analysis, mainly because the types of changes we will see with the changes to the Patent Act, particularly for the additional two years of protection, are not likely to kick in until the agreement has been in place for probably eight years or more, at least for the majority of changes.

Looking at the changes in agreements with the provinces, the provinces are on board regarding CETA. Certainly Health Canada could do a substantial amount of work looking at reducing overall drug costs in Canada.

Looking at what the chief negotiator said, how can we make any prediction about the cost of drugs without scaring the general public with “what ifs”?

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson: Mr. Speaker, I will rely on the advice of the Canadian Generic Pharmaceutical Association, the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions, the Canadian Health Coalition, and in fact, Health Canada itself. They all say that the direction of prescription drug costs is way up. Nobody is estimating it down. We are already in a huge crunch.

Canadians pay more for drugs than any other country's consumers, and we are the only country in the world that has a public health care system that does not have a pharmacare plan. We have work to do. It is a service we could provide, which New Democrats are committed to providing. We certainly are concerned that entering into a forever trade deal like this would limit those opportunities.

This is absolutely a place to slow down, as the Liberals proposed in the previous Parliament, and study this and be much more clear. With 215 out of 338 members of this House newly elected, we would certainly all benefit from more study in this area.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet (Hochelaga, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my colleague talked about the lack of compensation for dairy farmers. The amount the Liberal government is putting on the table is even lower than what the Conservatives were proposing and that was already low enough. What is more, compensation will be granted only on the condition that dairy farmers invest their own money toward improving their facilities. In other words, dairy farmers have to spend money in order to get a very small amount of compensation.

What impact does the hon. member think this will have on dairy farmers? This is very important for Quebec, the province I represent.

[*English*]

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson: Mr. Speaker, I certainly want my colleague's constituents to continue to make cheese, because it is the best. From British Columbia, I can say that the hon. member's cheese is the best, although ours is good.

This is a very good point the hon. member raises. The Conservatives promised a \$4.3 billion compensation package for supply management farmers affected by CETA and TPP, but the Liberal government's offer, finally, after a lot of delay, was

announced to be \$350 million. I will say those numbers again. It was \$4.3 billion under the Conservatives. It will be only a \$350-million package for dairy farmers, so that falls far short.

This is a time when we need to be increasing our local food security, stimulating and protecting our local economy, and absolutely adding value to the resources we have.

The dairy industry is a vital partner and a long-standing part of our local economy, and we cannot risk alienating it and impeding its ability to continue to feed Canadians in this way.

•(1615)

Mr. Sean Fraser (Central Nova, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I cannot tell members how excited I was when I saw that job creation in Central Nova was going to be on the docket for debate today, which is what international trade is all about.

Whether we are talking about the agrifood producers in the Musquodoboit Valley, the fisheries on the north Northumberland Strait on the eastern shore, small businesses in Antigonish, or manufacturers in Pictou county, international trade is about generating new business and ultimately creating jobs, which is my top priority as long as I hold this office.

Before I begin, I would like to take a moment to highlight the global context within which this debate about the Canada-European Union comprehensive economic and trade agreement takes place.

There is a growing trend toward what I will call inward facing politics. Quite honestly, I find this to be one of the most troubling political trends, and potentially the greatest intellectual debate that we may have in a generation next to climate change.

What I see around the world, whether it is with Brexit or a rise of nationalism in different parts of the world, is an attitude that we do not need our neighbours to get by. When it comes to matters of immigration to security, economics or climate change, I firmly believe we are better when we work together, when we co-operate.

It is easy to understand where this belief comes from. When we talk about billions and billions of dollars, when we frame everything in the context of GDP, I can empathize with many people at home who perhaps see these numbers and think that is not working for them. However, I could not disagree more strongly, because international trade is one of the avenues that we can pursue to help grow our economy and create jobs in my own community.

The starting point for me is that economic development is a good thing. Perhaps it is a bit obvious, but it is worth stating. It is not just because we have the opportunity to have more money in our bank accounts. With economic development, we see improved health care outcomes and better hospital care for our kids. We see improved economics and job creation in our communities so people have something meaningful to do with their career. We see better education opportunities for young people in our communities. We see more vibrant communities and ultimately a higher quality of life for Canadians.

Government Orders

How do we get to economic development in Canada?

I look at some of our assets. We have an abundance of natural resources. We have been blessed in every square inch of the country to be able to produce something. We also have an incredibly skilled workforce. We have tremendous education. We have the tools to make economic development work for our communities.

However, one of the shortcoming we have as a country is a small population relative to the magnitude of our resources and our skilled workforce. What we have to do to turn these opportunities into jobs is start selling to customers outside of our own country. This is where international trade comes into the picture for me.

If we can open up new markets for our natural resources and the products we create with our skilled workforce, we will be able to put more people to work in our own communities. This is why I have been incredibly thrilled with the approach that the government has taken toward international trade. Indeed, after some strong advocacy by my colleagues in the Atlantic caucus on this side of the House, we have managed to secure investment and trade as a key pillar to the Atlantic growth strategy, which was announced this past summer.

With this context in mind, I would like to turn this into a more local discussion.

When I look at these small businesses in my riding, I need to look no further than MacKay Meters on Abercrombie Road in Pictou county to identify a perfect opportunity of how the Canada-European Union trade agreement is going to create jobs in my home town. This is an incredibly innovative company that makes parking metres. There is only a handful of companies that make parking metres in the global community, and these guys do it better than anybody.

The company makes solar powered parking metres, sometimes made almost exclusively of recycled materials. It is also very close to working on a technology that can retrofit its parking metres to become electric vehicle chargers. It also holds a patent that allows it to accept major credit cards for payment for parking and potentially for charging electric vehicles.

• (1620)

When I look at what is going on around the world, I see the Netherlands has adopted legislation that says that after 2025, it will not be selling any more cars that use gas or diesel to move the wheels. It is going to be purchasing electric vehicles in Europe. If I want to be able to create an opportunity for a company that has a manufacturing base in my community and a research and development office in Halifax, I would look no further than this group that has powered automobiles across Europe for a generation.

It is not just one company. There are a lot of small and medium-sized businesses that generate positive economic outcomes. I can look at Velsoft, a company that creates computer training materials for tech giants like Microsoft, that will not face unfair tariffs and that will help expand its access to global markets. I can look at a company like Bionovations based in Antigonish that manufactures through its own research and development shipping containers that allow it to transport live seafood, which is our nation's second largest export, and a massive opportunity for eastern Canada.

While I am on the lobster fishery, we are already seeing incredible economic returns from a policy of engaging with the world when it comes to our seafood exports.

In lobster fishing communities there are only a couple of things one can do to really have a bumper crop, so to speak. There could be more fish in the water, which is, for the most part, beyond the scope of government policy, or there could be a better price for the fish that we sell. Last year, it was incredible to see fishermen in my community getting \$7.75 a pound, which is nearly unheard of. The best thing I can have for some of the communities that I represent, whether it is Sheet Harbour, Lismore, Sonora, is a high price on lobster. This is a terrific thing, although it might be personally inconvenient for me at times when I get hungry at home.

This agreement will help sustain rural Canada. We are going to be saving little fishing communities along the eastern shore and the Northumberland Strait if we continue to engage with the world. The demand for Nova Scotia lobster creeps higher and higher with every conversation we have with another member of the global community.

It is not just the primary industry or the small manufacturers that are going to benefit. We have tremendous opportunity in 21st century sectors like the aerospace industry. We have Halifax international airport in my riding. The Aerotech Business Park is right there as well. Pratt & Whitney Canada is currently subject to significant barriers to trade and tariffs when it comes to the EU, which is the largest importer of aerospace technology. I see an opportunity for these innovation players, like Pratt & Whitney, in and around the airport. If that means there will be more aerospace engineers working in communities I have been elected to represent, I will feel as though I am doing my job fairly well.

We also have tremendous opportunities when it comes to transportation. I have two coasts in my riding, each of which is dotted with shipyards and ports. The port in Sheet Harbour would love to have open access for local markets to the European Union. It has a deepwater port that it would love to expand and take on the increased traffic that would be shipping. There would be more work for the stevedores and their community.

It is not just international trade from which we have such a great benefit. Embracing modern trade agreements like this also promote investment in our communities.

I need to look no further than the shipyard in Pictou where it manufactured turbines that went into commission just recently to generate 21st century clean power through tidal resources in Parrsboro. This is a benefit to the entire region, promoting clean energy, high skilled manufacturing jobs that we can do in Canada, and we need to be promoting them.

Government Orders

If we can give certainty to investors around the world so they have their international companies putting money from somewhere else into the communities that we represent in Canada, that create jobs for people in our communities, we can be very proud.

As I mentioned at the outset, my number one priority from the moment I stepped into this office was to create more jobs at home. By promoting international trade and opening up markets for Canadian businesses in the European Union, we will create opportunities for the private sector to grow and hire more people who live in Pictou county, Antigonish, the Musquodoboit Valley, the Eastern Shore, and everywhere in between.

By standing up and speaking in support of this legislation, I will have done the job I have been elected to do and I will help businesses create work for the people who so desperately need jobs at home.

• (1625)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault (Sherbrooke, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech.

I have a question for him about the investor state provisions and the right to have a legal system parallel to our own, domestic systems. Foreign businesses, that is to say those that are not Canadian, can take legal action against the federal government, provincial governments, even municipalities, if they are not satisfied or if their profits decline due to a regulation, law, or new rules implemented by a government in Canada.

Is my colleague concerned, as are the Europeans who are discussing this issue, about investor state provisions? The elected members of legislative assemblies adopt rules and represent the people. When a decision is made, the fact remains that foreign businesses sometimes have the last word in a legal system that operates parallel to our domestic system. In the end, businesses have every right to challenge the decisions of the elected representatives of the countries in which they operate.

[*English*]

Mr. Sean Fraser: Mr. Speaker, that is an important question. No, I am not concerned. In fact, I have significant experience working on an international dispute resolution practice group for a major national Canadian law firm. Not primarily, but a major part of my practice did focus on investor-state dispute resolution.

The argument suggests, tacitly, that there is somehow an erosion of Canadian sovereignty when we allow a foreign investor to sue the Canadian government. It cannot be further from the truth. In fact, it is an act of sovereignty to adopt an agreement that provides rights to investors to secure investment.

However, if we want to look to a domestic example, constitutionally we cannot enter into a contract that fetters the discretion of the state. We know that well. Case after case has gone to the highest levels of court. The remedy is that if we pass a law that interferes with an investment, we have to pay the investors for the harm they have suffered. We have an option to either uphold the laws we have agreed to uphold, or change the laws and compensate the investors. To do otherwise puts a closed for business sign on our country's

borders, which we cannot afford to do when the people in my community need to get back to work if they are to succeed.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre Nantel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to know my colleague's position on the compromises and the addendums to the report, which were secured by the Walloon parliament.

What does my colleague think of the amendments, especially those concerning the courts where investor state disputes will be heard?

[*English*]

Mr. Sean Fraser: Mr. Speaker, of course there will be a dispute resolution mechanism put in place and arbitrations between investors and the states in question. I will not deny that is part of the process.

What we need to have, if we are to engage with the world community, is a fair and neutral place to serve as the forum of arbitration for our disputes. If we say that investors will make investments based on the current conditions that we have laid out in our laws in the form of a stability clause, it is only fair to them that they have some certainty. Without that certainty, their capital would go elsewhere.

I believe that Canada is now a party to in excess of 30 bilateral investment treaties. Of course this trade agreement would add, in effect, 28 more. We need to provide an opportunity not only for foreign investors to challenge decisions by the Canadian government, but for Canadian investors to challenge decisions by other governments as well. If we do not have this neutral place, we may find ourselves as Canadian investors trying to seek a dispute resolution forum in a country with a different legal tradition, with business practices we are unaware of, and a court that may or may not favour the host country.

In Canada, we do not have a history of expropriating the assets of foreign investors. We do have a history of adopting policy that serves our own national interest. The impact that those policies are going to have on foreign investment and international money coming into our communities is one important thing to consider, but not the only one.

• (1630)

Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak to the comprehensive economic and trade agreement between Canada and the European Union.

I have listened intently over the last few days to the debate. I think it is a healthy debate. Clearly, there are two groups here that support this agreement and are willing to move forward and create some Canadians jobs and, clearly, there are others in the House who appear to be against trade, despite their tweeting and facebooking on the iPhones and the Apple computers they have, which are products of trade. It is surprising to me that we have people here who put up every type of roadblock against trade.

Government Orders

I would like to start by acknowledging the hard work of our hon. colleagues on this side, the hon. members for Abbotsford, Battlefords—Lloydminster, and Prince Albert, who worked hard on this agreement under the previous government to get it to the point where it would come to fruition. I think it should be noted today that a lot of that heavy lifting was done by our Conservative government and our trade team, which did a considerable amount of work on this project in getting it to where it is today.

In light of the Canadian Football League and the Grey Cup that will be taking place this weekend, I am going to start my speech with a few football analogies, if I can.

It was our previous minister of trade and our trade team that got us to first in goal. The present Minister of International Trade and trade team is now at fourth in inches, so to say. The heavy lifting, again, as I said, was done by us and our trade team. The hard work our trade team did got us to a goal line drive. It did an amazing job and brought us to the goal line drive and the present government has used every timeout and down to get us within inches of the goal.

Now, there is more to be done. I am not taking away from the Liberal government the work it has done to get us to this point and I am acknowledging that the present Minister of International Trade has got it to where it is today. However, I also would like to acknowledge the strong leadership of former Prime Minister Stephen Harper, who fought passionately for Canadian jobs and the Canadian industry.

Former Prime Minister Harper understood that Canada is first and foremost a trading nation. He understood that one in five jobs was dependent upon trade and that 70% of our GDP was driven by trade. When former Prime Minister Harper sat at the negotiating table, he got the job done and, surprise, surprise, not a selfie needed to be taken to get it done.

This deal was successful because of the leadership and efforts of our former Prime Minister Stephen Harper and his understanding that trade deals are what make our country competitive in an ever-increasing globalized world and that international trade agreements generate increased economic activities because diversification of our trade drives prosperity and job creation, I think it is definitely appropriate for us today to stand in the House and give kudos to our former strong trade team, former Prime Minister Stephen Harper and, as well, as I said, the present Minister of International Trade.

Our previous government signed 43 trade agreements over the course of its tenure. We made critical investments in industry, transportation, and market development. That set Canada as a leader on the international stage, which helped us weather the worst economic downturn since the 1930s. It was through former Prime Minister Harper's strong vision that Canada's trade diversified.

CETA is our country's biggest bilateral trade agreement and trade initiative since NAFTA. When it comes into force, Canada will be one of the few countries in the world to have guaranteed preferential access to the world's two largest economies, the U.S. and the EU.

Well, that was until just two weeks ago, when the Prime Minister finally decided he was going to renegotiate NAFTA—but that is a speech for another time.

Imagine, as we go down the path with TPP and CETA, that the TPP would connect Canada to a market of 800 million consumers, with a combined GDP of \$29 trillion or 35% of global GDP, which combined with CETA would give Canada the opportunity to be a North American trade hub and to take advantage of something that our friends from the south are woefully, right now, kind of tossing in the wind.

● (1635)

We are here to talk about CETA, a deal that is good for all of Canada and, specifically, for my home province of British Columbia. CETA connects Canadian producers to 500 million consumers. It provides access to the largest economy in the world. It is a good deal for Canadian producers and a great deal for Canadian consumers. It will open trade, almost eliminating tariff lines for trade with the EU.

Studies show that CETA would bring a 20% boost to our bilateral trade and a \$12 billion increase to Canada's economy. That is the economic equivalent of adding \$1,000 to the average Canadian family's income, or creating 80,000 jobs. Adding 80,000 new jobs is incredible.

The EU is already B.C.'s fifth largest export destination and our fourth largest trading partner. British Columbia stands to benefit significantly from preferential access to the EU market. Once in force, CETA will eliminate tariffs on almost all of B.C.'s exports and provide access to new market opportunities in the EU. The provisions in CETA will help erase regulatory barriers, reinforce intellectual property rights, and ensure more transparent rules for market access. B.C. is well positioned to take competitive advantage of this new agreement.

CETA is good for our farmers. It has been said time and again by members on all sides, whether in regard to our dairy, our beef, or our pork producers, that this is something that will benefit our agricultural sector and those beef and dairy farmers who wake up every morning before the sun rises and hard at work long after the sun goes down.

If the Liberals could only act in a similar way to the previous Conservative government and bring home a new softwood lumber agreement, everything would be amazing. Maybe we would even stand a chance of maintaining our current employment levels in our forestry industry.

Our Conservative Party believes that Canada should strive to maximize the benefits we have as a strong trading nation. The establishment of trading relationships beyond North America is exactly what CETA accomplishes.

Government Orders

Our fish and seafood exporters would also benefit from CETA, as the EU is the largest importer of fish and seafood, averaging \$21 billion annually. The seafood industry has gone through many transitions and faces an uncertain future. When CETA comes into force, almost 96% of the EU tariff lines for fish and seafood will be duty free. In seven years, 100% of the products will be duty free. This is hugely important because, as I said, the EU is the world's largest importer of fish and seafood products. It comes down to a competitive advantage. Once the deal comes into force, Canada will have just that.

I would like to turn my attention back to my province. Through the strong leadership of the Conservative government, investments were made in British Columbia ports, gateways, and structures that would allow Canadian consumers, as well as manufacturers, to take full advantage of trade deals. We invested in the Asia Pacific gateway fund. We invested in the Go Global program that allowed small and medium-sized companies the opportunity to find out, once they get a trade deal, how to take advantage of it and fully prepare themselves to enter those markets. Not only did we do that, but we invested in ports, airports, railways, and roadways, so we could get our goods to market. That is exactly what our government did. We understood.

B.C. is a strategic gateway and can take full advantage of this new agreement. As a matter of fact, in my riding alone, we have the port of Prince Rupert, one of the largest and fastest marine routes. We have the third longest runway in Canada in Prince George, which is equidistant to Europe and Asia.

One of the things we need to talk about is what we do after we get this agreement in place. We need to look at our policies as to how we take full advantage of it. We need to develop programs for how we can invest in our markets and our small and medium-sized organizations so they can fully experience the full opportunities of this agreement.

• (1640)

The Deputy Speaker: Before we get to questions and comments for the hon. member for Cariboo—Prince George, 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 Nanaimo—Ladysmith, Status of Women; the hon. member for Salaberry—Suroît, the Environment; and the hon. member for Vancouver East, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship.

Ms. Karen Ludwig (New Brunswick Southwest, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I heard earlier today from another colleague in the opposition that over the last 10 years, 55 new trade agreements have been signed. I want to raise this because I think that fact is excellent. However, I also want to mention that of the one million small to medium-sized enterprises in Canada, only 41,000 are exporting. My hon. colleague talked about taking advantage of the policies.

What has the government done over the last 10 years to expand on the Canadian Trade Commissioner Service, and programs and studies between universities and colleges to support businesses not only entering the export market but also helping them to sustain themselves in the export market, because that has not been done well, in my experience.

Mr. Todd Doherty: Mr. Speaker, that is a great question. I am very happy that my hon. colleague brought that up. I believe it was back in 2014 that our government introduced the Go Global program, which helped our small and medium organizations to work with our trade commissioners and associations that are doing business on the world-wide stage. We invested in making sure that those companies had the tools available to them. Signing an agreement but making our producers fully available and capable to take full advantage of the incredible opportunities that trade deals offer is exactly what our government did. We set up the Go Global program and it was wildly successful. We are hoping that the current government follows suit with it, because signing a trade deal is just one thing. We have to be able to provide the capacity to our consumers and businesses to take full advantage of this opportunity.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre Nantel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I was wondering whether my colleague from Cariboo—Prince George, which is at the westernmost end of the country, is concerned about the fate of fish processing plants out in Newfoundland. There have been signs of concern here.

Once again, we have a government that is clamouring to sign when we do not have a package. He mentioned something about making sure our producers and business people are ready.

I would therefore like to ask him if they are ready. If not, does that worry him?

[*English*]

Mr. Todd Doherty: Mr. Speaker, as a matter of fact, we are concerned. That is why, in my role as the official opposition critic for fisheries, oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, I asked the question a number of times. The Liberal government has been talking with the Atlantic provinces about the CETA investment fund that should be going to our fishers in support of the issues and the changes they will have to make in their processing. We have yet to get an answer on that question but it is something that was raised.

Overwhelmingly, what CETA brings is a connection. The EU is the world's largest importer of fish and seafood, with an annual average of \$21 billion. I believe this opens up incredible opportunities for those coastal communities that have been hard hit. Whether with respect to northern cod or Atlantic salmon, this is a great opportunity for us to expand in that market, and hopefully the Liberals will follow through with their CETA investment fund for the Atlantic provinces.

• (1645)

Ms. Karen Ludwig: Mr. Speaker, how will we support the 54% of micro-businesses, those with one to four employees? How will they be able to take advantage of these opportunities when they are too busy managing their everyday circumstances of just making meeting their payroll? I think that is an important question.

Government Orders

In terms of rolling out any trade agreement, certainly that is part of it but so is the ongoing preparation. Through these negotiations, we have known for years that trade agreements were forthcoming. However, I do think there is a significant amount of work to do with respect to preparation, trades training, and preparing young people to get involved in trade and succession planning for our businesses. Would my colleague agree with that?

Mr. Todd Doherty: Mr. Speaker, those are great questions coming from across the way. I am going to first say that I am a small business owner as well. As a small business owner, the onus also is on me. If I want to expand my business, I cannot always go to the government for a handout or for a leg-up to be able to expand my business. To be able to expand my business, I should plan ahead of time and make sure that I am putting in place either the succession or the capacity so that I can take advantage of that, but that is a great question. As we expand these agreements, we want our micro businesses to take full advantage of this.

It goes back to my earlier comment that the government signing that deal is just one step. The government has to follow through with building those plans, marketing communications, but not only that, teaching and educating our small businesses and micro businesses how to take full advantage. Doing business internationally is considerably different than doing business domestically. I can speak from experience. When I was with the small Prince George Airport Authority and we were developing our business case, I spent a considerable amount of time on the international stage and it was a learning curve. It is something that we had to do but we had great trade commissioners right across the world who do phenomenal work.

Mr. Scott Simms (Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to say to all my colleagues in the House, congratulations on a great debate thus far. I have been in this House since 2004. I have been involved with the Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association. I am now proudly president of the Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association. We have talked a lot with our counterparts in the EU, both with individual members of Parliament from member states, whether they were U.K. MPs or senators from Italy and the like, and also the members of European Parliament, who are expecting a vote on this debate, just as we are here today, in the month of December. In a few weeks from now our counterparts in Brussels will be doing much of the same.

The EU represents a very important economic partner. It is the world's second largest economy and Canada's second largest trading partner after the United States, of course, so this is a monumental agreement.

In addition to that, I know we are second to the United States as far as that is concerned, but consider this for a moment: This is not one particular bilateral agreement, this is one agreement with 28 nation states. It is comprehensive to say the least. Not only did we include the fact that we are dealing with 28 member states in the European Union, but it had an unprecedented involvement of the provinces of this country in the forefront of negotiations way back when.

We talked in the past about how involved provinces have been, and in a piecemeal kind of way. Some successes include the Rideau conference on the environment. There were talks on the free trade

agreement with the United States that took place in the late eighties, but they were never involved to the level that they are now, because a lot of this CETA deal will involve provincial jurisdiction. Procurement is one of the big ones, and this is one of the original demands of the European Union to discuss how to get the provinces involved in the discussions so that they will not turn their backs on some of the issues contained within this agreement, and rightly so.

Although they do not have the ratification authority, I can honestly say, and this is from a personal standpoint, what I have seen in the involvement of all the provinces with the federal government in negotiating this have been quite thorough. I have spoken to officials from my home province, Newfoundland and Labrador, who have been involved quite a bit.

There was, in the beginning, some trouble regarding seafood, regarding seals and that sort of thing, and certain trade embargoes and bans, but we have got over that at this point. I am still working, trying to convince European parliamentarians that their ban on seal products is something they should not proceed with and we should look at changes in doing that from a commercial aspect, but that is a battle for another day, as they say.

My hon. colleague from British Columbia talked about some of the numbers and about \$21 billion in seafood. Think about this for a moment. On a personal level, in my particular riding, I had a shrimp plant. It was northern shrimp, the little ones. They are called salad shrimp in Europe, and there is an insatiable appetite in the United Kingdom for this type of shrimp, and we export quite a bit of this.

Over the past 15 to 20 years, shrimp has represented a large portion of income for a vast number of fisheries throughout northeastern Newfoundland, and a lot of it was exported to Europe. They were slapped right away with a 20% tariff on top, and it was a very difficult situation. We made a lot of sales despite that, but I think of the opportunity lost.

A large shrimp plant closed down in my riding about four years ago in Port Union. I truly believe to this day that if this deal had existed back then where there were no tariffs on the shrimp, that plant would have survived today. We have had a resource issue on shrimp, but I think this particular plant would have survived, based on the sales that they could have had with the European Union, in particular, western Europe, and that is a shame. They made some qualifications where the first 20,000 tonnes of shrimp would be subject to a 7% tariff instead of 20%. Thanks to this, now we go to zero.

As was pointed out earlier as well, 96% of these tariffs vanish on entering into force. It is an incredible opportunity for seafood, processed particularly, because we want to provide employment for our plants no doubt.

I heard some of comments about agriculture, and quite frankly, from some of the numbers that have been thrown around here, especially in pork, there is an incredible amount of money to be made in revenues from this trade agreement.

Government Orders

•(1650)

In the beginning, we talked about some of the hiccups or issues that the European Union had with us, such as fuel quality directives, and I spoke of the seal issue. However, we have managed to overcome that to the point that, not only do we have a commercial trade agreement, we also have a strategic partnership arrangement, or SPA, as well. Basically, we have political lines when we talk about human rights, and the fact that we will uphold the values that we hold dear in human rights to parallel with this commercial agreement. Of course, if we do something that is a violation of human rights, then we must look at this commercial agreement and question it as well, which is a good thing. This is why I think the agreement will hold as a gold standard for other bilateral or multilateral agreements.

Labour and environmental standards were also addressed. Of course, in the legal scrubbing of the legal agreement, we discussed the dispute settlement. Personally, I have always questioned the dispute settlement in this arrangement, simply because there has to be one, and I will give an example.

In my riding, there was a mill that was confiscated by the former premier. A mistake was made, and the province wanted to take back the rights of the water to flow to the rivers and the forestry. In essence, it ended up confiscating a mill at the same time, and was fined for it under NAFTA. These are the types of things where we need to settle disputes. I believe in them, and we have a tribunal set up to do that.

On the tribunal going forward, of course, it would come into force once the member states ratify this agreement, and is part of the less than 10%. For the most part, a little more than 90% will come into effect following the vote of the European Parliament and sanctioning by the European Commission.

I want to mention a few other things as far as the agreement is concerned.

Procurement is also going to be a golden opportunity for us as we look to share expertise in the jobs that we do and export some of our skilled trades. Over the past 20 years in my area in central Newfoundland, in Newfoundland and Labrador in general, and all rural areas really, one of the greatest exports we have right now are skilled trades.

The collapse of the cod industry in 1992 saw a rash of smaller private colleges opening up to compensate, because a lot of people were getting remuneration for training. At the time, these colleges were able to gear people toward the new world, oil and gas, and mining, where a lot of technical trades are involved. Now for these people, after being educated and with 10 to 15 years in the workforce, as someone described it, they do not go to the wharf as much to go fishing, they go to the airport and bring their skills with them to places such as Africa, Russia, Norway, and Alberta.

The recognition of skills in this agreement is a major part that I am glad to see. There is a chapter on that, which I think will prove to be another gold standard as to how we can recognize the work that we do and are able to go to other markets exporting these skilled trades.

However, there is an alarming trend. The most recent report for the World Trade Organization and other international institutions on trade barriers published in June noted that G20 economies introduced 145 new trade restrictive measures between mid-October 2015 and mid-May 2016, which is the highest monthly average since 2009. I witnessed this myself.

The anti-trade movement and some of these concerns were brought up here earlier. I share the same concerns, such as dispute settlement concerns, pharmaceuticals, and concerns in the seafood and agriculture industries. I believe that a progressive trade agreement such as this will help this country simply because, as has been said probably hundreds of times today, Canada has to punch way above its weight when it comes to trade. We have no choice.

For a nation of this size, with an economy of this size, and with 35 million people, I mean, it is almost to the point where free trade or no free trade is a ridiculous argument. It has gone way past that. It is like an argument over whether the earth is flat or round. No, we are free traders, it is as simple as that. We have no choice.

•(1655)

I do believe that this goes a long way to providing us an example of how we can do this in the future. For example, we know Brexit is going to happen. I would encourage our government and others to start a negotiation with the United Kingdom to make sure that the standards that have been set in CETA follow through on what I guess we would call "Brexit plus one".

That being said, I look forward to the questions and comments.

Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I listened intently to my hon. colleague's speech, and I work very closely with him as he is the chair of our fisheries and oceans committee, and I have great respect for him. I have a question for him with respect to the Atlantic provinces and the CETA investment fund. Does he feel that the government is going to follow through?

This is a loaded question, obviously, but we have asked it a number of times and we have gotten very vanilla answers. I am going to ask it for our hon. colleague because he is an Atlantic province MP. He is the chair of our fisheries committee. We have gone through the northern cod study and the Atlantic salmon study, and the member knows first hand how impacted the fisheries are on the Atlantic coast. Does he feel that the government is going to follow through with the CETA investment fund?

Mr. Scott Simms: Mr. Speaker, I hope I do not sound too vanilla. I hope to inject a bit of Neapolitan into this debate and provide maybe a bit more.

I was there during the ruckus that occurred between the last two governments. I say this, and I will try not to get too partisan about it, but here it goes.

There was an agreement on one side and not the other. There was a dollar value that was agreed upon on one side and not the other. The intent was fine. It is a transition fund that the member is talking about to go from certain species of fish to others, but primarily focused on the processing part, which is the minimum processing requirements.

Government Orders

Do I believe in a transition fund? He can bet I do. I think there is a valuable investment that can be made to do this. If I can look to another example of that outside of the dairy agreement, I am also talking about the European fisheries fund, which was something that helped small communities around much of eastern Europe.

I hope that was a little less vanilla, if I could use that term.

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I will not disagree with the encouragement of my colleague across the way around the prospects of trade with the EU. The European Union is ideal for us to work with, which is why we want this to succeed, with the details being right.

Following on my Conservative colleague's question, we are looking for a little more detail around the mechanisms to address negative impacts on the Atlantic fisheries. The concerns that the fishery would be hurt by the removal of minimum fish processing requirements for seafood for the EU, during the Conservative time, were proposed to be dealt with by this \$400 million offer.

I ask that the member tell me what is in the deal under the Liberal government, because we have not heard any details on compensation for Atlantic fisheries around value-added processing, and surely that is a detail we need to get right before this is signed. I am curious.

• (1700)

Mr. Scott Simms: Mr. Speaker, I am not sure if I can totally kill the curiosity, but nevertheless I will give it a shot.

The member mentioned something about an agreement that was in place. There never was an agreement. There was not even an offer, not even that. There was an assumption of an agreement that took place by the province, and the province said it had something in place, but the federal government said it did not. That was the problem with it, because there was so much confusion. They had a huge press conference. Nobody from the federal government, not one bureaucrat, even showed up. That part is out.

As I mentioned from my other colleague's question whether I believe in a transition fund, yes, I do. Will I always work for it? Of course, I would. I always believe that, as a government, we need to invest in how we transition from one fishery to the other or, in this case, minimum processing requirements. I can honestly say that there is so much to be done because our fishery is transitioning, not just from MPRs, but there are several other factors.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, my friend's riding name has changed, but he is still my friend. It is now Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame.

My question is going to be as brief as I can make it. Premier Danny Williams did not expropriate a mill. There was a 99-year lease, if members can imagine, between AbitibiBowater and the Province of Newfoundland. They extended it, so it was over 100 years that this entirely lopsided deal had let AbitibiBowater run a pulp mill and have the right, for free, to use the water for hydro.

If we had had a proper hearing in proper courts instead of a chapter 11 secret tribunal, Danny Williams had a legal case. But the federal government under Stephen Harper threw Newfoundland under the bus and said that the next time around when money was paid for something like that, they would go back and claw it back from a province.

I just want to ask if my hon. colleague from Newfoundland and Labrador would like to see that go to court.

Mr. Scott Simms: Mr. Speaker, I do not like to see anybody take over resources; there is no doubt about it. However, going back to the original comment, if he did not expropriate a mill, why do we own it? We now own it. I do not know how this happened without his expropriating the mill. No deal was signed.

What I would say in this particular case, to the essence of whether a tribunal would look at our rights over natural resources, yes, absolutely. On the secretive part of it, NAFTA aside, I hope that this one is thorough. I think the instruction is right in there, in CETA, that tells us there would be a thorough mechanism by which these disputes would be settled.

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today and talk about CETA, the trade arrangement between Canada and Europe. What is interesting is that we have this agreement coming forth, and one of the things that we have not heard much about in the debate is the measurables of a trade agreement. I have raised it a few times myself. The measurables of a trade agreement that matter for Canadians are whether or not they are getting a job or their children's future is going to be better because of the agreements that Canada signs.

I will include the Liberals and Conservatives in the ideological right. Remarkably the right argue that, if we just have free trade, everything gets better. We hear that argument that we should just open these markets and have trade that goes back and forth. Then they start to realize and complain later that the reason we do not do well in these agreements is that Canadian labour is too high and that the governments do other things. They have the concerns in the same sentence, but they never connect the two.

When we try to add labour rights, environmental rights, and social responsibility rights, they are often put on the side of these trade agreements. There is an advantage in this agreement because we have Europe, which has some commonalities with us for that, but we also do not take into account the massive corporate subsidizations that take place in the European Union. I can point no further than to the auto sector, for example, which receives massive and state involvement.

Government Orders

Liberal members say it is going to be a fair market, but meanwhile they promote and sacrifice industries like the auto industry in deals like the one with South Korea, for example, where state-owned companies compete against us. They close their markets as well. They do non-tariff barriers. The Liberals say we are going to trade more and we are going to have more accessibility and, by the way, we are going to compete against state-owned car companies that are owned by the people, have a national strategy, and get massive subsidization that imports millions into our country over the terms of the deals and we hardly get any back to South Korea; just dozens. It is not reciprocal, but the Liberals are okay with that.

I know there are fireworks today because the Prime Minister is attending fundraisers with the Chinese and other business people from a Communist state government, but the reality is the use of their dollar and their environment and their dirty energy competing with Canadian companies. We brag and boast about the fact that we are going to sell our energy everywhere and make a difference in the world. However, we sell it for fire sale prices to countries that use the energy that is subsidized to build things and put Canadian workers and companies out of business and attract other business there, because they use energy as a subsidy for development and production of goods and services.

However, we cannot talk about those things. We do not have that type of mature debate in the House of Commons. The reality is that we actually facilitate the demise of Canadian jobs, not based on competition but on the fact that we are okay with others' manipulation of the so-called free market economy and state intervention, and state subsidization against our workers here who beg for a national strategy on certain issues but get nothing.

Take, for example, our exports of automobiles to Japan. Canadian automobiles are equal or better on J.D. Power and other types of independent assessments of vehicles for quality, workmanship, production value, and for consumers; yet we cannot produce and ship into those markets. How fair is that? It is not. Yet this says that if we just opened more markets, then we should be doing great and we should be doing well.

• (1705)

From the year 2000, for trade agreements, promotion and protection agreements, and investment agreements, this is where we are at. We basically go to countries and we increase corporate rights. We do the work that taxpayers fund and we have no expectations on these agreements leading to Canadian jobs. We do the work for the corporations to get them into these markets without any expectations of what is going to take place with regard to jobs.

I will give the House an example and this one is really sad. Over the last number of years I have heard both the provincial and federal Liberals talking about trade and doing missions in India. Some companies have gone over there on the Canadian taxpayer's dime. I coach hockey and I know the people who come out with their kids. These are working people. Some are engineers. These engineers are in the process of losing their jobs. They are training people from India who come over here with an engineering degree and take their jobs. Congratulations on a great strategy. Those people are funding the trips from India and the expenditure and now are going to subsidize the fact and deal with the reality. They have to deal with

the reality that day to day they will work with the people who will get their jobs even though those jobs are considered value-added jobs in Canada. These are well-paying jobs in Canada. This is taking place in a tool and die and mould-making company that is a stalwart of our local economy. It is a Canadian success story that is unequalled in the world in terms of quality and workmanship. It cannot be denied that tool and die and mould-making in Canada is the best. We are facing subsidization of our jobs.

Since 2000, we have signed agreements with countries, agreements that are supposed to give jobs to Canadians, that are supposed to increase the chances for economic improvement for not only themselves but collectively for the nation. Here are some of the countries that we have signed agreements with since 2000: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, China, Costa Rica, Croatia, Czech Republic, Guyana, Hong Kong, Iceland, Jordan, Korea, Kuwait, Latvia, Mali, Nigeria, Norway, Panama, Poland, Romania, Senegal, Serbia, Slovakia, Switzerland, Tanzania, and Ukraine. These agreements were signed just in 2000 alone. There has been no talk about the others.

Let us be clear about this. Some of the provisions in CETA will crush Canadian industries. We have signed all of these agreements but where are the jobs? The Conservatives get up on a daily basis and tell the Liberals that they have not created a single job despite the fact that we have signed a number of different trade agreements over the last number of years. Where are the jobs? We would like to know. We would like to see what they are so we can at least measure them.

We will have certain exposures in these agreements that are well known. The cost of pharmaceuticals is a huge one. Investment-state provisions is another, and the dairy industry.

We need to at least hear from the government about what the measurables are that we are going to put in. The government pulled a number out for the agricultural industry in terms of supply management. We need to know, just like the Chilean agreement and others that we have signed in the past, where the jobs are, where our neighbours are employed, and most important, if there will be an adverse effect on the cost of living. We need to know what the agreement will do for us because we have subsidized it.

• (1710)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, although I totally disagree with many of the comments from across the way, I appreciate what the member is saying.

Earlier today I made reference to the fact that New Democrats seem to take the position that there is no such thing as a good trade agreement. They say that they have supported one. I believe it was the Korean one. I do not know what it was about the Korean one that was so outstanding that it was the single trade agreement they supported.

Government Orders

The member talked about Japanese cars. Many Japanese cars are actually manufactured here in Canada. I would not want to sell our automotive industry short. We have some of the best cars in the world being produced here in Canada. We should be very proud of that.

Trade equals jobs, good middle-class jobs. At one time, we had a significant trade surplus, under a Liberal administration. We were working towards getting more trade, more world trade, because at the end of the day, Canada is a trading nation.

Would the member not acknowledge that Canada is dependent on international trade? Without international trade, we would lose tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands, of jobs. Would the member not at the very least acknowledge that fact?

• (1715)

Mr. Brian Masse: Mr. Speaker, every nation state requires trade. They have been doing it for decades, generations, and centuries. That is obvious. The question is about trade agreements. That is the difference.

We are still going to have trade. For example, we have the South Korea trade agreement. We did not address, which I pushed hard for, non-tariff barriers. That is why, interestingly enough, with the TPP and others, non-tariff barriers are the things that prevent an open market from developing.

What South Korea does is block, directly and indirectly, for example, dealerships from opening in South Korea. Canada can sell there all it wants, but good luck to people who actually buy a Canadian product, because they cannot get it serviced. That is what has to stop. If we did the same thing, those South Korean cars would not be dumped here.

There are good cars produced across Ontario. There is no doubt. Workers do that for Canada, not the government.

Mr. Randy Hoback (Prince Albert, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I was actually chair of the committee when we went through the South Korea trade deal. I remember that the NDP and Liberal members supported that unanimously as it went through committee. In fact, it was the first time the NDP members actually supported a trade deal, which surprised us. I know the joke around here was that they got mixed up and thought it was North Korea, not South Korea, and that is why they supported it.

When we look at the NDP on trade, when we look at its party policy when it comes to resource development or taking advantage of the sectors we have, strengths here in Canada, it seems to want to shut them down. It seems to be scared of the fact that Canadian companies can actually compete, and not only compete but succeed and do very well and hire more people. They can generate wealth and generate taxes, which gives us our health care and the social programs Canadians actually want.

If we do not have trade, if we do not have agreements like CETA, if we do not have situations where our companies can grow and compete around the world, what happens is that companies lay people off and we do not have a tax base.

What would be the member's suggestion? If he does not want trade, where are all these people supposed to work? Where is all the

food supposed to be shipped to? Where are all these jobs going to come from? Obviously he does not like trade. What is the member's solution?

Mr. Brian Masse: Mr. Speaker, that was actually kind of bizarre.

First of all, our automotive industry is integrated with the United States. With the United States going into free trade with South Korea, we had no real option in the sense that we had to pursue that.

Similar to CETA, there is greater protection for other industries than what Canada gets. It is similar to what has been happening in other trade agreements, like the TPP. Malaysia out-negotiated these guys. Malaysia gets 12 years for auto. We get five years.

This is the immature element of the argument: "If we do not have a trade agreement, we are not actually going to trade with these people."

England is our third-largest trading partner. We are still going to trade with it, even if it is out of CETA, with Brexit. It is going to happen. It is a choice of whether we enhance WTO trading privileges. It is not whether we are actually going to trade with some countries.

Ms. Karen Ludwig (New Brunswick Southwest, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the CETA negotiations provided a great opportunity to innovate, especially regarding provisions on investment protection and the mechanism for the resolution of disputes between investors and states. Our government fully seized that opportunity and developed a new and improved approach to investment chapters in Canada's free trade agreements.

Let me tell members today about some of these innovations.

I know that members of this House fully appreciate that the Canadian government and the European Union and its member states have a sovereign and inalienable right to regulate in the public interest. It is, in fact, our solemn responsibility to do so for the benefit of all citizens, especially those among us who are the most vulnerable.

It is also important to know that there are well-recognized principles of international law establishing that such a sovereign right to regulate in the public interest is not affected by provisions in international trade agreements. Nevertheless, to ensure that CETA is clear on that principle, we modified the investment chapter and introduced a dedicated article reaffirming the right of governments to regulate in the public interest, including in such areas as the environment, health, and safety.

Another significant CETA innovation our government is proud of is the transformation of the mechanism for the resolution of disputes between investors and states. CETA is indeed the first international trade agreement that establishes a permanent tribunal to hear claims by investors alleging that states have breached investment-related obligations.

Government Orders

There are currently around 3,000 international investment agreements in force worldwide, and a large majority of those include a mechanism for the resolution of disputes between investors and states. In all of those agreements, including those to which Canada is a party, investment tribunals are constituted on an ad hoc basis and are thus dissolved when a final decision is issued. The members of those tribunals are jurists who are appointed by the parties to the dispute; that is, the foreign investor and the respondent state. Critics of this process have been deeply concerned about arbitrator independence.

The CETA tribunal, in contrast, will consist of 15 members appointed solely by Canada and the European Union. Ethical requirements will be central to the process leading to their appointment. Among others, members of the tribunal will not be allowed to act as counsel or expert witnesses in an investment dispute under any international investment agreement. Members will be appointed for a five-year term that may be renewed only once. Individual cases will be heard before a three-member division of the tribunal, and those members will be selected on a rotation basis, ensuring that the composition of a division is random.

Our government is convinced that such innovations address the concerns about a perceived lack of arbitrator independence and will give greater legitimacy to the dispute resolution process.

Moreover, as the members of a division hearing a specific case will be in a position to consult with the other members of the tribunal, we expect that the coherence of decisions will also, as a result, be much improved.

That is not all, however. In addition to the first-instance tribunal, CETA will establish a permanent appellate tribunal, thus creating another precedent in international investment law. The appellate tribunal will function in a way similar to the first-instance tribunal. Its tasks will be to review decisions that are contested by either the foreign investor or the respondent state.

In time, the first-instance tribunal and the appellate tribunal will develop a body of decisions that will constitute effective jurisprudence. This, in turn, will create greater legal certainty for both foreign investors and governments.

We believe that these innovations regarding dispute resolution are great accomplishments, but our government intends to go even further.

Indeed, our ultimate objective is to establish, with the European Union and other interested trading partners, a multilateral institution for the resolution of investment disputes. Once established, this new institution would take over the resolution of investment disputes under CETA and could become the mechanism for investment dispute resolution for all future Canadian investment agreements with trading partners who agree to sign up with the multilateral institution.

The above innovations regarding the right to regulate and the mechanism for the resolution of disputes are certainly significant ones that our government is proud of.

● (1720)

However, let me now turn our attention to another important innovation of the CETA investment chapter that may be less visible. We have clarified in CETA that, absent a specific commitment made to an investor to that effect, a decision by Canada or the European Union not to issue, renew, or maintain a subsidy does not constitute a breach of CETA's investment protection obligations.

We have closed the doors to shopping by clarifying that investors cannot seek to import provisions from other Canadian or European trade agreements through CETA's most favoured nation treatment article. Canada and the European Union have clarified what constitutes a breach of the fair and equitable treatment standard to ensure the standard is not interpreted in a broader manner than intended.

CETA encourages the use of domestic courts by suspending the timelines for the submission of a claim while domestic remedies are being pursued. We added an article on mediation to encourage early settlement of disputes without recourse to the CETA tribunal. We have provided CETA with a mechanism for the early dismissal of frivolous claims. We have taken small and medium-sized enterprises into consideration and have added provisions that make it easier for them to access the mechanism for the resolution of disputes.

We have made it mandatory for an investor who submits a claim, while benefiting from third party funding, to be transparent and disclose the identity of its funder.

Importantly, we have established a committee that provides a forum for the CETA parties to consult on difficulties that may arise regarding implementation of the chapter, as well as on possible improvements to the chapter, especially in light of experiences and developments in other international fora.

It has been Canada's practice to prevent so-called mailbox companies from benefiting from Canada's trade agreements. CETA is no different. In order to be considered as an investor under CETA, a European Union enterprise that is owned by interests of a third party is required to have substantial business activities in the territory of the European Union. It cannot simply establish a mailbox company in the EU for the sole purpose of gaining access to the dispute resolution mechanism of the CETA.

Finally, the CETA demonstrates Canada's continued leadership with regard to promoting transparency in the dispute resolution process. Under CETA, all hearings are open to the public and all documents submitted to or issued by the tribunal are made available to the public.

Our government is genuinely proud of the progressive investment chapter achieved in CETA. We believe that the progress made here may become the world standard for future investment agreements.

Private Members' Business

•(1725)

Mr. Randy Hoback (Prince Albert, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my colleague sits on the trade committee. I want to congratulate her for her hard work on the trade committee. I know she has worked very hard on this file. I think she is as happy as we are to see this move forward, and the results for Canadian businesses.

That brings about my question. Does she feel Canadian businesses are ready for this trade deal? Are they ready to take advantage of the opportunities here? I look for her opinion on this.

Ms. Karen Ludwig: Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his work on the trade committee.

There is a lot of work to be done in preparing Canadian businesses for international trade. As I mentioned to my colleague in a previous question and comment, over the last 10 years, 55 trade agreements may have been penned by the previous government. We have one million small to medium-sized enterprises with only 41,000 that are currently exporting. There is a significant amount of work to be done.

The trade committee heard that the agreement did not only constitute the 500 million people of the European Union. We are in a unique position in Canada, with access to one billion, because we have the advantage of NAFTA. We take in to the tip of Mexico, all the way over to the borders of Poland.

There is a significant amount of work that has been done, but more work can be done, particularly tying in our universities and colleges to help our small to medium-sized enterprises find out what they do not know about international trade.

The committee heard about the expansion of the virtual trade commissioner service. Many of our Canadian companies would benefit even more greatly if they knew the benefits of being a qualified company under the commission. Also, there are the advantages and the necessity of looking at export insurance. Many Canadian companies want to get involved in export, but they are not sure what they need to know, and those that do not need to know. We know that 75% of first-time exporters are not exporting in their second year.

The Deputy Speaker: There will be three minutes remaining for the period for questions and comments for the hon. member for New Brunswick Southwest when the House next returns to debate on the question before the House.

It being 5:30 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business, as listed on today's Order Paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

•(1730)

[English]

CRIMINAL CODE

Mr. Chandra Arya (Nepean, Lib.) moved that Bill C-305, an act to amend the Criminal Code (mischief), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to speak to my private member's bill. Bill C-305 seeks to amend a subsection of the Criminal Code which deals with damages to property due to crime, motivated by hate, based on religion, race, colour or national or ethnic origin. The bill proposes to expand this to include motivation by hate based on gender identity and sexual orientation. Also, the subsection is primarily limited to places of worship like churches, mosques, synagogues and temples.

The proposed Bill C-305 seeks to expand this to include schools, day care centres, colleges, universities, community centres, seniors residences and cultural centres.

Recently there were acts of hate crimes in Ottawa, motivated by hate based on religion and race. Synagogues, a Jewish community centre, a Rabbi's private home, mosques and a church were targeted.

Whenever these things happen, it is important for each and every one of us to stand up united to condemn these acts.

I am Hindu, and no Hindu temples in Ottawa were targeted in the recent hate crime wave. However, in times like this, we do need people from all different religions and races to stand united together. We need, each one of us, to speak to each other and in one single voice.

Let me quote Martin Niemöller, the prominent protestant pastor who emerged as an outspoken public foe of Adolf Hitler and spent the last seven years of Nazi rule in concentration camps. He said:

"First they came for the Socialists, and I did not speak out—
Because I was not a Socialist.
Then they came for the Trade Unionists, and I did not speak out—
Because I was not a Trade Unionist.
Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out—
Because I was not a Jew.
Then they came for me—and there was no one left to speak for me."

Under this criminal subsection, if a person is found guilty of an indictable offence, the prison term is up to 10 years. If a person is found guilty of an offence punishable on summary conviction, the prison term is up to 18 months.

After these recent hate crimes in Ottawa, several religious leaders have stated that education and compassion are more important than law and the consequent punishment to eliminate and eradicate these hatred acts from our society

However, while I agree education is the best long term solution, I also believe a strong law acts as a major deterrent. We have seen that we have combatted social issues like smoking, and wearing seatbelts through an effective combination of law and education.

At this point, I would like to quote Dr. Martin Luther King on the interaction between positive law, morality, and culture. He said:

It may be true that morality cannot be legislated, but behavior can be regulated. It may be true that the law cannot change the heart, but it can restrain the heartless. It may be true that the law can't make a man love me, but it can restrain him from lynching me...So while the law may not change the hearts of men, it does change the habits of men; and when you change the habits of men, pretty soon the attitudes and the hearts will be changed. And so there is a need for strong legislation constantly to grapple with the problems that we face.

• (1735)

Also, it is quite interesting to see people who diametrically disagree on ideologies seem to agree on the relationship between culture and law. I would like to quote Ryan Anderson who is the William E. Simon senior research fellow at The Heritage Foundation. While I completely disagree with Mr. Anderson's views on pro-choice and marriage, I do like to quote him on culture and law.

Culture shapes law, but so too does law shape culture. The law both reflects our values and teaches values—especially to younger generations. The better metaphor, I think, is that of two coasts connected by a tide, that comes in and out, that picks up and drops off on the shorelines. Law and culture reinforce each other, either for or against human dignity and human flourishing.

Therefore, it is very important that we have a strong and robust law for hate crimes. Again, I agree that education is important, but I am equally confident that good law is also required.

There is also an interesting article that appeared in the *Christian Research Journal*, which said:

Because every law springs from a system of values and beliefs, every law is an instance of legislating Morality. Further, because a nation's laws always exercise a pedagogical or teaching influence, law inescapably exerts a shaping effect over the beliefs, character, and actions of the nation's citizens, whether for good or ill. Those who seek to separate morality from law, therefore, are in pursuit both of the impossible and the destructive. The question before us is never whether or not to legislate morality, but which moral system ought to be made legally binding.

It is heartening to note the near unanimous support I have received from all sections of society. Every person has expressed his or her support and encouragement. In particular, I would like to acknowledge the support I have received from a diverse group of religious and ethnic organizations. I would like to recognize and thank the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs for its ongoing support and its efforts to mobilize the stakeholders.

I would like to thank the following organizations that have pledged their support for Bill C-305: the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, World Sikh Organization, Coalition of Progressive Muslim Organizations, Canada India Foundation, Canadian Rabbinic Caucus, Association of Progressive Muslims, Baha'i Community of Canada, Multicultural Council for Ontario Seniors, Ukrainian Canadian Congress, Ghanaian Canadian Association of Ontario, Presbyterian Church in Canada, Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at of Canada, Armenian National Committee of Canada, Canadian Polish Congress, Jamaican Canadian Association, Reconciliation Canada, Anglican Diocese of New Westminster, Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Vancouver, Vivekananda Vedanta Society of British Columbia, Temple Shalom of British Columbia, International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) of Vancouver, and the Akali Singh Sikh Society of Vancouver.

With respect to hate crimes, there are some alarming statistics that I would like to share today. As per a Statistics Canada report released in 2015, it was noted that 51% of police reported hate crimes were motivated by hatred of race or ethnicity, 28% was motivated by religion, and 16% by sexual orientation.

• (1740)

Furthermore, six out of 10 hate crimes were classified as non-violent. These would include crimes such as mischief, public incitement of hatred, and disturbing the peace. Mischief in relation to religious property and other types of mischief made up over half of

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all reported hate crime incidents. It was the most commonly reported offence. This is regarding the same subsection of the Criminal Code that my proposed bill deals with. Out of all of those crimes, 4% of mischief related to religious property was motivated by hate.

Four out of 10 police-reported hate crimes involved violent offences, such as assault, uttering threats, and criminal harassment. Among religious hate crimes, 18% were violent. Hate crimes fuelled by prejudice against sexual orientation at 66%, or against race and ethnicity at 44%, were most likely to involve violence.

There was a recent study by the Department of Justice on understanding the community impact of hate crimes. It states, "The commission of a hate crime is against not only the individual but the entire community." It quotes David Matas as stating that "People live in community. Rights are exercised in community".

The study continues:

With victims of hate crime, it is important to consider that the impact on the community is particularly devastating, as hate crimes are 'message crimes in that the perpetrator is sending a message to the members of a certain group that they are despised, devalued, or unwelcome in a particular neighbourhood, community, school, or workplace.

Furthermore, it notes:

As well, it is important to consider that the impact on the individual victim may result in the victim rejecting the aspect of themselves that was the target of the attack or associating a core part of their identity with fear, loss, and vulnerability.

The study concludes:

The data also showed that after the hate crime incident, many people experienced increased levels of fear for their personal safety and for the safety of their family... As a result, many community members took measures to protect themselves and their family, especially members of the targeted ethnic identity community.

This bill expands the number of places to include schools, daycare centres, colleges or universities, community centres, seniors residences, and cultural centres, because the impact felt by those victims of hate crimes cannot be limited just to places of worship. The public properties proposed to be included have either all been subject to hate crime or are vulnerable to being a target of hate crimes. Whether it is places of worship or other properties, the negative impact of hate crimes on the community remains the same.

Bill C-305 will also recognize that hate motivated by bias based on gender identity and sexual orientation carries the same weight as crimes committed against religion, race, colour, national or ethnic origin. I am open to amendments with a view to broadening and further strengthening the bill.

The issue of hate crime is truly one that saturates communities nationwide. While we may be shocked and appalled when these terrible acts occur, we must focus on how we may prevent them in the future. Make no mistake: this is an issue that affects every riding and every member of the House; this is an issue that goes across all party lines. There is no room for hate and/or discrimination in Canada. We are a nation that embraces its diversity and that is inclusive of people irrespective of their race, religion, gender identity, or sexual orientation. I know—

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• (1745)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Unfortunately the time is up. Maybe the member will be able to finish his speech during some of the questions and comments.

Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Madam Speaker, I want to congratulate our hon. colleague for bringing forward this bill. There is no doubt that hate crimes, crimes that we have seen locally in Ottawa and across the country, definitely have a negative impact on the communities at large, as well as on those that the crimes are directed toward.

My hon. colleague has brought forward a great bill, and I support it. However, the government has taken an awkward stance. The member has talked about a strong law and mandatory minimums of 18 months to 10 years, but the government has said that it is reviewing mandatory minimums.

Indeed there is a high-profile case today. The Prime Minister actually supported a pretty egregious ruling. How does the hon. colleague feel about this movement by the government?

Mr. Chandra Arya: Madam Speaker, I have been very clear that I am against mandatory minimum sentences.

The punishment side of the bill, amending subsection 430(4.1) of the Criminal Code, reads, “imprisonment for a term not exceeding ten years; or” if the person “is guilty of an offence punishable on summary conviction and liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding eighteen months.”

I have been very clear. I am not for mandatory minimum sentences. The point I also made was that education was equally important. We have seen a lot of crimes and a lot of mistakes solved through both the education and law.

Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP): Madam Speaker, I, too, want to thank the member for Nepean for bringing forward this legislation, especially in light of the unfortunate hate crimes we have seen in the Ottawa region in the past couple of weeks. I think it is very timely legislation.

My question for the member is this. Why is this coming forward from the Liberal side as a private member's bill and not as a government bill? It obviously should be a priority for Canadians, and therefore I am not sure why it is not a government bill.

Related to that, we have seen backbenchers on the Liberal side bring forward very good bills and their cabinet has voted against them. It has actually voted down private members' bills. Has the member had any consultations with his front bench to ensure his government will provide support to this very important bill?

Mr. Chandra Arya: Madam Speaker, I have been in touch with the Minister of Justice, and I hope, and am fairly confident, the government will back the bill.

I am open to amendments to further strengthen this bill so it will survive the whole process.

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe, Lib.): Madam Speaker, first, I would like to thank my colleague from Nepean for all of the hard work he has done on his private member's bill, Bill C-305. Again, you have done a great job, and a lot of great work.

Having worked for the RCMP for a number of—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I want to remind the hon. member that she is to address her comments and questions through the Chair.

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor: My apologies, Madam Speaker.

Having worked for the RCMP for a number of years, I wonder if the member could comment on the importance of this bill and how the proposed amendments to the Criminal Code will help police officers when doing their investigations?

Mr. Chandra Arya: Madam Speaker, the hate crimes in Ottawa likely have been solved and the culprit caught.

The men and women in uniform are doing a great job in protecting the community and the individuals. They, too, are looking forward, when the bill can expand the definition of a hate crime and cover the scope of crimes against what properties. I hope the bill will further strengthen and enhance in solving the crimes.

• (1750)

Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to rise in strong support of Bill C-305. At the outset, I would like to congratulate the hon. member for Nepean for his hard work in bringing forward this important and much-needed legislation.

Bill C-305 seeks to amend section 430 of the Criminal Code. Section 430 of the Criminal Code makes it a criminal offence for an individual to commit an act of mischief motivated by hate targeted at a group and carried out on religious property, whether that property be a church, synagogue, temple, or cemetery. Bill C-305 seeks to expand section 430 of the Criminal Code to include other types of property, whether it be a school or other educational facility, a cultural or community facility, a seniors facility, or other facility.

Regretfully, Bill C-305 could not be more timely. Recently, we have seen a spike in anti-Semitic, anti-Muslim racist vandalism in Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal, and other centres throughout Canada. Just last week, as the hon. member for Nepean alluded to, we saw peaceful Jews, Muslims, and black Christians targeted by a criminal with a string of hateful vandalism.

Bill C-305 seeks to close a void in the Criminal Code that presently exists under section 430. The fact is that if an individual commits an act of mischief motivated by hate toward a particular group and carried out on a religious property such as a house of worship, that individual would be subject to being charged, prosecuted, and convicted under section 430 of the Criminal Code. If convicted, that individual would be subject to a penalty of imprisonment for up to 10 years. By contrast, if the same individual committed the same act of mischief motivated by the same hate and targeted at the same group, but carried it out not on religious property but at a school, a recreational facility, or a seniors facility, that person would not be able to be charged under section 430 of the Criminal Code and would not be subject to a penalty of imprisonment for up to 10 years. Most likely, that individual would be subject to prosecution under the general mischief provisions of the Criminal Code where the maximum penalty is up to two years.

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Acts of mischief motivated by hate toward a particular group, whether it be on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, and so on, are not general acts of mischief. They are much worse. They are acts of hate. They are acts of hate designed to intimidate and terrorize a particular community. It is precisely for that reason that under section 430 of the Criminal Code, an individual who commits an act of mischief motivated by hate targeted at a group on religious property is subject to imprisonment for up to 10 years, not two years.

Bill C-305 would close the loophole that presently exists in the Criminal Code by ensuring that anyone who commits an act of mischief motivated by hate toward a particular group would be subject to section 430 of the Criminal Code and subject to a penalty of up to 10 years imprisonment whether they carry out that act of mischief at a religious facility, a school, a community centre, or other facility.

• (1755)

We know that, so often, acts of mischief motivated by hate are carried out in places other than strictly religious institutions or other religious property. Indeed, when we look at the very sad events last week in Ottawa, we saw that, yes, a church and two synagogues were targeted, but also the Ottawa Muslim Association as well as a Jewish teaching school. This past July, a Jewish community centre outside of Montreal had graffiti spray-painted on its doors. In 2004, the United Talmud Torah School in Montreal was firebombed. There are hundreds of other examples in the past number of years.

We, as Canadians, take pride in our collective diversity. The values of tolerance and inclusivity are Canadian values, but the fact remains that crimes motivated by hate continue to occur in Canada. Sadly, they occur regularly. Indeed, according to Statistics Canada, in 2014 nearly 1,300 hate crimes were reported. Those were just the reported hate crimes. We know from Statistics Canada that the vast majority of hate crimes are not reported. Of the hate crimes that have been reported, nearly 60% involved mischief.

Based on those very troubling statistics, it is evident that we have a lot of work to do collectively as Canadians to combat the scourge of hate. As we undertake that work, we must not be complacent and turn a blind eye, but must be vigilant and proactive, and must call out hate when we see it, by shining the light on the darkness of hate.

As parliamentarians, we have a responsibility to ensure that individuals who perpetrate crimes motivated by hate are held accountable to the fullest extent of the law.

Bill C-305 would be a step in that direction. Let us support Bill C-305 and make sure that this legislation is passed as soon as possible.

Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP): Madam Speaker, it is a great pleasure to rise in support of Bill C-305, introduced by the member for Nepean.

The bill is both timely and important in our community. The member for Nepean read a long, very impressive list of groups that are supporting the bill. That tells us a lot about the significance of promotion of hatred in North America at this time.

The bill would do two basic things. One is to expand the number of places that are defined as protected under law against hate-

motivated damage, basically from religious property to community institutions like day cares, schools, universities, town halls, senior centres, and sports arenas. This is admirable, because we know that those who want to promote hatred do not pick on churches alone. Although they quite often do pick on churches, we have all seen these messages scrawled elsewhere in our communities. This is the essence of why this is an important bill.

The second part is important to me, as one of the six out gay members of Parliament. It tends to expand the grounds for protection of groups to include sexual orientation and gender identity. That is laudable. We have made progress over the years in extending protections to people of my community, but it has always been done in a piecemeal fashion, kind of step by step. I accept that this is another step in that progress.

Some people are surprised to know that sexual orientation was not originally included in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Of course, I am old enough to have been around at that time. In fact, I was actually here in Ottawa at that time, and I was not a supporter of the Charter of Rights because it did not include my rights. That was corrected through decisions of the Supreme Court of Canada.

In 1996, Parliament, and again, a Liberal government, brought forward a government bill to add sexual orientation to the Canadian Human Rights Act. In 2004, the section we are really dealing with in this bill was brought forward by Svend Robinson, a New Democrat member of Parliament, and the first out gay member of Parliament. His private member's bill succeeded in working its way through Parliament to add sexual orientation to the hate crime section of the Criminal Code.

Of course, I am very proud that Bill C-16 has now passed in the House of Commons. It would extend that same protection against hate crimes to those who are gender diverse, non-gender binary, or those who are called transgender. Bill C-16 would also add this to the Canadian Human Rights Act.

When this bill gets to committee we will be asking for one small amendment, and that is to make its wording consistent with Bill C-16. That will take a very small amendment, but I am confident that the member for Nepean had no intention of narrowing the bill. I hope to have a good discussion with him about the possibility of that. I regard it as a technical amendment that really meets the objectives of what he laid out in the bill.

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When it comes to hate crimes, we know the groups that are most often subjected to them because of the statistics that are kept. However, I would point out in the chamber, as I did in debate on my private member's bill in the last Parliament, and as I did on Bill C-16, that we do not keep good statistics on hate crimes that are committed on the basis of gender identity or gender expression, because these are not explicitly embedded in the law. They are lumped together usually, when they are considered at all, with sexual orientation, which is quite a different matter than gender identity and gender expression. Again, I hope we can make the bill more consistent.

We need a larger debate about hate crimes in this Parliament at some point. I am not faulting the bill. It is not the purpose of the bill, but I would look forward to a discussion, because unfortunately, in the last Parliament, in June of 2013, we passed a bill that removed section 13 from the Canadian Human Rights Act, which would have allowed the Canadian Human Rights Commission to do more proactive work against hate crimes in our society.

The very fact that this is coming forward as a private member's bill gives me some confidence that we can probably find a consensus in this Parliament to actually restore the power to the Canadian Human Rights Commission to do that preventative work that would prevent the kinds of crimes that Bill C-305 is talking about.

• (1800)

I look forward to finding a forum where we could have that broader discussion among MPs.

I would hope that the government might bring forward such a bill as part of its agenda. Again I have to question why this important bill is a private member's bill and not part of the government's agenda. In response to my question, the member for Nepean said he hoped to have the support of his frontbench and the Minister of Justice for this legislation. That is a bit of a waiver for me in terms of my confidence. I hope that we can and will see the government, particularly the frontbench, support the bill and not kill a private member's bill as it has done to other Liberal backbenchers.

When it comes to hate crimes, the crimes that the bill focuses on are the most common. I do have to note once again that the groups most likely to be subject to violent hate crimes are the LGBTQ community and, in particular, transgender Canadians, and within that group, first nations or two-spirited people.

I am pleased that on Friday and Saturday in my riding, the Victoria Native Friendship Centre is putting on a workshop for two-spirited British Columbia youth from across the province to help them build confidence in themselves and to confront the prejudice and the violence they often face. I intend to be at that conference on Friday and to bring news, I hope, that we have support for adding gender identity and gender expression to help protect two-spirited first nation youth in this country against these kinds of hate crimes.

Who is in favour of this legislation? I guess my question should be, who in Canada would not be in favour of this legislation? Quite often because of the immense overflow of American culture and American politics into Canadian society, we get caught up in the negativity that goes on there, particularly the negativity of the presidential campaign, and the increased frequency of hate crimes reported throughout the United States as a result of the unfortunate

encouragement of prejudice and hate by some very prominent citizens, including the current president-elect of the United States, whose name I always avoid saying.

As previous speakers have done, I am not going to review some of the incidents that have taken place. We all know about them. It is a bit like my own personal habit of not mentioning the perpetrators of crime, but instead talk about the victims and how they recover from that crime. It is important that we recognize the reality, and I thank the member for Nepean and the member from Edmonton for bringing that to our attention again.

I know my time is drawing short, but let me go back to what I said at the beginning of my remarks. I extend my thanks to the member for Nepean for bringing this forward. I encourage him to talk to the frontbench of his party seriously to make sure that those members will support this legislation. We have found some support, I hope broad support, within the Conservative caucus. The member will find universal support in the NDP caucus for his bill. We will ask for what I regard as a technical amendment to broaden the legislation a bit to make it consistent with Bill C-16. We look forward to this legislation's passing through the House expeditiously.

• (1805)

Mr. Sean Casey (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity today to speak about private member's bill, Bill C-305, an act to amend the Criminal Code (mischief).

[*Translation*]

Bill C-305 seeks to broaden the provision of the Criminal Code on mischief that constitutes a hate crime in relation to buildings or structures that are primarily used for religious worship by adding other types of buildings or structures.

[*English*]

To help situate the Bill C-305 within the criminal justice system, I intend to do three things in my remarks. First, I will provide an outline of how the current criminal law addresses cases of mischief that are hate motivated. Second, I will provide recent statistics of mischief that is hate motivated. Third, I will briefly outline how Bill C-305 proposes to expand the existing hate crime of mischief committed against property primarily used for religious worship, including some concerns with this approach.

First, let me address what the Criminal Code currently does to prevent hate mischief including hate-motivated mischief. Section 430 of the Criminal Code includes a general offence of mischief, which carries penalties ranging from up to two years imprisonment, where the value of the property that has been vandalized does not exceed \$5,000 in value; up to 10 years imprisonment, where the value of the property that has been vandalized exceeds \$5,000; and up to life imprisonment, where the mischief causes actual danger to life.

The variations in punishment for this offence depend on the value of the property that has been vandalized, not on the cost of the damage done to the property. For example, minor damage of a few hundred dollars done to a property that exceeds \$5,000 in value, such as a house, could result in a maximum punishment of 10 years imprisonment, not a maximum punishment of two years imprisonment.

• (1810)

[Translation]

For the general offence of mischief, like for all criminal acts, there is a sentencing provision for hate crimes. In fact, subparagraph 718.2 (a)(i) of the Criminal Code indicates that, during sentencing, the courts must take into account any aggravating circumstances, including whether the offence was motivated by prejudice or hate based on a non-exhaustive list of motives, such as race, colour, religion, sex, or sexual orientation.

[English]

There is also a specific hate crime of mischief relating to religious property. Subsection 430(4.1) of the Criminal Code specifically prohibits mischief directed against a building or a structure that is primarily used for religious worship—such as a church, mosque, or synagogue—an object associated with religious worship, or a cemetery. For a person to be convicted of this offence, the mischief must be proven beyond a reasonable doubt to have been motivated by bias, prejudice, or hate based on religion, race, colour, or national or ethnic origin. The maximum penalty is 10 years imprisonment on indictment. Enacted in late 2001 by the Anti-terrorism Act, this offence was designed to prevent the chilling effect that some mischief could have on the worshippers of a particular religion.

Now let me move on to what we know about the incidence of hate-motivated crime in Canada and, in particular, hate-motivated mischief. The uniform crime reporting survey conducted by Statistics Canada in collaboration with the policing community collects police-reported information on hate crimes. This includes offences motivated by bias, prejudice, or hate based on race, national or ethnic origin, language, colour, religion, sex, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, and any other similar factor.

It also includes information about hate crimes categorized by the term “most serious violation”, which includes the categories of mischief and mischief to religious properties motivated by hate. The statistics for mischief for the last two years of police-reported information on hate crimes cover the years 2013 and 2014. Statistics Canada reported that for 2013 there were 1,167 incidents of police-reported hate crime in Canada.

Now let me provide some information with respect to vandalism committed because of hatred of a person's religion.

According to the B'nai Brith of Canada's annual *Audit of Antisemitic Incidents 2015*, for the five-year period from 2011 to 2015, antisemitic vandalism declined to its lowest point in 15 years, with 136 incidents in 2015, compared, for example, to 362 in 2011 and 238 in 2014. However, it added:

Frequent and ongoing threats against the Jewish community result in increased security costs for synagogues, Jewish schools and community organizations, in order to maintain the safety of those who utilize such facilities. These increased security

Private Members' Business

costs are unfortunately justified, with hundreds of incidents every year taking place at Jewish institutions.

As well, the National Council of Canadian Muslims, which tracks hate crimes committed against Muslims, has noted on its website that in 2015, of the 59 hate crime incidents reported, 18 involved vandalism against Muslims.

Bill C-305 proposes to expand subsection 430(4.1) of the Criminal Code, mischief relating to religious property, to include hate-motivated mischief directed at a building or structure that is primarily used as an educational institution; for administrative, social, cultural, or sports activities or events; or as a residence for seniors.

Bill C-305 also proposes that the grounds of hate motivation found in subsection 430(4.1), currently restricted to acting out of bias, prejudice, or hate based on religion, race, colour, or national or ethnic origin, should be expanded to include the grounds of gender identity and sexual orientation. As a result, if Bill C-305 is enacted, subsection 430(4.1) of the Criminal Code would no longer have, as its underlying rationale, preventing a chilling effect on worshippers of a particular religion.

The intent of Bill C-305 is consistent with our government's commitment to ensuring equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination, in keeping with the charter. It is also consistent with a clear message that hate crimes will not be tolerated in Canada.

This rationale is well explained by the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, or CIJA. This organization has highlighted the recent spike in anti-Semitic, racist, and anti-Muslim vandalism that was reported in Ottawa, including at three synagogues and other religious institutions in our nation's capital.

CIJA argues that the current law is deficient, since it only designates as a hate crime mischief committed against a religious site such as a church, synagogue, mosque, or temple. In its view, this designation should be broadened. To quote from its website:

Hate-fuelled criminals do not distinguish between synagogues, community centres and schools. Neither should the law.

I believe that this principle is a worthy one, but I have questions about the potentially broad scope of the proposed crime. For example, would it include structures such as sports arenas, like the Rogers Centre in Toronto? Would it apply to a coffee shop used regularly by a university Spanish club or to an office building occupied partly by government? As it is currently worded, it appears that the bill could potentially capture numerous unintended buildings and spaces. As a result, the offence could become over-broad and potentially vague.

Potential impacts of the bill on other parts of the Criminal Code must also be considered. Would it have a deleterious effect on paragraph 718.2(a)(i) of the code, the hate-crime sentencing provision, since that sentencing provision would no longer be used in a large number of mischief cases?

Lastly, I am concerned about maintaining the underlying rationale of subsection 430(4.1) of the Criminal Code, which is to protect freedom of religion. In its current form, the bill appears to go quite far beyond that original intent.

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Cabinet will therefore support Bill C-305, with amendments to address over-breadth and consistency with other provisions of the Criminal Code, including those referred to by my colleague from the New Democratic Party.

● (1815)

As noted, this bill aligns with our government's commitment to charter values, as well as being a clear message that hate crimes will not be tolerated in Canada. For these and other reasons, I believe that Bill C-305 is deserving of further discussion and examination at a committee of the House.

Mr. Len Webber (Calgary Confederation, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to be able to rise today to contribute to this important debate on Bill C-305, which aims to amend the section in the Criminal Code dealing with mischief. Currently, there are four specific offences listed as hate propaganda offences or hate crimes in the Criminal Code of Canada. There is advocating genocide, public incitement of hatred, wilful promotion of hatred, and fourth is mischief motivated by hate in relation to religious property.

The proposal before us today intends to strengthen the penalties and the convictions for hate crimes that target property. Damage to property is the most common form of hate crime. These crimes can range from graffiti to the complete destruction of a building through fire. Sadly, we know that the main targets for this type of crime are schools, places of worship, community and cultural centres, seniors homes, and even memorials. Places of worship, as I mentioned earlier, are already covered by existing legislation, but we need to close the gap and address the realities of hate crime. This is why the bill proposes to include, along with religious property, day cares, schools, community centres, seniors residences, and playgrounds.

The statistics are startling. One half of police-reported hate crimes are based on race or ethnicity. Another quarter are based on religion. Sixteen per cent are based on people's sexual orientation. Sixty per cent of these hate crimes are non-violent mischief targeted at property. This proposed bill would help police and the courts by giving them a stronger tool to crack down on this type of criminal activity in our communities.

I am sure I speak for all members of the House when I say that there is no place in Canada for hate. We are a peaceful and compassionate society as a whole, but that can never be taken for granted. We have a societal duty every day to defend the country and the way of life we have taken so long to build and defend. At the same time, we have to recognize that we are not perfect as a society. Things that were tolerated in the past are no longer tolerated as we have become more enlightened. As little as a generation ago, it was common to have the LGBTQ community targeted. As a society, we have taken a stand to say this is not what we want in Canada. We now have an intolerance for those who target people based on whom they love. We have an intolerance for those who target our indigenous communities, but we can still do more.

Another part of this proposed legislation seeks to broaden the definition of mischief as it relates to those acts motivated by bias, prejudice, or hate based on gender identity or sexual orientation. Sadly, a sizable portion of the population still hates others simply because of the colour of their skin, the nature of their worship, or the gender of the person whom they love.

I am not naive. I know that passing legislation such as this would not fix the backward thinking and prejudices of folks like them. However, it would allow us to deal with bad apples within our community. Hateful actions hurt more than just those they target. They affect the entire community. They divide communities. They foster mistrust among neighbours and make us all feel a little less safe and less secure. These criminals are misguided. They think that their criminal actions will only hurt those whom they hate. However, they often make victims of those they purport to protect in the community.

I will digress for a moment to make a general comment about hate. The recent American election seems to have raised the issue of hate speech again. I will not go on about this, but I will say that hate is not limited to any one political stripe or any one nation. I have seen it from both ends and in the middle. As a society, we can do better here in Canada. Hate for fellow citizens is alive and well in all ridings, including my own.

● (1820)

I receive thousands of responses from constituents on a regular basis, as we all do in this House. I am saddened by the very small but consistent number of hateful responses I receive.

These comments are occasionally targeted at me, but usually at others in our community. These venomous and toxic comments are targeted at others, based on their skin, their god, their sexual orientation, their political affiliation, or anything that makes them different from the writer. These spreaders of hate know their comments are not welcome in the community, though. They never provide their names. They hide, cowardly, in their anonymity.

I simply mention this because folks ought to know that their other opinions rarely count for anything in my books, when accompanied by their hateful comments. If they have something constructive and valuable to say, it is best said intelligently, without all the hate.

This is not the first time that this legislation has come before the House. I applaud those who tried to bring these issues forward in the past and did not give up.

Societal change does not happen overnight. Change is a difficult concept for some and a dream for others. I do not doubt for a second that every single person here has been the target of hate, at some point. When members were the target of hate, it resulted in a lasting memory. It left a deep emotional scar, I am sure. It made them mad. People need to take these memories and the emotions they created and channel that energy into fighting hate in all its forms.

This legislation could be a valuable tool to our law enforcement in dealing with hate crimes in our communities. It would make it easier to get convictions and deal with this problem.

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Before I close, I want to encourage all Canadians to challenge hate at the source. If we have friends, family members, or co-workers who engage in this type of thing, we should take a moment to let them know that they do not speak for us.

People may be amazed to find that many of these spreaders of hate are incredibly insecure and when they find out that they are alone in their thinking, it can provoke perhaps a moment of personal reflection and perhaps even change. Our silence in situations like this is taken by them as tacit approval of their behaviour. Our silence is seen as agreement with their thinking. We should not let them speak for us.

Recently, we commemorated Remembrance Day.

Tens of thousands of Canadians fought hate. They gave their lives to put down those who sought to reshape human existence through hate. They gave their future so that we could have one. There could be no greater dishonour to their memory and their sacrifices than for us to give up on the fight against hate.

Yes, we have the freedom to speak our mind in Canada, but that freedom was found in the fight against hate. Let us not forget that.

I am reminded, in cases like this, of a certain saying, "If you are not part of the solution, you are part of the problem".

I and many others in this House are supporting this proposed legislation because we want to be part of the solution when it comes to fighting hate in our communities.

• (1825)

Mr. David de Burgh Graham (Laurentides—Labelle, Lib.): Madam Speaker, Canada is a nation that is proud of its multiculturalism. We thrive when we all grow together. As the Prime Minister has always said, we are strong, not in spite of our differences, but because of them.

However, Canada is not immune to the issue of hate crimes. It is an issue that affects us from coast to coast. As the country continues to become more diverse, hate crimes against individuals and groups are an ongoing issue.

The most common form of hate crime is that of mischief, damage to property, most often in a form of vandalism. These cowardly acts, targeted at people and groups in our neighbourhoods, are hurtful, not only to their intended targets, but to our communities as a whole.

It is for this reason that the member for Nepean proposed Bill C-305. This bill seeks to amend section 430 (4.1) of the Criminal Code of Canada that to date only includes places of worship such as churches, temples, synagogues, and mosques as protected places against hate crimes.

In its current form, Bill C-305 seeks to expand this to include schools, day care centres, colleges or universities, community centres, and playgrounds.

The LGBTQ community is one of the most targeted groups when it comes to hate crimes. While Parliament has previously passed legislation to protect these groups, section 430 (4.1) currently does not recognize hate-based mischief against one's sexual orientation or gender identity. The current law only recognizes bias, prejudice, or hate based on religion, race, colour, or national or ethnic origin.

Bill C-305 seeks to include these two groups. It is the sponsor's hope that with the passage of Bill C-305, our neighbourhoods will be a safer place for the LGBTQ community.

I believe the bill is very important for making progress in fighting hatred and hate crimes, and I really congratulate the member for Nepean for his hard work on this, for bringing this forward. When we look at the results of the bill, we see a wide number of stakeholders have come out in support of this. We have heard from the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, the World Sikh Organization, the Coalition of Progressive Canadian Muslim Organizations, the Canada-Indian Foundation, the Canadian Rabbinic Caucus, and so on and so forth. This is a wide breadth of support for a very important bill to address hate.

Where I grew up in rural Quebec, there used to be signs on places that said, "No dogs, no Jews". Hatred is a real thing. It is a thing that has to be fought. It has to be fought against and protected from. I think this is a really nice step and I really encourage the member for Nepean to go forward with this, and I am looking forward to the second hour of debate.

[*Translation*]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The hon. member for Laurentides—Labelle will have seven minutes remaining the next time this matter comes before the House.

The time provided for the consideration of private members' business has now expired, and the order is dropped to the bottom of the order of precedence on the Order Paper.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

• (1830)

[*English*]

STATUS OF WOMEN

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Madam Speaker, in my discussion with the status of women minister in this House earlier this fall, I referenced that the United Nations and women's organizations across the country are calling for a national action plan to end violence against women. I asked why the minister had chosen a very narrow scope that does not include services such as shelters, policing, education, and some of the fundamental factors that can lead to increased violence against women but also in which we can find some of the solutions, such as the welfare system, in areas of provincial, municipal, and territorial authority. It was in that context that I asked the question.

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The minister said that it was great hearing from people across the country and that she is listening to police. That is a good thing. However, that is not aiming toward a national action plan. Therefore, I want to dig a little deeper into why I did not get an answer from the minister that day, and reference some of the very good support for the current government. If it is truly committed to ending violence against women and gender equality, it would be happy to embrace this broad base of advice.

I will start with the United Nations. Under international law, every country has an obligation to address violence against women, and the United Nations called upon all countries to have a national action plan in place by 2015. It is now 2016 and Canada does not have one. Therefore, on Friday the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women issued its report. It is all about Canada. These only come out every five years or so. Therefore, this is a particularly good opportunity to hear from the United Nations about how it views Canada's progress.

In section 24 it states:

The Committee notes with appreciation that the Ministry of Status of Women is currently working with other Ministries to develop a federal strategy against gender-based violence.... However, the Committee is concerned about:

(d) The lack of a national action plan, bearing in mind that the strategy will only apply at the federal level;

In section 25 it states:

...the Committee recommends that...[Canada]:

(d) Expeditiously adopt a national action plan in consultation with civil society organizations, especially aboriginal women's organizations, to combat gender-based violence against women and ensure that adequate human, technical and financial resources are allocated for its implementation, monitoring and assessment;

It also indicates the necessity to have a national action plan, increased reporting by women regarding incidents of violence and de-stigmatizing victims and working with judges, prosecutors, police officers, all of which fall within provincial authority.

I will end with flagging, from the blueprint for Canada's national action plan on violence against women and girls, which was prepared by NGOs and women's organizations from across the country. Last year they called upon the government to implement a national action plan. It indicates that, in the absence of a national action plan, responses to violence against women in Canada are largely fragmented, often inaccessible, and can work to impede rather than improve women's safety.

Therefore, my question to the status of women minister is this. Why not a national plan? Why so narrow a federal plan?

Ms. Anju Dhillon (Parliamentary Secretary for Status of Women, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to participate in this adjournment debate and discuss the federal government's approach to addressing gender-based violence.

[Translation]

Our government understands that reducing and preventing all forms of gender-based violence, including violence against women and girls, is a pressing matter. Violence disrupts not only women's lives, but also their dignity and self-respect. It violates their right to live without violence, prevents them from succeeding in so many ways, and puts true gender equality out of reach in this country.

●(1835)

[English]

This is why budget 2016 contained a number of measures that underscore the federal government's commitment to reducing and preventing gender-based violence. This includes \$89.9 million over two years, beginning this year, for the construction and renovation of shelters and transition houses for victims of family violence. This investment is expected to support the construction or renovation of over 3,000 shelter spaces over the next two years. We have also allocated \$10.4 million over three years to support the construction of new shelters in first nations communities. Budget 2016 also provides \$33.6 million over five years, and \$8.3 million ongoing funding to better support shelters that serve victims of family violence living in first nations communities.

[Translation]

Our government is also taking other steps to combat gender-based violence in Canada. For example, we launched a national inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women and girls. The inquiry will examine and report on the systemic causes behind the violence that indigenous women and girls experience and their greater vulnerability to violence by looking for patterns and underlying factors that explain why higher levels of violence occur.

These measures are in addition to a suite of investments that will help women, including funding for shelters that offer women fleeing violence a way out.

[English]

We also know that gender-based violence disproportionately affects LGBTQI2S, namely the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, and two-spirit community, and gender non-conforming people, as well as other vulnerable groups, including indigenous women and girls.

[Translation]

That is why the Minister of Status of Women is meeting with experts, activists, service providers, victims of violence, and members of civil society. I am delighted to inform the hon. member that this includes the RCMP and other police services, educators, and women's shelters.

[English]

Throughout the summer, both the minister and I met with the RCMP and law enforcement officers regarding the question of gender-based violence. As well, the minister established an advisory council to inform the development of a comprehensive federal strategy against gender-based violence. This outreach considered a wide range of perspectives, from young women, women and girls with disabilities, indigenous women and girls, LGBTQI2S, and gender non-conforming people, as well as men and boys, working to end gender-based violence.

Adjournment Proceedings

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson: Madam Speaker, I commend the parliamentary secretary and minister for all the work that is listed.

None of that addresses the question I asked last month and just now. Why is the government not implementing, as the United Nations said it should do by last year, and reiterated in this Friday's report, a national action plan to end violence against women?

Why is it choosing the much narrower strategy, bearing in mind that the strategy will only apply at the federal level? I will say again that in section 24 of Friday's report by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the United Nations says it is concerned about the lack of a national action plan.

I ask that the parliamentary secretary explain why the government does not think it needs to follow the United Nations' advice.

Ms. Anju Dhillon: Madam Speaker, preliminary findings are emerging from this engagement with Canadians in recent months.

First and foremost, we have heard there is a need for future actions tailored to the unique needs and experiences of diverse populations in Canada. We heard there is a need for more gender and culturally sensitive training for service providers. More research is needed into what works to prevent and address gender-based violence. Stakeholders have also called for improved data on the nature and extent of gender-based violence, including against those who are most vulnerable.

• (1840)

[*Translation*]

This feedback from Canadians will serve to better inform the development of the federal strategy. Finally, our federal strategy against gender-based violence will also build on the important work already under way in the provinces and territories to address gender-based violence.

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach (Salaberry—Suroît, NDP): Madam Speaker, I have been campaigning for action on the *Kathryn Spirit* for over five years now. This includes over 20 letters to various ministers involved and hundreds of hours of meetings with ministers, government officials, local elected representatives, environmental groups, and the general public. That is to say nothing of the tens of thousands of pieces of mail sent to explain the situation because the federal government did not want to give any updates, especially when the Conservatives were in power.

Thousands of Canadians have also mobilized, including the more than 3,600 people who signed the petition. Hundreds of others have written to me or to the minister to get information, including local journalists and members of the Beauharnois municipal council. In addition, more than 50 volunteers have worked on this file over the past few years. I would like to thank them all for their dedication.

We welcomed the announcement made almost two weeks ago by the Minister of Transport regarding work that is supposed to begin on the *Kathryn Spirit*, and we welcome it still. However, a number of questions remain following his intervention, and I hope the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard will be able to help the people of

Salaberry—Suroît and the surrounding area better understand the situation.

First, the minister announced that Groupe St-Pierre was awarded the contract to build a barrier around the wreck. In order to justify that choice, the Minister of Transport told me that urgent action was needed. That is true. We have been asking that something be done about the wreck for over five years because a disaster could occur at any time and one almost did this summer.

In April, a Transport Canada inspector estimated that the *Kathryn Spirit* contained close to 7,000 tonnes of contaminated water. In May, I learned from documents that I was able to obtain under the Access to Information Act that one of the main mooring lines at the front of the wreck was in poor repair. It was the subject of many emails from public servants who requested a swift intervention.

It is lucky that the mooring line was repaired before the wreck began to list dangerously in June. In other words, residents of Beauharnois were extremely lucky, and the Coast Guard then made the necessary repairs to stabilize the wreck. I am very grateful to them.

In financial terms, the government has already spent nearly \$4 million to stabilize the *Kathryn Spirit* over the years, and it awarded a \$7.9-million contract, nearly \$8 million, to the company that caused the problem in the first place. What is more, Excavation René St-Pierre, a subsidiary of Groupe St-Pierre, was fined \$10,000 by the Quebec department of environment for failing to comply with environmental regulations at its quarry in the Quebec City region. The public therefore has reason to be concerned.

The questions that I want to ask are simple. Why did the government choose this company, which, at the time, did not have the expertise to do the work? The company was unable to obtain a certificate of authorization from the provincial environment department to move forward.

Was the company chosen simply because it is located nearby or because it has built this type of structure in the water before?

Can the government assure me that the company now has the necessary expertise and will comply with all of the environmental regulations while doing the work this winter and in the future?

I would remind the House that the *Kathryn Spirit* is lying in a drinking water reservoir in Beauharnois, in Lac Saint-Louis. That is what people are worried about and why they are asking the government questions. I hope that the government will be transparent and explain to us the criteria for selecting Groupe St-Pierre to build the cofferdam.

Mr. Serge Cormier (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for Salaberry—Suroît for her questions. I will give her a brief update on the *Kathryn Spirit* situation.

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On November 7, our government announced the oceans protection plan, which includes a comprehensive strategy to deal with derelict and abandoned vessels shipwrecked in Canadian waters. In future, this will certainly reduce the risk of situations like that of the *Kathryn Spirit* from happening again.

In addition to that commitment, I am pleased to say that the Government of Canada is taking the necessary measures effective immediately to start the permanent removal of the *Kathryn Spirit* from Lac Saint-Louis, which is part of the St. Lawrence seaway. As we all know, this ship has been moored on the shores of the lake since 2011. In 2012, the ship was sold to a Mexican company that planned to tow it to Mexico and dismantle it there. Unfortunately, the company declared bankruptcy in fall 2015 and it announced that it was abandoning the ship.

In January 2016, a routine inspection uncovered structural problems with the ship, which would pose major challenges if the ship were to be towed to another location.

On November 10, my colleague, the Minister of Transport, on behalf of the Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, announced the first phase of the permanent removal of the *Kathryn Spirit* from the shores of Beauharnois. This phase is the result of our ongoing collaboration with the community and the provincial government and is based on a plan that was recommended and approved by all parties.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my colleagues from Châteauguay—Lacolle and Vaudreuil—Soulanges for their work on this file.

Groupe Saint-Pierre will begin the work to secure the *Kathryn Spirit* in late December. It will build a protective embankment around the ship to isolate it from the marine environment.

I can assure residents of Beauharnois and all interested parties that Groupe Saint-Pierre has the requisite experience and expertise to carry out this work.

This is the first phase of the work that will address the concerns raised by the community for many years. We are convinced that past efforts and the construction of the embankment around the vessel will properly secure it for the winter until dismantlement can begin. This crucial phase will also prevent further damage to the vessel's structure by the movement of ice during the winter.

Plans and funding for the next phases have been finalized, with work expected to begin in spring 2017. The Canadian Coast Guard and Transport Canada will continue to keep the community of Beauharnois and all parties participating in the project updated as work progresses.

The Government of Canada recognizes the risks that abandoned, derelict and wrecked vessels pose to safe navigation, the marine environment, public health and local economies. This is why we announced the oceans protection plan. This comprehensive plan improves marine safety and responsible shipping, protects Canada's marine environment, and creates stronger partnerships with indigenous and coastal communities. It also focuses on prevention and removal, including a robust, polluter-pay approach for future vessel clean-up.

I would like to thank the Canadian Coast Guard, Transport Canada, and our partners for their work in dealing with the problem of the *Kathryn Spirit* on the shores of Lac Saint-Louis in the municipality of Beauharnois.

I would also like to thank the Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard for moving this file forward. We have taken the lead in dealing with the *Kathryn Spirit*, and we will keep working on it until the vessel is removed from the shores of Beauharnois.

• (1845)

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach: Madam Speaker, I just heard the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard admit that Groupe Saint-Pierre does indeed have the expertise to build a dike around the *Kathryn Spirit*.

However, I find it curious that five years ago, the same company had to stop dismantling work because it did not have the required expertise or certificate of authorization.

Based on what criteria does that company now have the required expertise? Has it completed other work in other waterways? I am asking so that I can inform local residents that the necessary expertise has been acquired and that the company can go ahead with an \$8-million contract paid for by taxpayers. It is really important that the Liberals tell us.

Regarding the dismantling of the ship, what will happen after the barrier is built, and when will public tenders be issued?

Mr. Serge Cormier: Madam Speaker, I can assure the member for Salaberry—Suroît and Canadians that Groupe Saint-Pierre has the expertise to do the job. As I have already said, this is a first step.

The Minister of Transport announced the first phase, which is the result of a plan approved by all parties. The Groupe Saint-Pierre firm will begin work to secure the *Kathryn Spirit* and then build a protective dike around the ship.

The government will then launch a competitive process to go ahead with the dismantling of the ship in the spring. The dismantling of the *Kathryn Spirit* will happen in due course. The process is moving along nicely.

We are very grateful to all parties that took part in the process. This work has taken some time, but we are well on our way to finally getting the *Kathryn Spirit* off the shores of Beauharnois.

• (1850)

[English]

IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Madam Speaker, one thing in which we can all take pride is the fact that Canadians have overwhelmingly shown their generosity and humanity in their response to the Syrian refugee crisis. Scores of Canadians responded to the call to provide support to Syrian refugees. They have done so in numerous ways, not the least of which was to be involved as private sponsors.

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Since this national project began, we have heard from scores of private sponsor groups who are frustrated in their efforts as they still are awaiting their family to arrive in Canada. In some cases, private sponsors had already rented apartments for their families and yet no family has arrived.

The minister is fond of characterizing this situation as a great problem to have. Let me say this. For the sponsoring families, this problem is aggravating and upsetting. They responded with genuine care for the families they are sponsoring, and when it appeared that the government was meeting the numbers it had targeted, thereby meeting the political agenda, it began to withdraw staff in processing the applications.

Left out in the cold are numerous anxious private sponsors and Syrian refugee families who are getting more desperate and losing hope as they wait.

In my own community, the Or Shalom Synagogue has stepped up along with several other groups from the United Church on the north shore in Vancouver. They have sponsored close to 100 Kurdish Syrian refugees. They submitted their applications back in February and they have been waiting for their families to arrive since then.

Even when the criminal record check is completed for these families, they cannot get into either country for an interview. The groups involved have proposed three possible options to address the stalled applications, one of which involved the authorization of representatives from the International Organization for Migration or the United Nations, who are already in the area, to process the applications.

During the lunch with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, I took the opportunity to inquire about the United Nations' capacity to help address these backlogs. I was advised that they could do it, and all they need was for the Canadian government to authorize them to do so.

I promptly brought this to the minister's attention. Initially the minister thought it was a good idea to authorize the UNHCR to help with the process, as it is already on the ground there. In the end, he has refused to act on this suggestion, even though we learned at committee from the representative from the UNHCR that, based on international best practices, Canada can waive this additional level of screening and bring people to Canada following UNHCR screening. The delays continue.

Just last week, I made an inquiry on behalf of the sponsoring group about their family in northern Iraq, and here is what transpired. My office contacted the IRCC's members hotline and the hotline was unable to provide me with any concrete information, and did not seem to understand what was happening with the file at all. I was informed they would get back to me within 10 days.

One of the sponsored families, currently in a refugee camp in Dohuk, northern Iraq, has a child who has needed heart surgery since he was one year old. Currently, the family members do not have a roof over their heads in the refugee camp. The elements are making the young child's condition worse. My office then contacted the minister's office for an update. We were informed that the family had been approved on February 19 and that everything was on schedule.

We were told that "on schedule" meant 19 months in processing time for this family, and 19 months after February is September 2018.

I was under the impression that all approved applications prior to March 31 would be processed and the families would arrive by the end of 2016 or early 2017. This timeline was reaffirmed last night during the briefing with the minister and his department officials; yet an inquiry to the minister's office contradicted the information that was offered by the deputy minister at the minister's briefing session.

To say that I am seriously concerned is an understatement. This cannot continue. Families are anxious. Let us get on with it.

• (1855)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Anju Dhillon (Parliamentary Secretary for Status of Women, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for the question. Canada is a major contributor to the international efforts to address safety concerns in the Middle East. Our country is providing shelter to more than 25,000 of the most vulnerable refugees who have been displaced by the conflicts in Syria and Iraq.

The government-assisted refugee program and the blended visa office-referred program provide protection by resettling vulnerable refugees referred by the United Nations Refugee Agency.

The private sponsorship of refugees program is an important complement to these programs because it allows ordinary Canadians acting as private sponsors to recommend refugees for resettlement.

Although the UNHCR and private sponsors represent key partners in the resettlement efforts in Canada, at the end of the day, it is a Canadian visa officer who has to decide whether or not to grant someone a permanent resident visa. This authority cannot be given to a third party.

It is important to know that in order to be resettled as refugees in Canada, the individuals have to be outside their country of origin.

I would like to say that officials of Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada process resettlement applications of Syrian refugees in Iraq in the same way as all other resettlement applications by Syrian refugees.

With respect to our ability to process and protect refugees, including those from Syria and Iraq, I believe that our successful resettlement of 25,000 Syrians in just over three months clearly demonstrates the government's ability and determination to make a difference.

The Government of Canada has honoured its 2009 commitment to resettle 23,000 Iraqi refugees by 2015. We are proud of these efforts and we are determined to continue working with refugees from that region and other parts of the world.

I would like to point out that the Damascus visa office was closed in January 2012, and that its services were transferred to the nearby Amman, Ankara, and Beirut visa offices, to which additional resources have been deployed to facilitate the transfer of services.

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In this context, the government's ability to process asylum claims in Iraq is very limited given the violence in the region. This explains why our efforts to resettle Syrian refugees have focused on Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey.

The instability in Iraq makes it difficult to get access to vulnerable people in order to identify, select, and interview them, not to mention help them leave the country, while ensuring the safety of our immigration officers, refugees, and other vulnerable groups.

Nevertheless, the government is working on a plan to deal with the cases of Syrian refugees in northern Iraq through its resettlement programs. The government is working with its international partners to organize interviews in person or via video conference, when available. That is all the information we have at this time.

Once again, I thank the member for her question on this important topic, and I commend her for the interest she shares with the government regarding the need to provide refugees with protection in a timely manner.

[*English*]

Ms. Jenny Kwan: Madam Speaker, the fact is that other countries are managing to process without security concerns. That is the international best practices offered by the UNHCR. In addition to the many Syrians, Iraqis, and Kurds there, northern Iraq is also where many of the Yazidi population has fled. The UNHCR has already processed many of these people and it is the additional level of Canadian screening that has led to severe delays.

Ms. Chantal Desloges stated at committee:

Everyone knows they're refugees. They're prima facie refugees. They really only need to pass their security and medical screening. Why are we interviewing every single one of them? Not only does it create backlogs but it also creates a situation where it's difficult to send Canadian visa officers into these various areas without a risk to their security.

Dr. Martin Mark, director of the Office For Refugees of the Archdiocese of Toronto, stated quite clearly to committee members that "protection delayed means protection denied". It is time to get on with it.

● (1900)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Anju Dhillon: Madam Speaker, as I mentioned earlier, Canada relies on the UNHCR and other partners to select refugees for resettlement in Canada. Although these partners can help us, the ultimate decision-making authority is held by Canada's immigration officers and cannot be delegated to a third party.

That being said, we are working on a plan to deal with the cases of Syrian refugees in northern Iraq. That includes working with our international partners to conduct interviews in person or via video conference, when available.

That is all the information we have at this time.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 7:01 p.m.)

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