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(HANSARD)

Tuesday, September 20, 2016

Speaker: The Honourable Geoff Regan

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, September 20, 2016

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayer

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1010)
[English]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to table today, in both official languages, “Our Security, Our Rights: National Security Green Paper, 2016”.

This green paper, as well as an associated background document, have been prepared on 10 key national security issues in support of the national security consultations I was pleased to advance this summer, along with the Minister of Justice. These documents are not meant as a statement of government policy. Rather, they are intended to stimulate discussion and debate. The broad-based consultations give Canadians an unprecedented opportunity to provide their views about how best to protect our national security and our rights and freedoms. I encourage all hon. members to participate actively and constructively in this process.

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INTERPARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS

Mr. Scott Simms (Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame, 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 Parliamentary Delegation of the Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association respecting its participation at the 12th Conference of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region, held in Ulan-Ude, Russia, June 14 to 16.

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INCOME TAX ACT

Hon. Andrew Leslie (Orléans, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if you seek it, I believe you will find consent for the following motion:

That, notwithstanding any Standing Order or usual practice of the house, the recorded division on the third reading of Bill C-2, An Act to amend the Income Tax Act, deferred to the expiry of Government Orders later this day be deferred until the expiry of Oral Questions today.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

* * *

PETITIONS

PALLIATIVE CARE

Mr. Nick Whalen (St. John's East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour today, pursuant to Standing Order 36, to present a petition brought forward by members of my constituency to identify hospice palliative care as a defined medical service covered under the Canada Health Act so that provincial and territorial governments will be entitled to funding under the Canada health transfer system.

In addition to this petition, properly tabled, my constituents have also prepared a petition that did not include the necessary address to the House and the other necessary addresses. I would just like to remind all Canadians that if they intend to present a petition before the House of Commons to do so under the form of Standing Order 36.

The Speaker: I thank the hon. member for making this point for our viewers.

DAIRY PRODUCTS

Mr. Larry Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure today to present my very first e-petition.

Pursuant to Standing Order 36, the attached electronic petition is certified. It is numbered e-289 and has been signed by 5,116 Canadians. I duly present it in the House right now.

OIL AND GAS PIPELINES

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure to present e-petition 216.

Privilege

The whole Canadian economy relies on oil and gas exploration, extraction, transport, upgrading, refining, and processing. The industry is Canada's largest private-sector investor and contributes \$17 billion annually to government programs and services across the country. The livelihoods of hundreds of thousands of Canadians rely on the oil and gas sector directly and indirectly, and 110,000 Canadians have lost their jobs in the energy sector.

Canada is a world leader in the responsible development of energy resources, but a lack of pipelines to new markets means that Canadian producers often receive far less than market rates for their oil. Jobs depend on new and expanded pipeline infrastructure.

Canadians expect their government to champion the best interests of all of Canada, so I stand with the nearly 35,000 people who signed this e-petition calling on the Government of Canada to vocally defend Canadian oil and gas pipelines and to make the building of oil, gas, and diluted bitumen pipelines across Canada to tidewater and to the United States a national priority.

JUSTICE

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to present two petitions.

The first petition is in support of Cassie and Molly's law. These signatures represent tens of thousands that have already been presented in the House, people from of all walks of life.

I want to congratulate my colleague from Yorkton—Melville and the excellent work she has done on the bill.

This is in support of preborn children in the context where the mother wishes to carry the child to term and should have the right to do so to protect it.

●(1015)

HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Speaker, the second petition is about human rights in China, specifically drawing the attention of members of the House to the situation affecting Falun Gong practitioners, and major issues of religious freedom affecting people in China from a variety of faith groups.

This petition, in particular, highlights the practice of forced organ harvesting that happens in China. It encourages members of the House to take this issue very seriously and to hold China accountable for these abuses of human rights that have happened and continue to happen.

PALLIATIVE CARE

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is with pleasure that I rise today to table a petition signed by many of my constituents. It deals with the very important issue of hospice palliative care. They are asking members of Parliament to specifically identify hospice palliative care as a defined medical service covered under the Canada Health Act, recognizing the importance of palliative care to all Canadians.

JUSTICE

Mrs. Cathay Wagantall (Yorkton—Melville, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to stand today to present two more petitions in support of Cassie and Molly's law. These signatures are representative of tens of thousands that have already been presented to the House and represent Canadians of all walks of life, affirmed by a Nanos poll with 97% of respondents identifying as pro-choice, and of those pro-choice individuals, 52% to 73% agreeing that there is a need for a law to protect pregnant women and their preborn children.

* * *

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

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

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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PRIVILEGE

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, yesterday I indicated that I would return to the House to provide further comment on the question of privilege raised with reference to the Minister of Natural Resources. Therefore, I would like to make a short supplementary intervention on the question of privilege concerning the government response to Order Paper question 152.

Specifically, I would like to address the allegations on the executive travel of the Minister of Natural Resources. The crux of question 152 is whether a minister used a rented limousine while on official business. The Minister of Natural Resources responded:

Insofar as Natural Resources Canada is concerned, the Minister of Natural Resources did not use rented limousines while on official business.

The answer provided by the Minister of Natural Resources not only directly answers the question but does so accurately. Let me explain.

The Department of Natural Resources Canada rented two sedans and shuttle buses for members of an official delegation to the North American energy ministers meeting. While members of the delegation were transported in sedans, the minister used the shuttle bus for transportation. At no time did the minister use a rented limousine while on official business.

As I stated yesterday in my intervention on this matter, the hon. member opposite is simply looking to initiate a debate on question 152. I will remind the House that responses to Order Paper questions are not to be used as an opportunity for debate. This is a dispute about the facts. A disagreement about the content of a response is merely that: a disagreement about facts and not a question of privilege.

Speaker Fraser, in his May 15, 1991 ruling, stated:

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The difficulty that is always with the Chair in these cases is that there are often very great differences of interpretation on the answers given. It is not a question of privilege; it is a question of disagreement over certain facts and answers that were given.

Again, I submit that the matter the member has raised is not a question of privilege but rather is a dispute about the facts.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I will take the information under advisement, and the Chair will get back to the House of Commons with its decision.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

FOOD AND DRUGS ACT

The House resumed from September 19 consideration of the motion that Bill C-13, an act to amend the Food and Drugs Act, the Hazardous Products Act, the Radiation Emitting Devices Act, the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999, the Pest Control Products Act and the Canada Consumer Product Safety Act and to make related amendments to another Act, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The hon. member for Windsor West has eight minutes remaining on debate. Questions and comments.

• (1020)

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Speaker, I was here last night and listened to the member's interesting speech about the trade issue.

In this debate, we have been covering a number of different aspects of the trade discussion. I want to ask the member about the issue of consultation on the TPP. One of the criticisms we have heard from the NDP is that this discussion supposedly happened in secret.

I have with me a list of more than 150 different stakeholders who were directly engaged in the conversation throughout the negotiating process. They signed non-disclosure agreements and were able to be part of the discussion. The member knows that.

The reality is that when there are international trade negotiations, those negotiations cannot be held in public because of commercially sensitive information that is discussed. However, there were many different stakeholders involved throughout the process.

Does the member recognize that reality and that bringing many different key Canadian stakeholders into the discussion and doing so in a way that respects the reality of commercial sensitivities is an appropriate way to conduct negotiations?

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): Madam Speaker, I actually did not raise the TPP during my speech, but I would be happy to answer.

The concerns the NDP members have raised, and they are concerns brought to us by many stakeholders, not just here in Canada but at the beginning of the discussions on the TPP, were that they were done in private and created an agreement that, basically, we cannot amend right now.

Let us imagine that someone went to buy an automobile—my personal preference, in terms of my riding, would be a Pacifica—and in trying to negotiate the sale was given a contract, with the only option being to sign that contract.

Later on, when there were discussions and hearings, as we are having, we heard concerns that people were not consulted during the creation and have no avenue to deal with the issue.

I would continue to at least look at some of the benefits and some of the challenges we have. On Bill C-13, I have talked a lot about organized crime and the exposure of our ports, with goods and services coming into Canada, which would expand, as would the problems we have with organized crime.

Interestingly, we are going to have a chance in this chamber very soon to deal with a bill on organized crime. It is my private member's bill, Bill C-221, which is up for a vote on Wednesday. That bill alone will end a \$10-billion annual benefit, in cash, for organized crime in Canada alone, and \$4 billion in Canadian money that goes offshore.

We can affect things right here, right now. This bill, C-13, will have further challenges if we want to tackle organized crime.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, Bill C-13 is about a meeting that took place among the World Trade Organization members. Some 160-plus countries came together, recognizing that there was a need to facilitate an agreement to ensure that the world would be better off in terms of trade.

Two-thirds of those countries need to approve the agreement, signed in December 2013, to ultimately implement it. Since June, just over 80 countries have ratified it.

Bill C-13 is about ratification by Canada so that we accept what is being proposed. My understanding is that the New Democrats will be supporting Bill C-13 going to committee.

Is the member aware of any amendments he might want to share with the House that he believes should be brought forward at the committee stage?

Mr. Brian Masse: Madam Speaker, yes, there will be amendments, and there will also be concerns raised with regard to the ports, where the volume of traffic coming into the ports is only checked at 4%. I submitted evidence yesterday, including from the minister's organization, the Public Safety Canada report that talked about how only 4% of containers that come into Canada are checked for contraband or illegal goods and how organized crime uses this as the number one element to get goods into Canada.

Interestingly enough, what was in the government report was the fact that contraband and illegal goods were mixed together, and this is something we will have to deal with. To summarize, we are going to need the proper resources. Instead of the government neglecting and cutting Canada Border Services Agency positions, we need to invest in it to ensure safety for CBSA personnel and for our country.

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•(1025)

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Madam Speaker, Bill C-13 would amend several pieces of legislation, and during yesterday's debate the member for Windsor West raised a series of points to consider related to trade and organized crime. Could he expand on these concerns?

Mr. Brian Masse: Madam Speaker, I have raised this extensively because Bill C-13 would amend several pieces of legislation that deal with everything from poisons, to hazardous material, to other potential contraband coming into Canada. Organized crime uses this as a serious plank for operations, and that is why I spoke earlier about my private member's bill that will be up for a vote on Wednesday to send it to committee. It deals with single event sports betting in Canada, which amounts to \$10 billion annually that goes to organized crime base, minimum. Last time, Joe Comartin's bill passed to the Senate, and since then there has been about \$50 billion of estimated gaming revenue going to organized crime, with no public good.

There is \$4 billion that goes offshore for other types of practices as well, and people are asking for regulation. This chamber will have a chance on Wednesday to strike first and fast at organized crime's number one tool, and I am hoping Bill C-13 could be the second tool for that issue.

Mr. Chris Bittle (St. Catharines, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the hon. member for Thunder Bay—Rainy River.

I would like to thank my hon. friend from Windsor for all his work on Bill C-221. It is an excellent proposal and I look forward to voting on it on Wednesday.

Today, I am pleased to have the opportunity to talk about the organization that made the agreement on trade facilitation, known as the TFA, happen: the World Trade Organization.

The TFA is the first multilateral agreement concluded since the creation of the WTO over 20 years ago and is a notable success for both the organization and the multilateral trading system.

As an export-driven economy, one in five Canadian jobs depends upon exports and over 40,000 Canadians companies abroad. The WTO has played an important role in helping to liberalize trade, and trade liberalization remains vital to Canada's future.

For these reasons, Canada has been a key player in the development of robust international trade rules since the 1947 beginnings of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, which later became the WTO.

The WTO remains a cornerstone of Canada's trade and investment policy and serves as a backstop against protectionism. The continued enhancement of global trade rules benefits Canada and the international community as a whole.

The WTO provides an important and effective forum for settling trade disputes, which has dealt with 500 cases in just over 20 years.

Today, 98% of global trade takes place under the WTO rule book, and the WTO's 164 members actively monitor each other's trade measures against those rules in order to improve transparency and avoid protectionism.

It is a system that continues to deliver results, as evidenced by decisions in Canada's challenge of the U.S. COOL rules; that is, country of original labelling.

The WTO delivers results in other areas too, such as the Nairobi package announced at the 10th WTO ministerial meeting in Nairobi, Kenya, late last year, which included discussions on issues important to developing and least-developed countries, including the elimination of trade-distorting export subsidies and conclusion on the expanded Information Technology Agreement, the ITA.

Once implemented, the ITA will eliminate tariffs on certain information technology products that represent around 10% of global trade, which is about \$1.3 trillion annually.

The Minister of International Trade participated in the 2015 ministerial conference, where she talked about the importance of inclusive growth and shared prosperity for both developed and developing countries. We want trade and opening up of markets to help raise standards of living, empower women, and protect the environment.

The WTO better helps to integrate developing countries into a global trading system and ensures that they derive real, tangible benefits from it. The WTO also provides the technical assistance required to help improve their trading capacities.

The TFA, a multilateral undertaking, was successful in large part due to the flexibility it allows in the way new commitments are taken on, which has proven to be a crucial ingredient for the WTO's recent successes. It allows developing WTO members to implement commitments in ways commensurate with their capacity.

Under the TFA, developing members are able to divide commitments into those they can implement immediately, those for which they will require extra time, and those requiring both additional time and technical assistance. Developed economies are to facilitate the provisions of technical assistance.

Canada is well positioned to assist developing WTO members in implementing the TFA's provisions and has been refocusing development programming to promote trade facilitation reforms.

Key examples of our efforts include contributions to the World Bank's trade facilitation support program and the new Global Alliance for Trade Facilitation.

The World Bank's trade facilitation support program is a multi-donor program that helps developing countries implement trade facilitation reforms in a manner consistent with the World Trade Organization's TFA. Canada donated \$2 million to this worthwhile initiative.

The Global Alliance for Trade Facilitation, launched in December 2015, is an innovative public-private platform to ensure effective trade facilitation reforms in developing countries measured by real-world business metrics.

The key innovation of the alliance is to leverage private expertise to identify, validate, and support practical reforms that simplify customs procedures, reduce border wait times, and reduce trade costs—to which Canada contributed \$10 million, as a founding donor.

• (1030)

The TFA has attracted widespread support from Canadian and international stakeholders, including the Canadian Council of Chief Executives, the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters, and a large number of agriculture and agri-food business associations.

The TFA will only enter into force once two-thirds of WTO members have ratified the agreement. Some 92 members have already ratified the TFA. This includes our major trading partners—the United States, the European Union, China, and Japan—and Canada is expected to follow suit expeditiously. An additional 18 ratifications are required for the TFA to enter into force.

The statutory amendments contained in Bill C-13 are required to allow Canada to ratify this agreement. These amendments are designed to protect the health and safety of Canadian consumers and workers, as well as the environment, in the event that goods in transit are diverted into the Canadian market, and to clarify practices related to the treatment of rejected goods.

Canada is committed to making the world more prosperous and helping the poorest and most vulnerable reap the poverty-reduction benefits of economic growth. Canada can do its part by ratifying the TFA as quickly as possible.

I urge all hon. members to support the legislative amendments contained in Bill C-13 that will enable Canada to do our part to bring this agreement into force.

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Speaker, I thank my friend from St. Catharines for his speech. We have better wine in Sherwood Park, but I hope he passed a good summer all the same.

As I have been asking other Liberal members, I want to ask the member this as I would like to hear his perspective. Does he support the trans-Pacific partnership? It has been a year. I think he probably has some opinion on it. If he is not ready to say, when does he expect we will know the government's opinion? Does he think we will have to wait until after the Liberals see what the Americans are doing, or does he think his government will be prepared to lead before that?

Mr. Chris Bittle: Madam Speaker, I would first like to address the comment about better wine. Those are fighting words.

Now I will address his question on the trans-Pacific partnership. The Government of Canada is engaging Canadians from coast to coast to coast. We are maintaining an open mind. I am as well.

I do have concerns. I have heard from constituents in St. Catharines. Many of my constituents are auto workers, and there are some concerns related to that. However, I am confident that my colleagues on the international trade committee and my colleagues in

Government Orders

the Government of Canada are working hard and listening to all stakeholders. I am keeping an open mind and I look forward to their reports.

• (1035)

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): Madam Speaker, certainly some members know about better “winning” than others.

It is clear that the member gave a good speech today. I am interested in Bill C-13 going to committee. I do want to highlight this in light of some of the broader bills over the last number of years that have avoided committee.

The member for St. Catharines knows very well the importance of the auto sector. I would like to congratulate Unifor for reaching a tentative agreement with General Motors this morning, which will now go to an actual ratification vote.

Perhaps the member can highlight the importance of the automotive sector for his region, the importance of those jobs, and especially how committee can play a role to look at the potential issues we have to deal with, related to Bill C-13 and making sure the auto sector is thriving for this country.

Mr. Chris Bittle: Madam Speaker, St. Catharines' largest private employer is General Motors, which currently produces engines for export. It has been a long-standing relationship. Therefore, St. Catharines understands the importance of an export-based economy.

I would like to thank the hon. member for raising the point. The negotiation between General Motors and Unifor was exceptional news to wake up to this morning. It is a tentative agreement, which does need to be ratified by the members of Unifor. However, it shows General Motors' commitment to Canada. It shows that it hears what the government is saying with respect to investing in Canada and that Canada is open for business.

With respect to the member's point about a committee studying that, I look forward to the committee's review of this, and hearing the recommendations, if any, with respect to ways of improving or helping the automotive sector, as it is important to both Niagara and Windsor.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, there is a new and different attitude toward the whole idea of trade and its importance. We are debating Bill C-13 today, and over the summer we reached a wonderful trade agreement with Ukraine. We have a very proactive government.

Would the member want to provide some further comment on the trade issue?

Mr. Chris Bittle: Madam Speaker, our government understands the importance of trade. Recently in Niagara, General Electric has decided to build a brilliant new facility. This new factory is being built, which is incredible and has not been seen in Ontario in a while.

The government remains committed to trade, and Bill C-13 is part of that commitment.

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Mr. Don Rusnak (Thunder Bay—Rainy River, Lib.): Madam Speaker, our government strongly believes that trade can serve development objectives by fostering expanded economic opportunity, productivity, and growth in Canada and around the world. The high costs of international trade disproportionately affects developing nations and the least developed countries in particular. Our government is focusing on initiatives that can both support and sustain global growth and poverty reduction, including the ratification of the World Trade Organization's agreement on trade facilitation, known as the TFA.

The TFA would streamline the flow of goods across borders by cutting red tape. It would simplify the documentation required to clear goods at the border and streamline the procedures used by border agencies. All traders would benefit from faster, simpler, and more predictable trade at the border, which translates into lower trade costs. Governments would benefit from more efficient border procedures, fewer opportunities for corruption at the border, and increased revenue collection. Lowering trade costs can increase trade, contribute to a higher national income, and reduce poverty. Countries that do more to lower trade costs, for instance by improving logistics, tend to grow more rapidly.

Most economic gains from the TFA would flow to developing countries, as developed countries, including Canada, are already compliant with the vast majority of the TFA's provisions.

Another benefit of the TFA is that it supports economic diversification in the developing world. TFA implementation could enable developing countries to both expand the types of products exported and the new markets they reach. According to the World Bank, the number of new products exported by less developed countries could increase by up to 35%. Developing economies would require technical and capacity-building assistance to implement the TFA reforms and reap the resulting poverty reduction benefits.

The TFA would allow developing countries to implement the TFA based on their capabilities and to identify their needs for assistance. It also requires developed WTO members to provide the practical support necessary to meet them. In fact, the World Bank has found that trade facilitation projects have some of the biggest returns on investment among development efforts. According to the World Bank, reducing supply chain barriers and speeding up border administration could increase GDP six times faster than tariff elimination.

Canada is well positioned to provide this assistance, having provided nearly \$47 million in funding for trade facilitation assistance through a range of bilateral, regional, and multilateral programs from 2010 to 2015. For example, Canada is contributing \$12 million in trade facilitation assistance, about 10% of the project's total funding, to the trademark East Africa integrated border management initiative. This initiative will significantly reduce border delays and trade costs between East African Community members—Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, and South Sudan—by establishing a single customs territory and supporting improvements to border and custom management practices.

Prior to this endeavour, multiple customs declarations were required on both sides of each EAC border and clearance and

payment of goods could only be completed upon arrival at the destination. Clearing customs was a slow process. This trade facilitation initiative helps integrate customs procedures through automation and the establishment of a one-stop border post. Ports in the EAC now operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. As a result, average cargo clearance times have been reduced from three days to eight hours within the EAC.

● (1040)

Results like these have the potential to lift millions out of poverty. TFA implementation could replicate results like these elsewhere.

The TFA's potential will be fully shown when it enters into force. This will only occur once two-thirds of the WTO members have ratified it. To date, 92 of the required 110 WTO members have ratified this agreement. The legislative amendments contained in Bill C-13 would enable Canada to ratify the TFA to help bring it into effect as soon as possible.

To enable Canada to do its part in unlocking the benefits of this agreement, I strongly urge all members of the House to support Bill C-13.

● (1045)

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is interesting to hear my colleague speak a bit about economic development, and development in Africa specifically.

I want to ask my colleague for his perspective on the government's participation in the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank. The government has signalled that it is interested in putting millions of Canadian taxpayers' dollars into a Chinese-dominated infrastructure bank. Does he think it would be better to use those resources in concert with like-minded democratic allies to promote development and infrastructure in a way that reflects our values, including protection for basic human rights, for the environment, and these kinds of things? Does he think it is better for us to work to advance trade and development in concert with countries that share our values, or to do it in concert with countries who do not?

Mr. Don Rusnak: Madam Speaker, trade across the world and the trade our country has done over many decades has been done carefully. We like to trade. Canada is a trading nation. Trading with partners that we sometimes may disagree with gives us the ability to have those conversations, to engage with them rather than isolate them. It allows us to have a meaningful dialogue with countries that sometimes do not have the same values as us.

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[Translation]

Ms. Karine Trudel (Jonquière, NDP): Madam Speaker, this being my first speech in the House as the session begins, I would like to start by welcoming our pages, who are new to the job, on behalf of all my colleagues, whom I encourage to be patient.

I would also like to thank my colleague for his speech and ask him a question.

The trade facilitation agreement, the TFA, is good for small and medium-sized enterprises. The World Bank estimates that women own between 8 million and 10 million of the SMEs in emerging markets, or 31% to 38% of all SMEs in the market. However, the average growth rate of women-owned businesses is much lower than that of SMEs run by men.

Can my colleague tell us more about how the WTO will support implementation of the TFA in developing countries? Will that support specifically involve promoting and improving access to capital for women entrepreneurs in developing countries?

[English]

Mr. Don Rusnak: Madam Speaker, I am not sure of the exact question, but I believe the member asked if Canada is working with the WTO to help get more women and more disadvantaged groups to benefit from this agreement. I can assure the member that if that is the question, our government is working with our partners to make sure that we have more inclusive trading relationships, to make sure that disadvantaged groups such as women and indigenous groups are involved and benefit from these agreements. Our government is committed to that.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, could the member share his thoughts with the House on why this is an important piece of legislation? We have the World Trade Organization. This is a trade facilitation agreement that was signed in December 2013. From what I understand, this is the first time this organization has come forward with something like this, and we need to get a certain number of countries to ratify the agreement. The way to ratify it is for us to pass the legislation. It is important that this legislation passes, because it would give a vote of confidence to the World Trade Organization

Mr. Don Rusnak: Madam Speaker, as part of our commitment, it is extremely important to pass this legislation in order to facilitate all the good that will come out of this agreement.

In my speech I talked about helping developing countries and helping speed up trade processes. That is why the bill is so important. It would allow for quicker and more efficient trade, and that will trickle down to our partners.

• (1050)

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to speak to this important legislation. Before I do that, I will quickly join with the NDP member in welcoming this year's new pages and wishing them all the best. We thank them for their service to us in this chamber.

Bill C-13 is important, and it is a bright spot in a rather gloomy broader situation in terms of both the government's approach to trade and some of the challenges we see in the global discussion around

trade. We support Bill C-13. We see it as very much that bright spot, but I will discuss some of my concerns about the broader environment as well.

In spite of its desire to, it seems, reverse almost every good decision that the previous Conservative government made, this is one case in which the new government has fortunately chosen to carry forward something that was initially begun under our government, and in this case, we appreciate that is in fact moving forward.

The government has brought forward legislation which I think all parties will support, at least at this stage, on the trade facilitation agreement to implement that. This agreement deals with non-tariff barriers. Just by way of brief explanation perhaps for those who are watching, we could talk about formal trade barriers, prohibitions on trade, or tariff requirements that in order to trade in a country, we pay a certain tax. However, then there is also non-tariff barriers, cases where there is maybe a misalignment in regulations, certain policies which, perhaps not intending to stymie trade or at least not facially about trade, have the effect of making trade very difficult.

This trade facilitation agreement is about confronting those non-tariff barriers to trade, those rules and regulations where, because of disharmony in regulations perhaps between different countries, trade is not able to effectively happen.

This trade facilitation agreement was concluded in December 2013 at the WTO ministerial conference. It is the first multilateral trade agreement concluded since the creation of the WTO. Therefore, it is an important step insofar as many of the trade agreements that we have talked about recently, the bilateral trade agreements between two countries or perhaps the trade agreements between regional blocs. However, this is conceived on a much broader, truly multilateral basis and it is about a much greater share of the world stepping forward together. It is very positive that we are able to move forward on that multilateral basis in this respect. It provides for modernization and simplification of various customs and border procedures.

We know this trade deal will have a significant positive impact for the Canadian economy and for the global economy. The WTO estimates that the full implementation of this trade deal would boost merchandise exports by up to \$1 trillion, which is very significant opportunities for all WTO members, specifically providing substantial benefits for developing as well as developed countries, including benefits for least-developed countries. Even if not every country in the WTO fully implements this agreement, we still will see many of those same positive effects.

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We see particular benefits coming from Bill C-13 to small and medium-sized enterprises. We know that small businesses are the principal job creators in our economy. Especially for small businesses, these non-tariff barriers, the requirement to actually come to terms with and understand what may be discordant and complex regulations in different jurisdictions can be a real barrier to trade. In some cases it may be a much more significant barrier to trade than the more formal and identified trade barriers.

We are in a situation right now, and it is important as I get into talking about the context to recognize this, where there are many specific threats to small business coming from policies of the government. We saw a decision of the government in the budget, for example, not to follow through on an election promise to lower the small business tax break. An effective tax increase was imposed on small businesses which had been planning for that reduction.

• (1055)

At the same time, to many people's surprise, the government decided to eliminate the small business hiring credit. We have a government that talks about jobs, yet the most explicitly pro-jobs policy, a hiring credit for small business, was then eliminated as part of the budget. We also have the introduction of payroll taxes coming up with regard to the Liberals' proposed expansion of the CPP.

Therefore, if we look at these things together, it is specifically attacking jobs for small business, with the elimination of the hiring credit, the new proposed payroll tax, and the effective increase on small business taxes.

As I said, it is good to say that we have one bright spot in this rather dismal legislative agenda as far as it affects small business, which is the trade agreement that we have through trade facilitation. It is going to hopefully have a very positive impact for small businesses being able to access international markets.

We have talked more broadly as part of this debate already about the issue of a trade agenda. What was our government's trade agenda, and what is the current government trying to do on trade?

My friend for Winnipeg North talked about the government having an aggressive trade agenda. He cited as the example of this the fact that the Liberals had continued forward with the Canada-Ukraine free trade deal, which was in fact something that we all know was very much started under the previous government. Therefore, an aggressive trade agenda is continuing forward with one thing that the previous government was doing.

I want to acquaint my friends across the way with what an aggressive trade agenda actually looks like. These were the trade deals that were not just negotiated but brought into force under the previous Conservative government.

The Canada-Korea free trade deal, the most recent one, was brought into force on January 1, 2015. There were also the Canada-Honduras trade deal, the Canada-Panama trade deal, the Canada-Jordan trade deal, the Canada-Columbia trade deal, Canada-Peru trade deal, and the deal with the Canada-European Free Trade Association, not to be confused with the Canada-EU trade deal, but we signed a trade deal and brought it into force with the Canada-European Free Trade Association. These were all brought into force under the previous Conservative government. We also, of course,

negotiated the Canada-EU trade deal, and the Liberals are doing their best to screw that up. Hopefully it will succeed nonetheless. Of course, there are the negotiations of the Canada trans-Pacific partnership and trade deal.

We had various negotiations launched with a wide range of different countries: Costa Rica, Singapore, Morocco, Japan, India, the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Nicaragua, El Salvador, and with the Caribbean community. Many important trade deals were brought into force, negotiated, or for which current negotiations are going on.

Previously, before Stephen Harper took office, there was a limited set of trade deals. We had Canada-Chile, Canada-Israel, and Canada-U.S. Of course, we know that the Canada-Israel trade deal was updated under our government, and the Canada-U.S. was very successfully negotiated by the previous Conservative government under Brian Mulroney.

That is what an aggressive trade agenda actually looks like. It is telling that the Liberals talk about trade, they say they are supportive of trade, but we are not at all seeing strong efforts to expand Canada's international markets.

If we are able to bring into force trade deals with the EU and with the trans-Pacific partnership, we will have preferential trade access to countries representing over 60% of the world's GDP. That would be very significant for Canadian businesses of all sizes. Yet, we are not seeing action, we are not seeing leadership from the government. The Liberals would rather coast. They would rather wait and see, which is disappointing, because we know the benefits of trade and see the benefits of an aggressive trade agenda.

Again, Bill C-13 is a bright spot, but we are not seeing leadership when it comes to the trade file from the current government.

• (1100)

We are in a context where leadership on the trade file is very badly needed. We are seeing different kinds of threats to global trade. I would put those threats in three different categories. We are hearing the classic anti-trade arguments from two different kinds of sources. We are also hearing from what I would call the punters, the people who do not want to take a position on trade one way or the other and are therefore, rather than showing leadership, just continually punting it down the road.

Looking at the conversation happening in the midst of the American election, we are hearing a lot of conventional anti-trade arguments from both sides of the spectrum. What is striking, and I got these numbers from a *Globe and Mail* story, is that the discourse we are hearing in American politics does not reflect American public opinion when it comes to trade. Americans and Canadians understand the benefits of trade. They understand the benefits of our trading relationship and of broader trading relationships. Here are some numbers on that. According to Gallup, just 33% of Americans view trade as a threat. That is down from a peak of 52% during the financial crisis of 2008. Thirty-three per cent is a historic low when it comes to opposition to trade within that country.

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The Pew Research Center tracks opinions on trade and just under 40% of Americans have said that trade agreements are a bad thing. Therefore, it obviously leaves a strong majority of people on the other side of things. We have an opportunity to pursue trade and to talk about it if we have politicians throughout the world who are willing to show leadership in their defence of the idea of an open economy. That we can prosper together, not in opposition to each other, is important and an idea that needs to be defended by leaders across the globe.

We hear the opponents of trade talk about trade being about winners and losers. People might have heard a claim that we do not win anymore when it comes to trade, but this is a fundamental misunderstanding of what trade is all about. On Saturday, I took my daughter, Gianna, to a model train show and spent \$10 to get in. If I had this winner or loser view of economic interaction, I might ask who is winning, me or the model train show? That is obviously a ridiculous question. We are both winning. We are engaging in mutually beneficial economic exchange.

When I go to the grocery store, who is winning, me or the grocery store? Actually we are both winning. Trade is all about that. It is through free commercial exchange, businesses and individuals or different countries benefit together. Therefore, it is a mistake to think that trade is somehow about who is going to win and who is going to lose. It is about developing agreements that allow for collective prosperity.

On the other side of the anti-trade argument, we might hear those who talk about environmental and labour standards, and this is very important, but sometimes I feel that those who invoke these arguments are not actually looking at the trade deals in question. Modern trade deals, and especially the trans-Pacific partnership, are designed to protect the environment, labour rights, various kinds of human rights, and they are precisely about democratic countries, in the case of TPP, Canada, the U.S., Japan, Australia, New Zealand and other partners. Obviously, there are human rights concerns with certain countries that are part of TPP, but the structure of that deal creates an opportunity to set rules in trade that respect the environment, labour rights, and other human rights considerations.

We need to be discerning about how we approach these issues, but TPP was a deal championed by President Obama and by people across a range of different perspectives, whether they identified as progressives or perhaps with other kinds of labels. It is interesting to hear at the same time some in our politics invoking these other kinds of objections to TPP, whether it is environmental and labour standards or the discussion of winners and losers, without understanding what trade is all about and without actually appreciating what is in the deal and the real benefits it provides economically as well as when it comes to these various other considerations.

● (1105)

Those are the classic anti-trade arguments. It is critical for politicians of courage, for politicians who understand the value of the open economy, who understand that we can prosper together, not in opposition to each other, to stand up and defend the idea of the open economy.

We hear some of these classic anti-trade arguments from the NDP. From the government, it is just this constant desire to punt the trade

discussion. It is not leading on trade. It is not trying to move forward on new trade initiatives. It is half-heartedly continuing some of the things that the previous government did while wanting to punt the conversation on other issues, especially on the trans-Pacific partnership.

Frankly, we all know what is going on here. The government does not really want to take a strong position on TPP until it sees the way the winds are blowing in other countries. That has never been good enough for Canada in the past, just waiting to see what other countries are doing and then following the way the wind is blowing.

If we are going to be a legislature of conviction, if we believe in the importance of international openness and of the open economy, then Canada could take a stand and lead on it. It could say, in response to some of the rhetoric that we are hearing south of the border and elsewhere, that trade is important. It is not about winning or losing. It is about all of us profiting together. It is about all of us working together to improve our economic situation, as well as human rights.

The government's way of punting is to continually refer to consultation. Of course any kind of authentic consultation has an end point. One consults, gets the information, gathers and synthesizes the information, and then provides feedback and makes a decision. Ultimately, we are elected here to consult, to receive feedback, and then to make decisions.

The government is not actually doing that. It is using the veneer of consultation to avoid making a decision, to punt in the hope that somebody else will make a decision before it has to. The government is missing an opportunity to lead, and it will not even tell us what the plan is in terms of when it will make a decision. We have not heard any answers on that. It has been a year since the election and since TPP was initially negotiated. The government needs to be leading on the issue of the open economy, but frankly I do not have much of an expectation that is going to happen.

I want to say as well that there is a strategic consideration at play in these international trade deals. The government seems to be getting this strategic balance wrong. It is very important when it comes to trade, when it comes to international activity in general, that we be working in concert with like-minded allies. It is not that we do not talk to countries that perhaps have a different set of values than we do, that do not respect human rights. It is not that we do not talk to those countries, but that we work in particular with our allies to try to set rules, to try to set mechanisms in place that protect international human rights, that protect and advance our values.

That is what TPP, in large part, was all about. It was about those strategic considerations. It was about like-minded democratic countries, primarily, along with some others, working to set the rules of trade, so that intellectual property would be respected, so that human rights would be respected, and so that the environment would be respected.

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We have a government that is continually punting on TPP, yet is now talking about the possibility of a bilateral trade deal with China. It is hard to know how sincere it even is about that. What sense does it make to say no, or to at least avoid making a decision, when we have the opportunity to be working with our allies, and yet at the same time to be talking about prioritizing trade with a country that does not respect human rights, that does not share our values, and with whom there are significant concerns when it comes to things like respect for basic intellectual property?

There is a missed opportunity here to lead on trade in a way that reflects our values, that reflects our interests, and that also advances our economic situation. It is unfortunate that the government is not taking more of a cue from the previous government, in terms of what was a genuinely aggressive trade agenda.

I am encouraged by Bill C-13. I look forward to supporting it. As I have said, I do see this as a bright spot, but there are some significant overall challenges that we need to be confronting. We need to have a more aggressive trade agenda. We need to have a government that is willing to speak in favour of the open economy. I hope we will see some changes on that in the near future.

• (1110)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the member focused on some words that I used in terms of this being a government that has been aggressive on the trade file. That is, in fact, the case.

One could question some of the statements the member made in terms of accuracy. I was here during the debates on the Korea trade agreement, for example, and saw how the Harper government dragged its feet throughout that debate and sat waiting for edification, whereas other countries were already taking some action. Canada lost opportunities as a result of just how slow it was.

If we look at the bottom line of the trade balance, the member should be aware that when Harper took the reins of power and became the prime minister of Canada, we had a multi-billion dollar trade surplus. We are still paying the price of bad decision policies by the Conservative government. We have a multi-billion dollar deficit and that is one reason we have a minister out there negotiating and talking with the United States, trying to rectify the deal that was put together with the EU, and doing so much more on the trade file because we value our exports. This is because of the sloppy work of the former government.

Given that the Conservatives are supporting Bill C-13, does he not see the merit of using Bill C-13 as a good example of how we support our world organization of trade?

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Madam Speaker, I do not know if I will have time to correct all of the things the member said.

Apparently, the previous government was dragging its feet when it brought into force trade deals with Korea, Honduras, Panama, Jordan, Colombia, Peru, and the European free trade deal, when it negotiated agreements with the EU and the trans-Pacific partnership, and when it launched many other different negotiations. If that was dragging its feet, I do not know what one would say about the previous Liberal government and the fact that there were only three

trade deals in force before the Conservatives came into power, at least one of which was signed by a previous Conservative government. Those are the facts that are on the Global Affairs Canada website.

Specifically on the issue of trade exports, the basic economics of it are that trade deficits are exports over imports. We went through a global financial crisis when the Conservatives were in power, in which Canada was significantly less affected relative to many other countries. Obviously, during that period, Canadian consumption was not as negatively affected as consumption was in other countries. The implication of that is that Canadians were doing much better economically relative to other countries.

What we did not have and what Conservatives addressed by the end of their mandate was the fiscal deficit. A fiscal deficit, unlike a trade deficit, is something that has to be paid off. I think the member is trying to conflate the words in a way that is perhaps confusing. Understanding the difference between a trade deficit and a fiscal deficit, we have to be most concerned about a fiscal deficit, and the government is pushing ahead with a policy that creates a massive, totally unnecessary fiscal deficit, which is going to have very significant negative long-term economic implications.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Madam Speaker, it is amusing to see the Conservatives and the Liberals bickering about which party is the bigger champion of free trade.

Let us not forget that in both cases, it is all the same. When the Liberals are in power, they negotiate free trade agreements, and the same is true of the Conservatives. If you ask me, their bickering is pretty pointless.

Both parties have something else in common, which distinguishes them from the NDP: they do not seem to care much about the quality and content of those agreements. In the debate between those two parties, there is a lot more discussion about the number of trade agreements concluded and much less about the impact those agreements are having.

It is important to remember that we need to study the effects of free trade agreements. The repercussions must lead to a much more specific vision. For instance, there has been some talk of the human rights aspect and the vision for the economy. For an agreement like the TPP, neither of the parties conducted any studies to examine how it would affect our economy.

I wonder whether my colleague could share his thoughts on the importance of seeing free trade agreements as a contract that we, as parliamentarians, must examine carefully in order to analyze all the clauses and provisions. Of course that includes all the fine print, which is often overlooked.

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•(1115)

[English]

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Madam Speaker, I think the difference between the three main parties in the House is fairly clear. We have the NDP, which almost always opposes trade deals. We have our party, which generally supports international trade and the open economy, and we have a party in government that sort of blows in the wind on these issues. It certainly does not lead on them but sometimes continues with policies we brought forward.

The underlying philosophical statement that the member made is that we need to look at the content of the trade deals and we need to think about their impact on human rights and the environment and a range of issues. I completely agree with that. If we look at the trans-Pacific partnership in particular and many of the trade deals that we have signed, we do see these being borne out against the metric that the member put forward.

The office of the chief economist from Global Affairs Canada, whose website I have here, says very clearly that GDP gains expected from the TPP are \$4.3 billion, so we know that on an economic level.

On a human rights level, this is a trade deal championed by President Obama, rarely accused by our friends in the NDP of being an arch-conservative. He champions this very much as a progressive trade deal with protections for the environment and human rights, and really is about setting the rules of trade in a way that reflects the values of the democratic countries. It reflects the concerns of countries like the U.S., Canada, Japan, Australia, and New Zealand. This is the specific strategic benefit of moving forward with the trans-Pacific partnership. Yes, there are economic benefits, but it is also about finally being able to establish terms of trade that reflect our values when it comes to these other considerations.

I accept the test that the hon. member put forward. The many trade deals that we brought forward in government as well as the trans-Pacific partnership certainly live up to that standard.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, there were a couple of points in the member's conclusions where he made reference to understanding fiscal versus trade deficits. I would like to ask the member, very specifically, how it is that he can explain this to Canadians. When the former prime minister, Stephen Harper, took the office of prime minister, he had a multi-billion dollar surplus in both categories: a multi-billion dollar surplus in trade, and a multi-billion dollar surplus in finances. He turned out to be one of the worst prime ministers in accumulating over \$160 billion in additional debt. That same government created a multi-billion dollar manufacturing and exporting crisis by evaporating our surplus and turning it into a deficit. We are still paying the price on both of those points.

An hon. member: Did you look at your budget?

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: How does the member reconcile that the Harper government knew what it was doing? To me, it lost touch with what Canadians really wanted.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I just want to remind the member that he will have his opportunity to

answer, as opposed to yelling across the way. He can answer the question now.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Madam Speaker, it is not correct that I was heckling during that response. I did not heckle, and I want that to be noted for the record.

With respect to what the hon. member said, I could answer his consideration in three words: global financial crisis. That is something the member clearly has forgotten about. It is gratifying to hear that he did not support the previous government. I would have expected as much.

However, here is the reality. Canada went through the worst global financial crisis since the Great Depression. We made timely, targeted, and temporary investments in fiscal stimulus. His party wanted more spending at every stage. The Liberals said more spending and they wanted permanent new spending. We said we needed to be targeted and temporary and focused in the way we stimulated the economy. Everybody agrees except the party opposite. Even the New Democrats supported a motion to this effect. Everyone agrees that Canada was brought back into balance before the election. We had a balanced budget. We came out of the recession earlier than other countries. We did better than other countries.

The member may think what he likes, but he talks about these issues as if there is some equivalency between running a deficit in the 2008-09 period and then the Liberals' decision to run a massive budget deficit in this fiscal period. We are not in a global financial crisis. We are—

•(1120)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Order, please. The time is up.

I want to apologize to the member if I mistakenly pointed him out, but there was some heckling on this side. Members have opportunities to stand to ask questions. As opposed to heckling or yelling when someone else is speaking, I would ask members to please rise to ask their questions.

Resuming debate. The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister for Youth.

Mr. Peter Schiefke (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister (Youth), Lib.): Madam Speaker, this morning, I am pleased to be sharing my time with the hon. member for Brampton East.

I am pleased to have the opportunity today to speak on the subject of Bill C-13, which would make a few legislative changes needed to bring us into full compliance with the World Trade Organization agreement on trade facilitation.

The 2015 Speech from the Throne and the Prime Minister's priorities are clear. This government is focused on creating opportunities by pursuing policies that create growth and ensuring that growth produces tangible results for all.

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The agreement on trade facilitation, concluded at the WTO ministerial conference in December 2013, is the first multilateral agreement concluded since the creation of the World Trade Organization. It reinforces the important role of the WTO as a negotiating forum for global trade rules. The agreement provides for the modernization and simplification of customs and border procedures by all WTO members.

By playing a key role in the negotiation of the TFA and its ratification, Canada would demonstrate its support for the agreement and the WTO. The TFA supports the government's efforts to promote trade and development and provides another vehicle to increase prosperity in developing countries.

All WTO members agreed to the conclusion of negotiations on the agreement on trade facilitation at the December 2013 WTO ministerial conference and all WTO members will become parties once they ratify the agreement.

Multilateral trade negotiations can sometimes be difficult to relate to the day-to-day workings of business. However, the TFA is not a theoretical agreement; it is about making trade work better for everyone. It is important that Canada move to quickly ratify the TFA.

For traders, the TFA will ensure faster, simpler, and more predictable cross-border trade, translating into lower costs. The TFA's provisions will apply to trade in all goods between WTO members.

As my hon. colleagues on both sides of the aisle have mentioned several times, the WTO estimates that full implementation of the agreement on trade facilitation by WTO members could boost global merchandise exports by up to \$1 trillion, including the up to \$730 billion in export opportunities it will accrue to developing countries, and decrease trade costs for WTO members by an average of 14%, including an average of nearly 17% for least-developed countries.

The implementation of the TFA will cut red tape, enhance the predictability of trade, and reduce the costs and delays of trading at international borders for Canadian exports. In fact, the WTO estimates that the TFA will reduce trade costs by over 14% on average globally, including 17% for the least-developed countries.

As we know, lowering trade costs can increase trade, contribute to a higher national income and, indeed, reduce poverty. It can drive the growing participation of developing nations and small- and medium-sized enterprises in the world economy. In fact, countries that do more to lower trade costs, for instance, by improving logistics, tend to grow more rapidly.

Here I would reflect on an experience I had. I spent many years working in East Africa. I was able to see how the East African Community, through trade negotiations and the opening up of trade, was able to grow its regional economy significantly. While I was there, I was able to see significant growth of over 10% in Uganda alone, which allowed that government to implement, for the first time, free primary education for its youth. All of this is to say that the opening up of trade can have a very significant impact, not only on small- and medium-sized enterprises and Canadian business but also on developing countries, particularly those in sub-Saharan Africa.

Canada has provided over \$65 million in funding for trade facilitation assistance to developing countries since 2008. Canada has also partnered with TradeMark East Africa, contributing \$12 million to its integrated border management project, and has provided \$2 million in funding for the World Bank Group's trade facilitation support program launched in 2014 to facilitate the implementation of the TFA.

•(1125)

It is also worth noting that Canada is also a founding donor to the Global Alliance for Trade Facilitation, a public-private platform that would support the TFA implementation efforts of developing countries by leveraging private sector expertise, leadership, and resources to achieve commercially meaningful reforms all around the world. Canada is contributing \$10 million to the Global Alliance for Trade Facilitation over seven years, from 2015 to 2022.

These lower trade costs, along with enhanced timelines and predictability in the delivery of intermediate goods. It will also drive growing participation by small and medium-sized enterprises in world trade, particularly as the high cost of international trade currently disproportionately affect SMEs, as well as developing nations. SMEs would be better positioned to export their goods once the TFA is ratified.

Helping SMEs reduce trading costs, as many in the House would agree, would also benefit women in developing countries. The World Bank estimates that 8 million to 10 million SMEs in the developing world have at least one female owner. Studies in recent years have shown just what kind of impact investments in women can have all around the world, particularly in developing nations. Economic growth has skyrocketed when there is significant investment in empowering women to get involved in enterprise and become business owners. There is a reduction in child mortality rates and an increase in education rates. Innovation is strengthened. This ratification would have significant impacts not just for Canada but also for developing nations.

While the TFA's provisions complement those found in the trade facilitation chapters of Canada's free trade agreements, this agreement addresses a broader range of trade facilitation measures, since the TFA is a specialized agreement that reflects the more diverse priorities of all WTO members. The trade facilitation provisions in Canada's free trade agreements have to date focused on Canada's priorities, including transparency, release of goods, risk management, and the advance issuance of decisions on tariff classifications.

These interests are well reflected in the TFA, and because they would apply to all ratifying WTO members, they would serve to advance Canada's interests with countries with whom it does not have an FTA.

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The agreement on fair trade facilitation will enter into force when two-thirds of the members have completed their domestic ratification procedures and submitted their instruments of acceptance to the WTO. As of today, 92 of the required members have ratified the agreement on trade facilitation. While there is no specific deadline for WTO members to ratify the agreement, G20 leaders are committed to ratifying the agreement by the end of 2016 and called on all WTO members at the G20 leaders' summit in Hangzhou, China in September 2016 to do the same.

Our government is committed to ratifying the agreement as soon as possible, and we encourage all members on both sides of the aisle to do the same.

• (1130)

Mr. Colin Carrie (Oshawa, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am optimistic to see the Liberals moving ahead with ratification of this agreement, but the parliamentary secretary talked about cross-border trade and decreasing costs, so I was wondering if he could explain a contradiction.

I come from Ontario. We are a manufacturing community. What the Ontario Liberals have done is implement policies that have given Ontario the highest electricity costs for industry in North America. They are bringing in a carbon tax as of January 1, which means that the cost of energy will go up. These policies are now being parodied and mimicked by the federal Liberal government.

Therefore, I wonder if he could explain the difference. On one side, they are saying they are trying to get rid of costs to be more competitive but they are actually putting in policies that are making us less competitive. We have seen this in Ontario with the decrease in manufacturing. How will he explain the differences and the contradictions there?

Mr. Peter Schiefke: Madam Speaker, with regard to the member's first comment, if he has any provincial concerns I would urge him to contact the representatives that proudly represent him in the province of Ontario.

I will comment, however, on the idea that we are putting barriers in place to economic growth. We have taken a decision to invest in economic growth and were the only party to do so in the previous election. We are going to invest in middle-class families, which we all know are the drivers of the economy, by increasing the Canada child benefit significantly to the tune of \$2,300 on average per family. We are also cutting taxes for middle-class families and middle-class income earners who earn between \$44,000 and \$89,000 a year, putting roughly \$500 to \$600 back in the pockets of hard working Canadians. We are increasing our support for the most vulnerable seniors to the tune of roughly \$950 a year.

I do not know what my hon. colleague across the aisle is talking about when he refers to barriers. If anything, we were the only party in the last election to say that we would be drivers of economic growth. That is exactly what we are delivering on.

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Madam Speaker, Bill C-13 would change how Canada deals with goods in transit and non-compliant goods, including hazardous products and pest control products. There are several small manufacturing businesses in my riding that work tirelessly to protect their employees and to encourage growth. The NDP wants to see

some of these small and medium-sized businesses flourish with agreements like this.

Is my colleague confident that the changes proposed in Bill C-13 will maintain existing health and safety standards for workers who may come into contact with these products?

Mr. Peter Schiefke: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for being a strong advocate for the safety and health of people in her riding. We take that seriously as members of Parliament.

A lot of work and effort is being put into making sure that we are protecting our citizens in these kinds of trade negotiations. The one thing we are focused on, in addition to the concerns that my colleague is bringing to the table, is reducing the barriers that so many SMEs have right now in getting their goods and services across the border. From talking with small businesses in my own riding of Vaudreuil—Soulanges, which not only borders Ontario but is also close to the U.S., the reality is that they are being hit really hard by the excessive trade expenses in trying to get their goods and services into other markets.

I am proud that what we are really ensuring here is a reduction of that burden on small and medium-sized businesses, which currently, as we all know, are suffering all across the country.

Mr. Raj Grewal (Brampton East, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to have the opportunity to speak today on the World Trade Organization's trade facilitation agreement, commonly referred to as the TFA, and Bill C-13.

Trade facilitation generally refers to the simplification, harmonization, and standardization of the controls governing the movement of goods across national borders. In Canada, this generally covers policies and measures implemented by the Canada Border Services Agency, the CBSA, and partners that operate at the border, such as Health Canada and Environment and Climate Change Canada.

The TFA is designed to make trade faster, cheaper, and more predictable, as a lack of transparency, multiple documentation requirements, and lengthy clearance processes increase trade costs. Global value chains, just-in-time delivery systems, e-commerce, and the fast nature of transactions today require quick and reliable border crossings and clearance processes.

Since simplified trade procedures benefit all trade partners, trade facilitation reforms are best addressed on a multilateral basis. The WTO TFA helps provide a global foundation that will extend trade facilitation, modernization, and its benefits to WTO members once it enters into force.

WTO members started negotiations toward a TFA in 2004, and negotiations concluded in December 2013. This major accomplishment was a major gain for the global trading community and the WTO, as global trade rules were developed to expedite the movement, release, and clearance of goods.

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The WTO estimates that trade costs will be reduced by an average of over 14%, including an average reduction of nearly 17% for least-developed countries, and that the implementation of the TFA could boost global merchandise exports by up to \$1 trillion, including up to \$730 billion for developing countries. Even in the event that some WTO members do not move to fully implement the TFA, the real-world impact will be significant. Mechanisms are in place to assist developing countries to implement the TFA.

The implementation of the TFA would benefit Canadian traders by expediting, streamlining, and enhancing the predictability of customs and border procedures for their exports to developing countries, which translates into lower trade costs. The benefits are expected to be most significant for small and medium-sized enterprises for whom trade costs are disproportionately high. The implementation of the TFA by developing countries could help Canada's SMEs increase their export presence in emerging markets, from Latin America and the Caribbean to Africa and Southeast Asia.

The TFA will enter into force once ratified by two-thirds of the WTO members. As of today, 92 of the required 110 WTO members have ratified the TFA. That includes Canada's major trading partners, the United States, the European Union, China, and Japan. The sooner the TFA can enter into force, the sooner the global trade community will be able to reap its benefits.

Canada is already compliant with most of the TFA's provisions. The proposed amendments within Bill C-13 would allow Canada to implement two specific provisions of the TFA while maintaining safeguards on the health and safety of Canadians and the environment. Bill C-13 proposes amendments to six Canadian statutes, which fall under the responsibility of Health Canada and Environment and Climate Change Canada, in order to ensure compliance with the TFA. Bill C-13 would lead to greater consistency in how goods are treated at the border and facilitate the transit of goods through Canada.

More specifically, Bill C-13 addresses two specific TFA provisions: one, article 10.8.1, which deals with the treatment of non-compliant goods rejected at the border; and two, article 11.8, which deals with goods in transit.

Article 10.8 of the TFA requires WTO members to allow importers to return to exporters goods rejected on account of their failure to meet certain health and other technical requirements. It also includes an exemption, which allows a WTO member to dispose of non-compliant goods in alternative ways, where this is provided for in its laws.

• (1135)

Bill C-13 would identify criteria under which non-compliant goods could be either, one, returned or re-consigned, or two, seized, detained, forfeited, or disposed of. The proposed amendments would provide Canada with the necessary authority to take action regarding certain non-compliant goods shipped to Canada, including in order to avoid having to maintain indefinite care and control of non-compliant and dangerous goods.

Amendments designed to ensure compliance with TFA article 10.8.1 are proposed to the Canada Consumer Product Safety Act, the

Food and Drugs Act, the Hazardous Products Act, the Pest Control Products Act, and the Radiation Emitting Devices Act.

Bill C-13 would also enable Health Canada and Environment and Climate Change Canada to comply with article 11.8 of the TFA. This provision prohibits the application of technical regulations to goods moving through a WTO member's territory from a point outside its territory to another foreign point; for example, goods in transit.

Currently, certain provisions of the Food and Drugs Act, the Pest Control Products Act, the Radiation Emitting Devices Act, and the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999, prohibit the transit through Canada of certain goods that do not comply with Canadian technical regulations. Bill C-13 would create the legal authority to allow the government to exempt goods in transit through Canada from these technical regulations, thus helping to facilitate trade.

For some of these statutes, conditions would be imposed which, among other things, first, would identify goods in transit that may not comply with Canadian technical regulations in the event that the goods are diverted into the Canadian market and, second, provide oversight on products, such as certain pesticides and pharmaceutical drugs, not captured under the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act, 1992, which are currently not permitted to transit through Canada but will be, once the TFA is implemented. This oversight maintains safeguards protecting the environment and the health and safety of persons who may come into contact with such goods.

I urge all hon. members to support this bill, which would enable Canada to do its part to bring this agreement into force and ensure that the health and safety of Canadians and the environment remains protected.

• (1140)

Mr. Colin Carrie (Oshawa, CPC): Madam Speaker, my colleague from Brampton comes from a riding similar to mine in Oshawa. Automobiles are manufactured there too. I paid attention to his speech because he really talked about international competitiveness. Regardless of what some people say, this is the new reality for the world.

I asked the Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister to answer this question and he did not answer—he skirted the question—so I will ask this member, because he did actually bring up something very specific in his speech. He talked about just-in-time delivery, which is important to the automotive sector.

I do applaud the implementation of Bill C-13 because I do think it is something like a step in the right direction, but the Liberals are dithering on the TPP. They are also putting in something called a carbon tax, just as the Ontario government has done, and we have seen those taxes and the high cost of electricity. They have also increased the CPP, which will really affect our competitiveness.

Government Orders

I want to ask the hon. member about these carbon taxes, because we know the Ontario carbon tax will increase the cost of fuel by 5¢ per litre. Could he explain the federal carbon tax and what cost that would put on our manufacturers and our just-in-time delivery? How will they implement it? Will it be a tax on top of the Ontario tax? Will it be a blended tax?

There is a lot of uncertainty. We are trying to get new investment into our province. How would this carbon tax affect our competitiveness?

Mr. Raj Grewal: Madam Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his question and his passion on climate change and the issues he brought up.

My speech is focused on Bill C-13 and the implementation of the TFA, which I will reiterate is extremely important for Canada. I think we can all agree that the world is getting smaller in terms of e-commerce, just-in-time delivery, and global business.

Any first-year business student across this country, across the world, would be able to tell members of this House that, in order to be competitive in today's economy, we need to have access to emerging markets. We need to have access to simplified procedures. We need to have access to the world's markets to sell our goods and products.

They have to be able to flow easily, but at the same time, we have to make sure we protect Canadians and the health and safety of individuals who come in contact with dangerous goods, and that is exactly what the bill would do, exactly what the TFA would do. It would add almost \$1 trillion to the world economy. It would add almost \$730 billion to developing countries. This is a good deal. It is important for Canada to implement this agreement.

• (1145)

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): Madam Speaker, I would like to congratulate the member for Brampton East for a very good intervention, which also touched on several complicated issues related to this agreement.

I was also pleased to hear the discussion around CBSA. What I have raised on Bill C-13 is the question of organized crime, and particularly the goods that get into our country. The ports only check 4% of goods that come into our country, and they will be mixed, including now, with new types of materials and other things that are going to other countries.

Organized crime is one of the things that I have been pushing against with a number of different things, including my bill that will be voted on this Wednesday, Bill C-221. The bill would help eliminate \$10 billion in organized crime from single-event sports wagering. We have British Columbia, Ontario, and other provinces onside to diminish organized crime in this country.

I ask the member if, in his opinion, CBSA would get enough resources to tackle the potential of organized crime, basically using Trojan horse trade coming in to allow other goods and services of contraband, which should not be coming into Canada, to go to other countries.

Mr. Raj Grewal: Madam Speaker, I think we can all agree that there is a delicate balance between making sure goods flow easily,

quickly, and efficiently, protecting the health and safety of Canadians, and fighting against organized crime. This is exactly what Bill C-13 would do.

The bill would empower the CBSA and the Government of Canada to fight back against organized crime and ensure that only the products get through that need to get through. This would help legitimate businesses that are participating in the transit of goods in Canada to succeed, and would make it more efficient and easier, so that we help small and medium-sized enterprises benefit from a world market.

Mr. Colin Carrie (Oshawa, CPC): Madam Speaker, I appreciate having this opportunity to speak on Bill C-13.

This bill is an important piece of legislation, and I urge all of my colleagues to support the ratification power it possesses, because it brings Canada into the fold with the rest of our World Trade Organization partners, which is vital for Canada as we move forward in the new economy.

Bills of this nature simplify procedures, and as has been said in the House before, help cut red tape, expedite the release and clearance of goods, reduce costs associated with processing, which is extremely important for our competitiveness, and make international trade more predictable for Canadians and more predictable for Canadian businesses that want to make new investments and build our economy.

Most importantly, steps to ratify trade agreements need to be taken to avoid putting Canada on the outside of free trade agreements with our WTO partners. This is a very important point. Many countries, including our largest trading partners and fellow NAFTA members, Mexico and the U.S., have either done so or are actively working toward ratifying agreements, particularly agreements such as the TPP. I am happy that we are having this debate. It is important that we ratify the powers in Bill C-13.

I also want to talk about the overall picture. Right now, the Liberals have a very important agreement on the table. If we believe that today is an important step forward, and we want to believe what the Liberals are saying, we have to look at what they are saying but also at their actions, because actions speak louder than words. The reality is that, to date, the Liberals have made no attempt to ratify the TPP agreement. This lack of action by the government is a large risk for the Canadian economy.

The Liberals must realize that trade has the power to grow our economy without spending billions of dollars. That is the commitment we are seeing from the Liberal government. Instead of moving forward on agreements that are on the table in front of them, they seem to be focused on spending billions of dollars. When we look at the Conservatives' approach versus their approach, much of the work on the agreement we are talking about today was done by the previous government. I applaud and support it, but we are now moving forward at an accelerated pace. The government has to take a big picture view of what is going on with the different trade agreements, whether it is the European trade agreement or the TPP.

Government Orders

The Liberals are standing on the largest trade agreement in over 20 years. Stalling on the ratification of the TPP agreement will only put Canada further behind, when Canada should be moving ahead. It is clear that not signing this agreement will damage our economy and reduce the global supply chain, which will ultimately lead to job losses. We have seen the latest numbers. We cannot afford that.

Signing the TPP would send a clear message to Canadian businesses, and this is extremely important, because, first, it would give our exporters the opportunity to prepare and take advantage of preferential market access. Second, it would lower tariffs. I think everyone is in agreement that this is a good thing. Third, it would remove trade barriers. Fourth, and what is very important for the economy of Ontario, it would further integrate global supply chains.

I am the MP for Oshawa. Trade agreements have a lot of implications for my riding. It is the home of the General Motors assembly plant. Today we got some good news; it was able to get an agreement with Unifor. I applaud GM and Unifor for coming to an agreement, because the reality for the business world and labour is that the world will be doing business in a new way.

A really important point for me, as a local representative, is that our NAFTA partners are moving forward to ratify the TPP. The presidents of Mexico and the United States were here, and one of the things they talked about was how they are moving forward to ratify this agreement. If they ratify it and we do not, it is going to be devastating to manufacturing and our local economies. Consider that 80% of Canadian vehicles are made for export. Having access to new global markets, and over 800 million potential new customers, with the TPP is going to be significant.

● (1150)

To put that in context, the European free trade agreement would mean 400 million new customers. This would give Canada exclusive access to both markets.

It is important to take a moment to explain exactly what that means. It means that Canada will be unique in the world. Unique among our trading partners, it will have preferred access to Europe and preferred access to the Asia Pacific. That is 1.2 billion people. That is huge.

What we are seeing from the government is further dithering on the European free trade agreement, which was ready to go under our government. The TPP is ready to go. We see President Obama and the Mexican president moving forward, and what is happening with the Liberal government? It is dithering.

The numbers involved for GDP are \$29 trillion. Access to these markets would give Oshawa a competitive advantage in the production of vehicles at our assembly plants. They would be destined for new and existing markets. We are going to have a unique opportunity to manufacture in Oshawa. We will have access to Europe and the Asia Pacific. Therefore, there is a need to connect Canada with the global supply chain. This would allow Oshawa and all of Canada to grow competitively and to continue to show investors that doing business in Canada is profitable.

With access to new markets, Canada would not only benefit from cost savings but would be on par with our fellow NAFTA countries, and this is extremely important. Ratification of the TPP would allow

Canada to have the same preferential market access as other TPP countries. Not signing the TPP would make Canada suffer, as these markets would be accessible to our largest trading partners, the United States and Mexico, and we would be out of the deal. Both the U.S. and Mexico would be more competitive, and investment would be driven away from Canada.

The previous Conservative government laid the groundwork in a negotiation process to ensure that Canadians would prosper as a result of trade relations that were freshly established in these markets, because it is the new way of doing business.

A report released by the Office of the Chief Economist from Global Affairs Canada includes important observations on what the TPP would do to benefit Canada as well as on the consequences if Canada does not sign this important agreement. I would like to take a moment to go over some of the benefits.

First of all, there would be a boost to Canada's GDP of 0.127%, generating a GDP gain of \$4.3 billion by 2040.

The TPP would liberalize barriers to trade and provide estimated tariffs savings of \$428 million per year for Canadian exporters.

Auto companies, which currently do not have access to Japan on an equal playing field, would now have that access. This is something auto companies have been asking for years.

The most significant benefit would be a \$1.1 billion export increase to Japan, with exports of pork, beef, and wood products leading the way.

Canada cannot afford to remain on the outside. Not signing the TPP would lead to GDP losses of \$5.3 billion. Canadian automotive production and investment would both decline by 4%, and the way it would affect our global supply chain would be catastrophic.

Canadian beef exports to Japan would fall by more than 66%, and pork exports to Japan would drop by 13%.

Canada's exports to TPP countries in 2014 accounted for 81.1% of the total value of Canadian exports, totalling \$759.4 billion.

In conclusion, my message is simple. Today we are looking at Bill C-13, and that is a great opportunity, but we must also ratify the TPP. Canadians, especially businesses, deserve the advantages and opportunities the TPP can offer. The significance of trade cannot be ignored by the Liberals.

● (1155)

Canada cannot fall behind, especially now, and especially when trade has the power to significantly increase the total GDP of Canada without spending billions of dollars, which seems to be what the Liberals are obsessed with doing.

Government Orders

I want to take this opportunity to encourage my colleagues here in the House to support any of these agreements that facilitate trade.

I want to bring up an important point I have been trying to get the Liberals to address today. On one side, they seem to be talking about increasing business and increasing trade, which I think everyone agrees is a good thing, except maybe the NDP. On the other side, the Liberals are bringing in policies that are hurting our competitiveness internationally. I wanted to talk a little about that.

When we are talking about trade agreements, we are talking about the competitiveness of Canada versus other parts of the world. Recently the government brought in changes to the CPP. This is something I have been talking to my business community about.

What the Liberals are proposing to bring forward would cost Canadian businesses up to \$2,000 per employee. Let us put that into perspective. General Motors has 3,000 employees in Oshawa. If we do the math, that is a significant increase in cost for doing business in Canada. It would also mean that individual Canadians would have to match that. Now we are talking about \$2,000 for the employer and \$2,000 extra that employees would have to put into this plan that many will not have access to.

We want to talk about the competitiveness of our energy policies. I have brought up the example of Ontario. We have seen what the Ontario policies are doing to our competitiveness in the manufacturing field. Right now, Ontario is so worried it has backtracked somewhat on its electricity policy, because it has realized how much of a concern it is.

We are looking at a policy that has basically contributed to the loss of 300,000 good-quality manufacturing jobs in Ontario. The federal Liberals are supporting these policies moving forward in Ontario and are parroting its policies and bringing them into the federal jurisdiction.

That leads to the next issue I need to talk about. I need to get clarification today from the Liberals. I want to talk about the carbon tax.

We know that the people we compete against the most, Michigan for example, do not have a state carbon tax. Texas does not have a state carbon tax. Texas has a cost of energy that is 75% less than it is in Ontario.

The Prime Minister and the Minister of Environment and Climate Change have been very clear that they are actually going to be bringing in a carbon tax federally. I do not think the uncertainty of this can be overemphasized. Companies, when they are making investments in our economy, are making investments over a 10-year or 15-year period. Instead of getting certainty from the government, all they are getting is uncertainty.

The only certainty companies are getting is that it is going to cost more to do business. We are talking about the CPP costs, energy costs, and carbon taxes. It would drive up the cost of everything. What we are talking about in our factories is increased costs for heating factories. We are talking about increased costs for food in our factories. We are talking about the electricity going into these factories. Individual Canadians will be paying more. Basically, this is a tax on everything.

It really affects our competitiveness. On one side, the Liberals are saying that they want to be competitive. As I said, Bill C-13 is a great step forward. However, we need to address the other side. What domestic policies are the Liberals putting in place that are killing our competitiveness? On this side of the House, we think we have to look at these policies in conjunction.

● (1200)

Moving forward, this whole idea of economic policy needs to be addressed. We cannot just farm one section out, and say for trade we are going to move forward on positive things in that regard. Other countries are doing that as well.

It is the domestic side of the equation that the Liberals seem to be ignoring, to the point where this is going to make manufacturers and businesses in our communities less competitive internationally. Even with the good work moving this forward, the Liberals need to take a step back and do some work at the other end on domestic policies.

One of the things I would like to see moving forward within the next couple of months is certainty coming out of the Liberal government. As I said, this debate we are having today is a good thing, but what about the TPP? What is the government going to do to move that important agenda forward? Companies that are making business decisions right now do not have any certainty. That is a major thing and they may not be choosing Canada.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I listened closely to what the member was saying. He spent a great deal of his time talking about the TPP and encouraging the government to break its word to Canadians by making some sort of a decision prematurely. The Prime Minister made a commitment to Canadians to review the TPP thoroughly. He asked members of Parliament on all sides, but particularly members within our caucus, to do our homework on this particular agreement and I look forward to the debate on that. The Prime Minister is encouraging us to speed up on it.

Bill C-13 is a ratification of an agreement with over 160 countries participating in it, and they are encouraging us to ratify it. The United States ratified it in January 2015. It was negotiated back in December 2013. Why does my colleague believe that the Conservative government was not able to do what the United States did? The member drew a comparison to the TPP. Why was the Harper government not able to bring it forward in January, February, or March of 2015? The member will correct me if I am wrong but I do not believe the United States has signed off on the TPP.

● (1205)

Mr. Colin Carrie: Mr. Speaker, my colleague is right. The Americans are moving forward with the TPP. Mr. Obama was right here in the House. The Mexican president was here as well. We have an agreement on the table and the current government seems to be happy with just following the lead of other countries.

Government Orders

This is the most important trade agreement in 20 years. It is going to benefit Canada and place Canada in a unique position. The member has seen the recent numbers about the economy. We left the Liberal government with a surplus. The parliamentary budget officer has said that the government's policies moving forward are unsustainable.

I talked about the importance of moving these agreements forward. I do hope that members on the other side agree that we move this agreement forward as quickly as we can. We have been clear. We support the legislation moving forward today but it is not only about today. It is about moving forward over the next few months and the TPP is an important part of it.

Domestic policies are important too and none of the Liberals have addressed this issue, which is important for manufacturing communities here in Ontario. What about the domestic policies that are now making us less competitive internationally? It is all fine and dandy that this agreement is moving forward here today, but the Liberals are dithering on the TPP. We can all see that. They seem to want to consult on this forever, but there are real impacts to real Canadians who work in real industries.

I would like to see the TPP brought forward as quickly as possible. The Liberals are in government now and they like to bring up issues about the past. I would like to see one Liberal today address the domestic policies, which have the exact opposite intention of the trade agreements and make us less competitive because of carbon taxes, high energy costs, and things like doubling the CPP. This really hurts small businesses and their opportunities to be competitive in our country.

[Translation]

Ms. Karine Trudel (Jonquière, NDP): Mr. Speaker, as we said earlier, we support Bill C-13 at second reading. It will be important to ask questions in committee, especially since this is a measure that could help small and medium sized enterprises.

I would have liked the government to do more, including lowering the tax rate. That is a broken election promise that is going to cost SMEs millions of dollars.

Does my colleague think that the government should do more to bring developing countries together, be it through trade or development assistance?

[English]

Mr. Colin Carrie: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for the insight of her question. She brought up the fact that one of the things that the Liberals promised was lowering taxes, and it seems to be a promise that the Liberals do not have a problem breaking.

The member asked whether Canada should do more. That is why I am very passionate about moving forward with agreements such as the TPP, because moving forward with agreements such as the TPP gives our businesses and our Canadian reputation the ability to get out there. As for human rights and rights inside the countries that we do these trade agreements with, we have seen historically that one of the best ways to get better human rights around the world is to get involved with these countries, do business, have their people come here and give us a bit of information, and we go there to give them a

bit of information. It is a win-win when we have these different types of agreements.

Right now, Canadians have seen the economic challenges brought forth by the new government. We have seen, sadly, that there has been an overemphasis on spending. What was it this year? Was it a \$30-billion deficit or something like that? The Liberals like to say they have made certain promises. Let me just see. They were talking about a very small deficit for a very small period of time. I think they said \$10 billion. That is their idea of small; I do not know where that came from. However, it is now \$30 billion.

My colleagues over there say that during the economic downturn the Conservatives had an increase in deficit; that is true. However, during the economic downturn, the Liberals wanted more. I was here in the House when they were arguing, saying that we were not spending enough. Now, within six months the parliamentary budget officer, not the Conservatives or the NDP, is saying that the way the Liberals have turned the country is unsustainable. Six months is all it has taken.

Should we be doing more? Absolutely, and one of the ways we can do that is with the bill that we are debating here today, but also looking at trade moving forward such as the TPP, and I will also bring up the European free trade agreement. We have to move forward on these things. It does help people when you raise them up. Economic advantages and economic growth to individuals really work toward helping them, but also toward spreading the values of human rights that Canadians hold so dear.

• (1210)

Mr. Alexander Nuttall (Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte, CPC): Mr. Speaker, being in a riding in an area that has such a heavy reliance on manufacturing and has a heavy reliance specifically on auto manufacturing and discussing some of the domestic policies that are making our economy and our manufacturers less competitive, which policies in particular can you identify that you have seen pushing our economy in that direction? Perhaps you can comment on this.

I would also like to note the loss of 39,000 small businesses last month alone, the loss of 40,000 manufacturing jobs this year alone, and the effect these domestic policies are having on that.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Before the hon. member answers, I just want to remind all the members that when they say "you", I am sure they do not expect the Speaker to answer the question. I am sure they mean for the hon. member to answer the question. I just wanted to clarify so that the hon. member knows who is answering that question.

Mr. Colin Carrie: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for this extremely important question, but also for all the work he has done for manufacturers. He is doing something positive by bringing awareness to the actual policies that are killing jobs in his community and in my community. As he said, 39,000 small businesses were lost. There are huge losses in manufacturing.

Government Orders

At the end of the day, this is about Canada's and Ontario's competitiveness. This is where the big contradiction is in the House today. I would like to address three important domestic policies that are killing our ability to compete internationally. Number one is the Liberal changes to the CPP. This is \$2,000 more per employee that business owners are going to have to pay, \$2,000 more than individuals.

Second is carbon taxes and the uncertainty that is totally the responsibility of the Liberal government. We have this horrible carbon tax in Ontario, increasing the cost of heating, electricity; and just-in-time delivery of fuel, at 5¢ per litre more. Now the federal government wants to add on top of that.

The third thing I want to talk about is the high energy costs. What scares me is that we have lost 300,000 jobs in Ontario because of these irresponsible policies. Moving forward, in the next few months the federal Liberal Party is parroting these exact policies that have killed so many jobs. We are starting to see those effects. We need to ensure that domestic and international policies jive and that we are all working toward the same goal.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to address the House today, to be back in the House of Commons, to see all my colleagues again, and to know that we are all sitting in the House together at the same level, men and women alike. We do not need to look up to the gallery to see whether women or other people are sitting there.

I am very pleased to speak to this bill. Extraordinarily, we strongly support this bill introduced by the current government, as it is about the economy. It is about developing our economy here in Canada, and about free trade. Anything that promotes free trade, economic prosperity, anything that helps our businesses produce more and export more freely, and brings foreign investment to Canada, is a good thing, a good idea, which must be developed and supported. That is exactly what we are doing today by showing our support for Bill C-13 currently on the table.

I would like to begin by saying that, basically, the purpose of this bill is to implement the agreement to facilitate trade between various countries that was concluded by our Conservative government, that of the Right Hon. Stephen Harper, at a meeting held in Bali a few years ago. We were not the only ones involved. Over one hundred countries concluded this agreement. However, every legislature in each of those countries must also implement the agreement, and that is what we are doing right now.

This bill serves as a reminder of the history of free trade in Canada, and I would like to talk a bit about that before getting into the substance of Bill C-13.

Canada is an exporting country because of its size and our extraordinary assets, including our natural resources and our universities, which year after year produce excellent people to work in our businesses and industries and conduct high-tech research. With a population of over 30 million people, we may be relatively small in number, but we are rich in character and proud of it. Clearly, all countries, but Canada in particular, must rely on exports to fully develop their economies.

In that respect, I am reminded of more recent free trade issues. I could go back as far as the last century, but let us talk instead about the issues encountered in more modern times. Canada signed a milestone free trade agreement with the United States in 1988. That was a momentous occasion and a turning point in Canada's economic development. We opened our doors wide to export our products. Where would Canada be today if we had not signed that free trade agreement? Let us remember that it too was signed only after a long political debate. To put it mildly, some people had concerns about free trade in the beginning. Fortunately, now that some time has passed, today we see that the free trade agreement has had a positive impact, thanks to people's goodwill and especially their open-mindedness. We are fortunate to have signed that agreement.

Perhaps some members understood what I meant when I said that people needed time to warm up to the idea. Some members may remember that during the 1988 election campaign the Liberal Party, which is currently in power, expressed serious reservations about the agreement, even opposed it outright. A few years later, the Liberals finally recognized that it was a good thing.

These are the facts. It is important to mention that the Right Hon. Brian Mulroney, who was behind the 1988 free trade agreement, had also expressed some reservations previously. In 1983, during the Conservative Party leadership race, leadership hopeful John Crosbie, former Newfoundland MP and minister, championed this revolutionary and extremely important idea of free trade between Canada and the United States. During that same leadership race another candidate, Brian Mulroney, expressed very serious concerns and said that it was like a mouse lying beside an elephant. We would be crushed and nothing good would come of it.

We have to admit that, back then, Prime Minister Brian Mulroney's views had changed. Thank goodness we had this great leader in Canada, at a critical time for our economy, who made the agreement and its ratification possible. Members will recall how unusual the political landscape was back in 1988, particularly in my province of Quebec.

● (1215)

There were people who were sovereignists through and through. I will not call them separatists because that can have a pejorative connotation. Social democrats including Jacques Parizeau, Bernard Landry, former leaders of the Parti Québécois, and former premiers of Quebec came out in favour of free trade. They were strongly in favour of the free trade agreement. They spent their entire lives as social democrats and sovereignists and even they saw the economic benefits in the agreement that were essential for developing our country and Quebec.

Government Orders

That is why we sometimes saw a surprising alliance between right wing federalists, Conservatives, and so-called left wing sovereignists, like Jacques Parizeau. They worked side by side for the free trade agreement. I do not want to get into too much regionalism, since we are all Canadians, but some might say that the whole thing succeeded because of Quebec. It was Quebec's support for the Conservative Party that allowed the free trade agreement to be ratified in 1988.

Events and history proved the Mulroney government right, so that was good. When the government of the Right Hon. Jean Chrétien came to power, there was good reason to have some concerns about the development of free trade in Canada. Fortunately, those who in the past had said that the agreement was no good and they would tear it up instead maintained it and even expanded it, with the famous agreement between the three amigos, namely Mexico, the United States, and Canada. As a result, what had begun as the cornerstone of Canada's economic development, in a more contemporary setting, in 1988, was expanded into an agreement between Mexico, the United States, and Canada.

Without going into too much detail, it was about a year ago that negotiations were concluded for the trans-Pacific partnership. Once again, Canada is lucky to be part of that agreement because it represents an extraordinary opportunity for our economy. It should be noted that when we talk about free trade, we are really talking about exports. We are talking about goods that are manufactured here in Canada, by Canadians, and sold in other countries. It is about money from other countries invested here in Canada to pay our workers' wages. There is nothing more lucrative and more profitable for our economy than exports. In fact, one in five jobs in Canada depends on exports.

That is why we are so proud to see how important, how very essential this is for our economy, particularly in light of the following figures: \$54 billion for exports of materials for transportation; \$48 billion for exports of mineral products; \$26 billion for exports of electrical machinery and equipment and parts thereof; \$19 billion for exports of base metals; and \$18 billion for exports of products of the chemical industries. That is what export, free trade, and economic development are all about. That is what creates wealth in Canada, and that is why Canada is an exporting nation. It must continue to be an exporting nation, and we must do everything we can to open even more doors around the world so that everybody everywhere can enjoy the quality of Canadian products made by us, by Canadians.

I also want to say that circumstances can shift, people's thinking can change, and some who were once against free trade may now be in favour of it. So much the better. What really matters is the end result, and that is why we strongly support this government's Bill C-13.

I would like to talk about this bill, which would see Canada ratify the agreement on trade facilitation. I will start with some background. In August 2004, the World Trade Organization opened negotiations to hammer out three essential facets of free trade. The first was to improve developing countries' access to today's competitive markets. That is essential. It is fine to say all the right things about helping our friends, about how we are all citizens of this planet, about how we have to help people in developing countries.

• (1220)

However, they should have access to our products and vice versa. As of 2004, the intention was to open markets to developing countries, cut red tape related to trade, and reduce tariffs. In some cases, the cost of the paperwork exceeded the savings that could be realized with trade agreements between different countries. That does not work.

Fortunately, the WTO began examining the issue in 2004. Finally, in December 2013, the Bali package, incorrectly named the "paquet de Bali" in French, was agreed to. The Bali agreement covered the three aspects I just mentioned. They were committed to paper and then everyone was asked to enshrine them. This occurred on November 27, 2014, with the Protocol of Amendment.

Here, in Canada, a proposed trade facilitation agreement was introduced on May 13, 2015, by my colleague from Abbotsford, the former minister of international trade, whom I would like to salute. Not so long ago, he was seated on my right, here on this bench. It is always very pleasant to have neighbours on our right, even though I think I am not much to the left of my colleagues.

I would like to say, from my seat in the House of Commons, that the member for Abbotsford made a major and exemplary contribution to Canada's economic development. Canada should be grateful to the hon. member for Abbotsford, who signed historic agreements that are vital to Canada's economy. He is from British Columbia, a part of this country that I am discovering more and more. We are lucky to be MPs in Ottawa, because it gives us the opportunity to discover our beautiful, vast, and productive country.

On May 13, 2016, the member for Abbotsford, the former minister of international trade, introduced a sort of set of instructions for the agreement on trade facilitation. I am pleased to see that the current government is continuing that work by introducing this bill to implement the agreement on trade facilitation. It is a rather long bill.

The bill makes many technical changes. Amendments must be made to the Food and Drugs Act, the Hazardous Products Act, the Radiation Emitting Devices Act, the Canadian Environmental Protection Act of 1999, the Pest Control Products Act, the Canada Consumer Product Safety Act, and the Safe Food for Canadians Act.

The list of amendments is long, but they are necessary to allow Canada to reach its full economic development potential. More specifically, amendments must be made to two provisions of the trade facilitation agreement, namely article 10.8, which deals with the treatment of goods that are rejected at the border because they do not comply with certain health and other technical requirements, and article 11.8, which prohibits the application of technical regulations to goods moving through a WTO member's territory to a point outside its territory, or in other words, goods in transit.

I prefer reading, rather than speaking off the cuff, because these details are very technical. It is better to rely on good notes, to know what we are talking about.

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Basically, the bottom line is that this will give Canada access to more countries, and it will make it easier for all countries to do business with one another. It will also help ensure the safety and security of the products traded, give developing countries greater access to trade, and give our exporters access to those emerging markets, which, in the past, were often overlooked, but now must be part of the equation.

We are glad that, in 1988, we concluded an agreement with our largest trading partner, the United States. We are also happy that those agreements have been expanded to include all of North America. Bravo.

We are pleased to see that, over time, whether it was under the leadership of the Right Hon. Jean Chrétien or the Right Hon. Stephen Harper, all governments came together to open our markets and help our businesses export their products.

• (1225)

While it is true that we have a fundamental difference of opinion and specific concerns about each other, one thing that unites us and brings us together is the issue of free trade. Free trade is synonymous with economic development.

[*English*]

This is why the legislation is very important and we deeply support the bill. We will study it, line by line, to ensure that everything is all right, but the purpose of the bill is to open our country to new markets and to create jobs.

[*Translation*]

Basically, this agreement will boost exports from developed economies from \$310 billion to an estimated \$580 billion per year. Global exports could rise by nearly 3%, and 21 million jobs could be created worldwide.

That is the kind of potential we need to cultivate and evaluate carefully. As we said earlier, we have to get used to this and recognize the need for an open-minded response to new challenges. While we may have had reservations about the quality of what developing countries are producing and how they produce their goods and services, there is no denying that the best way to help these countries achieve higher standards is to trade with them.

Furthermore, as many historians would agree, trade is the reason that we have not had a world war in nearly 75 years even though, unfortunately, wars do break out around the world from time to time. Countries are working together and trading with each other.

General de Gaulle, who was not against European countries working together, said that this was one of the fundamental factors for ensuring national security and peace in Europe. General de Gaulle certainly knew what he was talking about, having suffered the horrors of the First World War and led his country in a honourable fight during the Second World War. This man, who fought fiercely against the Nazi enemy, reached out to Germany and all the other countries, including Italy, in order to work with them. That was the first global move toward international trade. It was legendary and now countries can help each other advance their development.

I can assure hon. members that on this side of the House we are in favour of this bill. We will work very hard and conscientiously on it and carry on the excellent work done by the hon. member for Abbotsford, under whose guidance previous agreements were concluded, bringing us to the introduction of Bill C-13 today.

• (1230)

Mr. David de Burgh Graham (Laurentides—Labelle, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if my colleague from Louis-Saint-Laurent had started wearing glasses at an earlier age, he might have taken a slightly different political path.

I appreciate my colleague's support for this important file. My question is this: if this file is so important, why did the Conservatives take so long to introduce it in the last Parliament?

Mr. Gérard Deltell: Mr. Speaker, I have taken note of my colleague's comments about my glasses and I will reciprocate in due course.

Seriously, in international affairs, we must take the time to do things right. If we rush things, if we do them willy-nilly, we run the risk of painting ourselves into a corner.

Personally, I am very proud to be a member of a political party that has done its utmost to ensure that our country has access to an even bigger market. I am very proud to belong to the political party that signed an agreement with Pacific Rim countries. Consequently, today, Canada is one of the countries, if not the country, that is party to the most agreements with other countries. I am very proud to have fought one year ago, under the leadership of prime minister Stephen Harper, who signed the largest number of agreements with other countries in Canada's history. Yes, I am very proud that, under the leadership of the member for Abbotsford, we signed that agreement and that we are now doing what is required to enshrine it. We are doing this so that our workers, exporters, businesses, SMEs, and creators of wealth have access to a larger market.

[*English*]

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in my province of British Columbia, trade deals signed by the Harper Conservative government and successive Liberal governments, especially over the last 10 years, have cost 21,000 jobs in value-added manufacturing in the forestry industry. We have lost 21,000 lumber-producing and pulp and paper jobs, which were well-paying, solid, lifetime jobs. This has had devastating consequences for some of our communities.

I am curious what my Conservative colleague would say in response to this question. Why did the Conservative government, during its time, not focus more of its efforts on facilitating domestic trade and improving opportunities for small and medium enterprises instead of negotiating these flawed trade deals that are sacrificing a great many jobs at the local level and harming our economy?

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•(1235)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gérard Deltell: Mr. Speaker, we need to adapt to the realities of the market and the existing situation. That is life.

We can take a romantic view of the situation, where everyone is equal, everything is going well, life is good, and there is no problem because the wealth will be distributed to everyone. However, we need to create wealth in order to be able to do that. From what I can see, free trade agreements have resulted in the creation of real wealth across the country.

Today, one in five Canadian jobs are linked to export policies. One in five. We need to adapt to the new reality. I am feeling very inspired by General de Gaulle today. As he said, it is perfectly natural to feel nostalgic for the splendour of sailing ships, but no policy worthy of the name can ignore the realities. The same is true here. Markets and doors are opening around the world and Canada needs to be part of that. This reminds me of the fearmongering that we heard in 1988, particularly from the Hon. Ed Broadbent, a man for whom I have a lot of respect and regard but who was completely mistaken in this matter.

He is happy that we have free trade agreements to ensure our country's prosperity.

[*English*]

Ms. Rachael Harder (Lethbridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member stated quite clearly in his speech that trade is in fact good for Canada. It is good for our economy overall; it is good for our present, and it is good for our future.

Would my colleague elaborate on how trade agreements in Canada benefit tomorrow's young people? I want to know the impact they have on our youth.

Mr. Gérard Deltell: Mr. Speaker, it is interesting that when we talk about exports, we are talking about creating jobs. When we talk about exports, we are talking about products made here in Canada that we are selling somewhere else. As a result, someone else is giving money to Canada. It is the Americans, Europeans, Japanese, or whomever. This is good for Canada, because we are bringing in fresh, new money here.

When we talk about opening the door, we are also talking directly to youth, because youth are involved in high-tech business and high-tech manufacturing. In my own riding, as I am sure is the case in other hon. members' ridings, I have a lot of businesses that are hiring bright young people with high-tech facilities and skills. This will create new products that can be sold offshore, and that offshore money will come back to Canada. This is how we create jobs in Canada. This is what is good for youth all around this country.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ): Mr. Speaker, in his speech, my colleague championed free trade in Canada and elsewhere in the world.

He took the opportunity to recognize the sound economic thinking of several Quebec separatists, such as Jacques Parizeau and Bernard Landry. I would like to thank him for that because federalists, who

tend to favour ideology, so seldom acknowledge the economic contributions, wisdom, and importance of Quebec separatists.

In his speech, he also talked about how exports are vital to creating wealth for people. In Quebec's economy in particular, exports have slumped in recent years. Quebec has been in a trade deficit situation since the early 2000s, and the manufacturing sector has lost a lot of jobs, more than 220,000. The number of jobs has kept falling in recent years. Canada has different economic priorities, such as supporting western Canada's oil economy.

Will these natural resources end up having a negative long-term impact on our economy? For one thing, we will have to cope with the aftermath of oil extraction and deal with climate change. For another, they are hurting Quebec's economy.

Does my colleague think that the Canadian economy is negatively impacting Quebec's economy?

Mr. Gérard Deltell: Mr. Speaker, the answer to that question is no.

In response to each of the points in my Bloc Québécois colleague's argument, I would say that, when we are having an economic debate, it is very important to consider all the information.

Yes, I am pleased to recognize Jacques Parizeau and Bernard Landry and remind the House of their contributions. I do so without any acrimony and in all sincerity. I know that in their political family, things have not always been easy, especially on the left, since the unions vigorously opposed the free trade agreement. Mr. Parizeau and Mr. Landry had the courage to say that it was good because it was going to create jobs in Quebec.

The member talked about a certain reality in Canada, specifically that some areas of the economy sometimes produce more than others. Businesses need to adapt to that reality, but what does that mean? It means capitalizing on start-up companies, which employ people with specific high-tech training. That is also what real wealth creation is about. It is about creating companies in which those people are going to produce things that do not yet exist. That is what is going to create the need, create the sale, and create exports.

To respond to what my colleague said, indeed there is a lot of oil in Canada and that is good. I am quite pleased about that. Need I remind the hon. member about the equalization payments Quebec has been receiving for far too long? What about the big ticket for the economy and the very future of this country, the energy east project we are still waiting for the government to decide on? We think this project is good for Quebec, good for Alberta, good for Canada, and good for all Canadians.

•(1240)

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to rise in the House to discuss and debate Bill C-13.

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Oddly, since this morning, except for a few interventions, very few people have spoken to the content of Bill C-13. This bill seeks to enact legislative amendments to comply with a World Trade Organization treaty or agreement that was signed to facilitate trade. I would say it is not an extremely controversial bill. We are supporting the bill at second reading simply because there are very few changes in it, since Canada is already largely compliant with the terms of the trade facilitation agreement. Very few legislative changes will be needed.

However, given that one of the arguments put forward by the government and those supporting the agreement's ratification is that this will truly help small and medium-sized business, we would also like to see, not just in the bill, but in the government's actions, concerted efforts to promote the economic activity of SMEs. Unfortunately, the government's efforts in that regard have been rather lacklustre from the start of its term. We hope this will change.

I very much enjoyed hearing the various debates from both sides of the House. They did not necessarily pertain to the bill itself, about which little has been said, but focused on who is the staunchest supporter of free trade in the House. I find that very amusing because arguments are being bandied back and forth, and members are accusing other members of not supporting free trade as much as they do. What we should note is that very little is being said about the content. Not much was said about the impact of this bill, except for the impact according to major economic theories and concepts, which we do not disagree with when it comes to trade. Canada is a nation that exports and imports. Its economy is open and benefits from the opportunity to develop through exports.

No one objects to that, and that is why the NDP will be voting in favour of this bill at second reading, just like we voted in favour of various other initiatives, such as the Agreement on Internal Trade. The NDP has also supported various trade agreements that have been signed, including those with Jordan and South Korea. That explains why, in some situations, we are still waiting to see what decisions the government will make, particularly with regard to the Canada-European Union comprehensive economic and trade agreement, for which the previous Conservative government promised specific compensation for dairy farmers and fish processors, as well as for the provinces, for drug expenses. We do not really know what the Liberal government is going to do about that.

With regard to the agreement with the European Union, we are not opposed to it at first glance, but we need to carefully analyze the compensation that will be granted by the government, if any. This may seem surprising because I often hear my Conservative colleagues and, to some extent, my Liberal colleagues saying that the NDP is against trade agreements and free trade. That is not the case. Unlike the other parties in the House, the NDP is more focused on the content of these trade deals.

This is extremely important because we need a lens we can use to evaluate our support for these agreements. I have not really heard these arguments from the Conservatives in the past. I have not heard them from the Liberals, either.

I would like to tell you a story. After the trade agreement between Canada and the European Union was signed, about two or two and a half years ago, Prime Minister Harper returned, and we discussed

that trade agreement in the House. The day after the signing, the first statement in the House by the Liberal leader, now the Prime Minister, was to extend congratulations on signing the agreement. He said that the Liberals supported it, and he asked when we might have it. This seems quite absurd to me, since a trade agreement is a contract. In a contract, there is content to be reviewed to ensure that it is appropriate for Canada's needs and what Canada is seeking.

● (1245)

That is why we need a lens, an evaluation grid or a set of principles for assessing the content of these agreements.

The NDP always evaluates three particular factors before deciding whether to support an agreement or not. First of all, any trade agreement between Canada and its partners must bring definite economic benefits for Canada. We are not talking about a zero-sum game. We fully realize that both parties may gain something. What should concern us is whether Canada gains something in the end.

It is important to realize that, in any trade agreement, some industries benefit more than others. Some of them may even lose in the deal. It is necessary to assess the overall economic impact of the agreements.

That is where the problem lies in the case of the trans-Pacific partnership. In the House, the Liberals and the Conservatives are ready to support it without first studying its economic impact on the country. This is pure carelessness, dogmatism, and irresponsible behaviour.

As parliamentarians, our duty is not to rubber-stamp a trade agreement simply because it is a trade agreement. We first have to clearly determine what the specific and overall pros and cons are for Canada. That has not been done in the case of the trans-Pacific partnership.

In fact, it is very rarely done for most trade agreements. It is rare for a specific study by the Department of Finance or Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada on how a trade agreement will affect the Canadian economy to be tabled in the House.

The first prerequisite is therefore that the trade agreement must have a positive effect on the Canadian economy with regard to growth and industry.

Second, such an agreement must be reciprocal. A trade agreement between Canada and a trading partner must afford Canada the same access and conditions that Canada gives its partner within its own borders. That would seem obvious, but it was not the case when we concluded certain agreements in the past.

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For example, in the foreign investment promotion and protection agreement we signed with China, a number of elements did not ensure reciprocity between Canada and China. Nevertheless, the two parties in the House were fully prepared to sign the agreement. It is worth noting that the agreement has not been ratified since it was signed four years ago.

This makes me smile, because people gripe about why the Liberal government still has not brought the trans-Pacific partnership to the House for ratification, when the Conservative government signed agreements such as the one with the European Union and the foreign investment promotion and protection agreement with China that were never put before the House for ratification.

The third condition is that a trade agreement with any partner must comply with conditions regarding environmental protection and the protection of workers' rights. In general, it must respect and promote the protection of human rights in the countries concerned. Once again, despite the claims made on both sides, this point does not seem to be of particular interest to the House or the committees studying the matter.

Since 2011, my first year in the House of Commons, we have been extremely consistent about supporting or rejecting trade agreements discussed in the House. We rejected agreements with Honduras, Panama, and Colombia, because those countries do absolutely nothing to protect human rights.

In committee, the two parties told us that signing a trade agreement would automatically promote the development of human rights and that there was no need to include provisions in the trade agreement.

●(1250)

They said that reviews would be carried out year after year regarding the human rights situation and how the treaty affected human rights. Systematically, there is never any follow-up on this issue. As a result, agreements are signed with countries that consistently violate human rights. We still sign agreements without bothering to try to insert provisions that will safeguard human rights and the environment.

That is why the agreements with Panama, Colombia, and Honduras were rejected by the NDP. That is why the NDP supported the Canada-Jordan Free Trade Agreement and the Canada-Korea Free Trade Agreement. Since the free trade agreement between Canada and the European Union seems to pass this test at this time, we are quite willing to study it further.

That is a long way from the picture of the NDP that the Conservatives and the Liberals are trying to paint. When all is said and done, we are the only party that is truly responsible with regard to international trade, because we are the only party that does not automatically support everything that is put before the House and everything that is signed by successive governments. We pay attention to details and content.

In progressive circles, more and more people find that in fact, a trade agreement is not a bad thing in itself. It is an agreement that establishes the rules of the game between the two trading partners. However, it will be extremely important to amend this content in the future, because it is not just a matter of free trade.

These treaties generally say very little about the barriers to be eliminated; they have more to say about protecting investors. Indeed, that was the case for the trans-Pacific partnership. The bulk of the TPP, and of the agreements tabled in the House, is not about eliminating tariff or non-tariff barriers; it is about protecting investors in the various countries.

If we could stop talking about free trade, since the issue is not free trade, and start thinking about what could be called fair trade, Canada would be in a position to alter its negotiating stance with the various countries and include elements that would add a significant component of fairness to its trading. This would ensure that the benefits underlying international trade would go to everyone, not just to the privileged few. That is the basis of the NDP's argument on international trade.

Let's return to the issue of the TPP. We should ask ourselves whether it will be beneficial or not and whether there will be benefits for Canada or not, once again, beyond the usual elements—clichés, I would call them—concerning international trade. Let us ask the question. About 80% of our exports to the countries that already trade with Canada, namely all of the 12 countries in the TPP, are raw and semi-processed materials. If we look at what we import from those countries, 80% of those imports are high value-added products.

We are therefore in a situation where, economically, many experts complain about or lament the deindustrialization of Canada, Canada's shift toward an economy that used to be industrially diversified, an economy that relies increasingly on raw or barely processed materials.

I think we would do well to have a debate and think seriously about how the Canadian economy has evolved in that direction, particularly since the 1980s.

●(1255)

The economic impact I mentioned includes another factor. Tufts University estimated that the trans-Pacific partnership would cost up to 60,000 jobs in Canada. However, the Conservative government, on whose watch we negotiated that agreement, did not present any economic analyses about job gains or job losses. What will the economic impact be with respect to growth?

In the United States, that analysis was done, and it was estimated that the trans-Pacific partnership could increase the gross domestic product by nearly 0.20% by 2025. We are going to make major structural changes in the American economy and all of the signatories' economies for a 0.20% gain. At some point, we have to be critical of these agreements, not with regard to the principle of trade, but with regard to what our goals are when we negotiate and ratify these agreements.

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There are very few analyses and debates in the House, only platitudes. That is a real shame, and also the reason I am proud to be part of the NDP. Since at least 2011, the year I was first elected, that party has taken a consistently procedural approach to analyzing these agreements. We want to continue doing so. An agreement such as the trans-Pacific partnership will have repercussions for supply management and the cost of prescription drugs, since there will be a big impact on intellectual property. These are repercussions of unprecedented scope. Let us not forget that Canada is currently the country with the second-highest cost of prescription drugs in the world. The agreement also gives enhanced protection and profits to makers of brand-name products rather than makers of generic products, which will drive up the cost of prescription drugs significantly. In the end, not only will the people have to foot the bill, but the provinces as well, since many of them have drug insurance plans, like the hospital sector, which is managed by the provinces.

So I want to reiterate the NDP's support for this bill, which, in the end, does not have a big impact on the Canadian economy, but I also want to remind members that our primary role is not just to say yes or no to a trade agreement, when we have to decide on one, but to analyze it in depth to see how it will affect the Canadian economy and the people we are supposed to represent in the House.

I urge members to take a much more rigorous approach in this regard. We are already doing so. We are giving the other parties an opportunity to step up.

• (1300)

Mr. David de Burgh Graham (Laurentides—Labelle, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I commend my colleague from Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques on his speech. I very much appreciate that he takes the time to go over every agreement.

At the beginning of his speech he said that the Conservatives and Liberals support the trans-Pacific partnership without having conducted an economic study. That is not really true, however. The first thing we see on the website on consulting Canadians on the TPP is a link to the economic impact of Canada's potential membership in the TPP. That is the first thing we see. We are studying the issue. Consultations are under way to determine which questions need to be answered. That is why we have not done it yet. We are still studying it.

I just wanted to point that out to my colleague and tell him that these studies are ongoing, contrary to what he says.

Mr. Guy Caron: Mr. Speaker, I very much appreciate that consultations are being held on this right now, but that is not the same as having systematic impact assessments of these agreements done by the Department of Finance and the Department of International Trade, who have been negotiating these agreements in recent years since they have the resources to do so.

I worked at a number of agencies in civil society and I noticed a difference in holding consultations where stakeholders quite often have an opinion from the outset, whether for or against this agreement, and having studies done systematically by the government departments that are involved and have the necessary resources to undertake these studies since they work in this area on a daily basis.

It is good to get the opinions of certain stakeholders during consultations, but it is not the same as having those departments submit a report to Parliament so that we can really delve into the issue of the agreement's impact.

[English]

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to follow on my colleague's theme on consultation around the trans-Pacific partnership.

Friends in the labour movement have said that their consultation of the TPP was a phone call two hours prior to a meeting, asking if they could they come to it. That is not really meaningful consultation to us.

I want to pursue my colleague's conversation about supporting the trade facilitation agreement, which we do support. Could he talk a bit more about concerns around worker safety? Some of the changes around hazardous goods in transport would conceivably involve more exposure to hazardous materials, including pest control. Could he tell us about his concerns around protecting workplace safety and about conversations we might have in committee on this issue?

[Translation]

Mr. Guy Caron: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, who pointed out that I was guilty of something I criticized in the House: people not talking about Bill C-13.

Basically, Bill C-13 will make changes to Canadian law affecting the goods in transit through Canada that are not destined for the Canadian market. In many cases, such goods will go through airports, for example. Products that are subject to specific regulations in Canada will touch down on Canadian soil on their way to somewhere else.

Under this legislation, Canadian regulations will not apply to such products, which raises concerns about Canadian workers handling these goods in transit. I do not think that has really been analyzed.

We do not feel that the government has paid enough attention to worker health and safety concerns. I hope the committee will take a good long look at this issue if this bill passes at second reading, which it probably will, to ensure that it will not chip away at worker protection.

• (1305)

[English]

Hon. Larry Bagnell (Yukon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member mentioned in his thoughtful speech that people should not support or approve trade agreements before they had seen all the details. I am assuming he is also saying that parties should not speak against or take a position against agreements before they have seen all their details.

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[Translation]

Mr. Guy Caron: Mr. Speaker, as soon as we see that certain provisions of a trade agreement are going to have serious repercussions on certain areas, and that they have not been taken into consideration, of course we are going to take a position. I think the members of all parties need to keep an open mind, depending on the provisions of the agreement and the analysis that is done.

If a trade agreement seems unacceptable at first glance, a party can oppose it, but if the facts then address those concerns, people need to be open enough to change their minds. At present, with respect to the trans-Pacific partnership, we have not seen any willingness to make changes or ask for changes during negotiations.

We are currently faced with a *fait accompli*, and a number of provisions regarding supply management, the protection of intellectual property, and many other areas are hardening our original position on the issue.

Mr. François Choquette (Drummond, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate my hon. colleague on his analysis of this very important bill. Of course we want to continue to diversify our economy, support SMEs, and encourage exports through good agreements. However, some agreements are better than others.

My colleague mentioned the trans-Pacific partnership, or TPP, among others. I wonder if he could explain why it is a bad agreement and what makes a good agreement versus one that is completely unacceptable.

Mr. Guy Caron: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for his question.

I did summarize the main problems posed by the trans-Pacific partnership. The government has not really done an impact analysis of the higher drug costs that the provinces will have to cover. This increase will be quite significant and this alone should justify an impact study, at least for the provinces.

There are concerns about supply management. Concerns were expressed about the European Union agreement and compensation has been promised. In fact, it was clear that there would have to be a transition period for dairy producers so that they can adjust to changes in import quotas for cheese. It is obvious that the trans-Pacific partnership significantly undermines Canada's supply management system. Once again, there is no transition period or mechanism that will help the industry adjust to the changes resulting from the trans-Pacific partnership.

Certain aspects of other agreements led the NDP to oppose them. For example, the NDP opposed the agreements with Honduras and Colombia because of those countries' lack of respect for human rights. In Colombia in particular, labour activists, people who want to improve the lives of workers, are killed, routinely murdered, and the government is not doing anything about it. None of these factors convinced the other two parties to include protections in these free trade agreements.

The human rights issue also played a role in the case of Panama. We do not agree with the fact that successive governments have refused to make some sort of connection between tax treaties and trade agreements. Panama is a tax haven and we are signing a free trade agreement with that country that will help facilitate tax evasion

in more ways than one. Once again, this did not persuade any of the parties in the House to make amendments. That is why we voted against that agreement.

We need to analyze the impact of each trade agreement in order to determine the benefits as well as the missed opportunities. That explains the positions we take.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Before we continue, I would like to remind hon. members that we have just wrapped up a period of debate where members had 20 minutes for speeches followed by 10 minutes for questions. We are now going to continue with a period of debate with 10 minutes for speeches and five minutes for questions.

• (1310)

[English]

Mr. Jamie Schmale (Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by welcoming all my colleagues on all sides of the House back from their summer. I hope they enjoyed it as much as I did. Like many of them, we attended fairs, we did farmers markets, we did parades, we met with constituents, and championed causes. I was very happy to visit all communities in my riding from Dorset and Cardiff in the north and northeast to Seagrave and Millbrook to the south, and many other towns in between. Like every other summer, I ate way too much Kawartha Dairy ice cream. I am looking forward to Thanksgiving when only the gravy and pie can make me feel less guilty about my summer indulgences.

However, today I am pleased to be back to speak to Bill C-13. The bill would implement the trade facilitation agreement concluded by our previous Conservative government at the World Trade Organization's ninth ministerial conference in Bali in December 2013. I hope the Liberal government will continue to build on this record of international trade.

Bill C-13 would create jobs and opportunities for Canadians. It would simplify customs procedures, reduce red tape, expedite the release and clearance of goods, reduce costs associated with processing, and make international trade more predictable for Canadians. It would help protect jobs, not only for Canadians but also in jurisdictions right around the world.

As we all know, Canada is a trading nation. We have a rich history in the development of trade. From the Hudson's Bay Company to our oil fields in Alberta, it has all contributed to the Canada that we know and love today.

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The TFA will be the first multilateral trade agreement concluded since the WTO was established over 20 years ago. Once it enters into force, global merchandise exports are estimated to increase by \$750 billion to \$1 trillion per year. The exports of developed economies are estimated to increase by \$310 billion to \$580 billion per year. The overall boost to the world export growth is estimated to be up to 2.7% and 21 million jobs created. That is just shy of the population of Ontario and Quebec. However, these jobs will not just be in developed nations like Canada; they will be spread right across the globe. It is important that Canada act quickly on trade matters to show the world that Canada is open to the world for business.

The TFA will enter into force once two-thirds of WTO members have completed their domestic ratification process. Currently we sit at 81. We need 108 of those members. So far, those include EU, United States, and Japan. Since June 2016, the following nations have ratified the agreement: Madagascar, Senegal, Moldova, Saudi Arabia, Saint Kitts and Nevis, El Salvador, Honduras, Peru, Uruguay, and Mexico. That is just since June of this year. Many other nations have already ratified the agreement: India, China, Turkey, and New Zealand just to name a few.

As members can see, this would not benefit just one or two nations. Bill C-13 would benefit countries and people right across the globe, including people in our hometowns, and my hometowns of Bobcaygeon and Fenelon Falls. In fact, this agreement would reduce total trade costs by more than 14% for low-income countries, more than 15% for middle-income countries, and more than 13% for upper middle-income countries.

To quote the World Trade Report 2015:

The TFA is groundbreaking because it provides for assistance to developing and least-developed countries to help them implement the Agreement. The Trade Facilitation Agreement Facility, launched by the WTO in July 2014, is designed to help deliver this support to them....

WTO work on trade facilitation culminated in the adoption of the Trade Facilitation Agreement...at the WTO's Ninth Ministerial Conference in Bali in December 2013. It is the first multilateral agreement since the establishment of the WTO in 1995.

We all know that Canada is a trading nation. We cannot afford to allow ourselves to be alienated. We cannot afford to exclude ourselves from these multinational agreements. Our refusal to be involved would put Canadians at a distinct disadvantage in international trade when compared to nations with bilateral or multilateral agreements. Our previous government knew this, which was why we were responsible for signing agreements across the globe. We understood the importance of trade, which was why we worked so hard to ensure that Canadians had access to large and growing markets. The TFA will introduce further rules and regulations that will level the playing field for Canadian businesses.

• (1315)

I want to take a minute to relate this back to my riding. My home riding, like many members' ridings, is filled with small and medium-sized businesses. There are many local businesses across Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock that would benefit from the TFA and other trade deals. These deals would allow farmers in Cannington, Kirkfield, and Bethany to export their products abroad and would give businesses like Kawartha Dairy a level playing field to expand and create opportunities for Canadians. We as parliamentarians need

to ensure that Canadians are given the opportunity and ability. Agreements like the TFA and TPP would do just that.

I am pleased to see that the Liberal government introduced this bill. I hope to have that signed, and once it is done I hope the Liberals continue on other agreements, like the TPP, which I mention many times. As we all know, the TPP is an international trade agreement. It represents a market of almost 800 million potential customers, with a combined GDP of \$29 trillion. It is projected that the TPP would boost Canada's GDP by \$4.3 billion by 2040. Staying out of the TPP would likely lead to a reported \$5.3 billion in GDP losses, according to the Global Affairs Canada website.

There is a very strong case to be made for ratification. The government needs to take action and ratify the TPP to ensure that hard-working Canadians have not only the opportunity but the ability to prosper as well. In Canada, one in five jobs are directly linked to exports. Canadians cannot afford to be left out of this deal. Trade can grow our economy without spending billions of dollars that we do not have.

I do not normally find myself in agreement with the members opposite, but I am happy to see the Liberals are continuing to build on our previous government's accomplishments, of course regarding trade. I hope that this deal is signed and that our colleagues across the floor will ratify the TPP as soon as possible.

If the Liberal government were serious about trade, it would adhere to the recent G7 leaders' declaration and commit to ratifying the TPP, independent of the United States. That would ensure that Canadians are given a strong position to grow and expand their businesses in the future, putting something into place that would lower trade barriers and increase market access, which will be critical for the success of Canadian businesses and the protection of Canadian jobs.

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

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the member's comments. I do not necessarily agree with him. When I think of the World Trade Organization, I see it as a body of 160-plus countries around the world that came together in recognition of the value of trade. It is something on which our government has been fairly aggressive in following suit and making sure deals get done. We just signed off on a Ukraine trade deal. We can cite the many efforts of our Minister of International Trade. She has spent a great deal of time in the EU area trying to get that deal back on track.

The Conservatives continually make reference to the TPP. The Prime Minister made a commitment that we will be looking at it and consulting, and at some point in time there will be a debate on it.

Government Orders

When we think of the World Trade Organization, and Bill C-13 today, this is probably one of its greatest achievements. We need 108 countries to ratify, and I understand 91 have actually signed it. I wonder if the member could provide his thoughts on why this is important. Ratifying this would send a very strong message to the World Trade Organization for the efforts it put into the agreement.

Mr. Jamie Schmale: Mr. Speaker, I think we are on the same side on this. We on both sides of the House see the importance of ratifying this deal. We all know trade is a growing part of the world economy. We are seeing that nations across the world are reducing their trade barriers. They are not being protectionist. They are not isolating themselves from the world. We are seeing that right now at the WTO. We need 108 of those countries. More and more come on all the time. I listed the group that has ratified since June and some that have done it before. Also, these include countries that believe in the same things we do: labour laws, environmental protection, and the list goes on. These are countries of all sizes and progression levels.

We are seeing that trading, opening up our barriers, and getting our products out are good things, especially in Canada. We are an exporting nation and we need to get our products to market. Hopefully, we can continue trade agreements like we are seeing and like we have seen already. There are 51 total agreements. We would like to see that progress continue to the benefit of our economy and Canadian jobs.

• (1320)

Ms. Rachael Harder (Lethbridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague mentioned in his speech that it is very important for Canada to act quickly on this trade negotiation. He went on to say that, without trade, Canada would be at a significant disadvantage on the world stage.

The question I have for my colleague is this. I would like him to elaborate on why this is so important. In particular, I am interested in hearing his thoughts with respect to small and medium-sized business within the agricultural sector. This sector is very prominent in my community. It is very important to us to make sure we get commodities to market, within agricultural sectors. Therefore, I would like him to elaborate with respect to the importance of this trade agreement.

Mr. Jamie Schmale: Mr. Speaker, as my friend from Lethbridge probably knows, a large section of my riding is agriculture-based. A large section of that economy is based on the success of agriculture, whether it be beef, canola—just name it and we probably have it in Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock. Therefore, getting those products to market and expanding those opportunities are huge.

When we have 800 million potential new customers, especially related to the TPP, with a growing middle class that wants our high-quality products, we have an opportunity to not only boost the revenue for those farmers but also encourage the young farmers who want to get into it if they know they can make a living, succeed, and get their product to market easily. That is something the government can do. I believe every government has a responsibility to create an environment for private sector growth. This is one way to do it, especially in our agriculture communities. We often talk about getting young people involved in agriculture, and this is one way to ensure there are opportunities. If people know they can get their

product to market and earn a living, that is a little more incentive to get those young farmers starting up and getting their operations going.

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to join this debate on Bill C-13, the trade facilitation agreement. Of course it comes as no surprise that I am going to be supporting this piece of legislation, as technical as it is and as difficult as it was to read through it.

I think it gives us an opportunity to celebrate the good work of the previous minister of international trade, the member for Abbotsford, a friend on this side of the House, whose hard work on behalf of Canadians has borne fruit.

It was at the ninth WTO ministerial conference, as the previous member mentioned, in Bali in September 2013, that ministers adopted the Bali package, which included allowing developing countries more options for providing food security, boosting least-developed countries' (LDC) trade, and helping development more generally. The largest deliverable was streamlining customs procedures through the trade facilitation agreement, which is now before us, which we have a chance to debate, implement, and ratify.

The previous government not only made free trade a centrepiece of its economic agenda but also demonstrated that Canada can be ambitious and bold when it seeks to expand access to new markets for Canadians. Over a 10-year period, the Conservative government was able to negotiate free trade agreements with 46 different countries, bringing the total number of countries with which Canada has trade agreements to 51. That is 4.6 agreements per year.

The Liberal government, on the other hand, is coming close to one year in office, next month, and it has exactly zero. It has zero new agreements ratified and consented to by Her Majesty. I think that is quite the record for the first year of government. It has no record on free trade to call its own. In fact, a previous treaty that we implemented and that this House passed, Bill C-11, the Marrakesh treaty, was passed last session and was, again, the work of the previous government and is now implemented in legislation.

I am not complaining. I would like to see the government implement more legislation based on the good work of the previous government, especially on the free trade agenda. There are lots of legacy pieces there that should be implemented. Again, when the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade spoke on this bill originally, he said this would reinforce the government's strong record on trade; except there is no record of which to speak. It is the record of the previous Conservative government, and in fact, all the good ideas and all the hard work of the member for Abbotsford, who contributed more to Canada in terms of free trade agreements signed, negotiated, and ratified than any other member in maybe the last 50 years.

Government Orders

There is no record for the Liberal government to promote, reinforce, or strengthen here. This bill, though, does lay the foundation for the potential of a record. There is an opportunity. There are two more free trade agreements that the government could bring before the House so we could ratify them properly.

Like many good ideas, they started with the Conservatives and, I want to again mention, the member for Abbotsford who deserves high praise. Many of these agreements, many of these successes, are thanks to him and the work he did when he was a member of the government.

Bill C-13 is good news. We know that trade accounts for 60% of Canada's annual GDP and represents one in five Canadian jobs that are tied to export. Members of the WTO have ratified the TFA, like those mentioned before: the United States, the European Union, China, and Japan. They expect Canada to do the same without delay.

We know that 108 countries, two-thirds, have to complete the domestic ratification process. The sooner we do it, the better for Canadian investors, importers, and exporters of goods, including small and medium-sized businesses, which will benefit from the implementation of the TFA.

I want to highlight one business in my riding that would benefit from this agreement. This business is called Tundra Process Solutions. We know that in Alberta right now times are tough in the oil patch. Easily more than 100,000 jobs have been lost. That is direct jobs and does not even count the indirect jobs losses.

I was pleased today to join the member for Lakeland, when she was doing a press conference on her e-petition. It was very successful. She had an oil worker there from Grande Prairie, talking about the job losses he is seeing.

Tundra Process Solutions is one of those companies in the oil patch that is diversifying. It is a great Canadian story. It is in my riding. It has purchased a manufacturing company that builds equipment, from California, and actually moved it to Calgary. It is a manufacturing oil and gas company producing equipment that it is selling to the world today.

With this type of agreement today, it could export to new countries, bypassing some of these very complicated customs rules and tariff rules, as well as the paperwork, the red tape required for it to move its product to a willing buyer in another country. This is how it is going to make money. Its 25-plus workers who depend on export will be quite happy when the TFA is passed, because their jobs depend on finding new markets for the product they produce.

With the lowering of tariffs across the globe, the cost of complying with customs formalities has been reported to exceed, in many instances, the cost of duties to be paid. Trade costs are among the most fundamental factors shaping the evolution of trade.

● (1325)

We have to remember that we do not live in a static world. If Canada does not move forward with more free trade agreements, others will, and that, by definition, will start cutting us out of those markets. Therefore, we have no choice but to pursue a free trade agenda.

The TFA is critical for many parts of its legislative measures, and there are two of them specifically. I will mention one of them, but there are two important ones. Article 11.8, which the member for Louis-Saint-Laurent mentioned before in debate, prohibits the application of technical regulations to goods moving through a WTO member's territory from a point outside its territory to another foreign point as a good in transit. This would affect Tundra Process Solutions Ltd., because it is moving equipment from country to country, some of which is being purchased and some of which is being leased. Oil and gas is an international business. Many companies are horizontally and vertically integrated and can move equipment around, so this is good news for them. This measure is an excellent one to introduce.

I think of the government's financial agenda and the budget it proposed. This would have no financial implications for the Government of Canada. This would be paid for with current dollars.

To support the TFA's implementation, Canada, Germany, the U.K., and the U.S. provided support in December 2015 for the launch of the Global Alliance for Trade Facilitation. It is a fantastic idea. It is more good news from the previous government and more good work by the member for Abbotsford. This initiative was designed to assist developing countries to implement the TFA.

The UN Conference on Trade and Development estimates that the average customs transaction involves 20 to 30 different parties; 40 documents; 200 data elements, 30 of which are repeated at least 30 times, and the re-keying of 60% to 70% of all data at least once. In my previous life working for a chamber of commerce, I know that specific point is when errors begin to happen and costs begin to rise, because the errors have to be fixed but oftentimes can start to compound. Then there are regulatory problems and delays in the business. If this agreement could help to at least reduce these by 50%, it would be a huge change for Canadian businesses. Again, there are many technical and legislative benefits to the TFA.

I want to finish on the principle of the matter. Free trade at its core is about a willing buyer and a willing seller meeting and making a voluntary transaction. Its core is about freedom. As former Prime Minister Sir Wilfrid Laurier said, "Canada is free and freedom is its nationality."

The great debates in Canada were about reciprocity, reciprocity between provinces, and reciprocity with our closest trading partner the United States. That has been the fundamental part of what it means to be a Canadian. We have had a lot of trouble with internal trade between our provinces. We can all agree that we want new markets to send our products to, so they can see the maple leaf and the words, "Made in Canada". I am proud of that when I see it overseas when I travel. Trade between people regardless of nation they live in is the ultimate proof of the nationality of freedom that Sir Wilfrid Laurier spoke about.

Government Orders

The economy does not need more stimulation or subsidies. What it needs is us to get out of the way and get rid of these laborious customs rules and the paperwork involved. That would provide more freedom for businesses owned and operated by Canadians. It is for Canadians. We can recapture that spirit of freedom that Sir Wilfrid Laurier encouraged.

Let us pass the TFA and move on to the true record of the government. It could ratify the Canada-European Union free trade agreement. It could ratify the trans-Pacific partnership agreement. It would have a record to speak about. It would have a legacy to speak of in 10 years. It would have something to look back on. It could say it was a government that promoted free trade.

Free trade has always been a part of this country. It was about reciprocity in a different generation. Today we talk about free trade. Sometimes we talk about fair trade, equitable trade, but it is about choice. It is about giving Canadians the choice on whom they choose to trade with, and with the least rules possible. Let us give Canadians the freedom to trade as they wish. Let us live up to Sir Wilfrid Laurier's call that "Canada is free and freedom is its nationality". That quote appears in our new passport. It is in each so that every single Canadian can turn to the middle of the page and look at it right there. That encapsulates what Canada is all about. It is about the freedom to trade, the freedom to associate, the freedom to speak one's mind.

I cannot see anything better than ratifying this agreement and proceeding to ratifying the next agreements.

• (1330)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member started by commenting on the Stephen Harper government and how the Conservatives were great at trade. I believe he said there were 46 trade agreements, to give the impression they have done a fantastic job in signing trade agreements.

However, we need to recognize that while the European Union agreement is with over 26 countries, it is just one agreement. Yes, it does affect many countries, but it is somewhat misleading. This deal has been off the tracks. If we check with some of the European countries, we will find out to what degree the current government is trying to resolve outstanding issues because the previous Conservative government did not get the job done.

The current Minister of International Trade and the Prime Minister got the job done in a trade deal with Ukraine. It was the president of Ukraine who stood in the House and challenged us to bring forward a trade agreement. I was there, as were other members. This is an initiative, and trade is important.

However, when the member looks at Bill C-13, the trade facilitation agreement was signed off on in 2013. The United States signed it and ratified it in January 2015. Why does the member believe that the Conservatives did not ratify it in a more timely fashion?

Mr. Tom Kmiec: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Winnipeg North because I was worried that over the summer he had become

mute, but I am glad he will be here in the chamber debating as passionately as he always has.

As I mentioned, there were 4.6 agreements reached per year, and the Liberals do not have any of that. They have proceeded with exactly zero agreements. They have had a year to work on this, including an entire summer. They are free to go around the world to find countries willing to sign a free trade agreement with them. It is really up to them. It is not up to us to go around trying to find partners for them to negotiate with.

I will mention the free trade agreements that we negotiated. We negotiated an agreement with the European Union in good faith, and since then individual EU member states have been changing their minds as politics changes and new parties have come into power. That is simply the nature of politics, especially international politics. We have national elections in different countries. We have the European Union with 26 member countries, and any one of them can go in a different direction after signing onto the agreement.

Again, it is not a matter for us to debate whether they made a right or wrong choice. When they signed the agreement, we signed it in good faith at the time, and it is up to them to ratify it.

• (1335)

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, why did the Conservative government not focus more of its efforts on facilitating trade and improving opportunities for small and medium-sized enterprises instead of negotiating flawed trade and investment deals that sacrificed tens of thousands of Canadian good-paying jobs?

Mr. Tom Kmiec: Mr. Speaker, again, I will bring up the example of a medium-sized company in my riding.

The company was actually purchased from California and moved to Calgary, Canada, despite the economic downturn, specifically because the purchasers wanted to produce the product in Canada and export to different countries. They wanted that made-in-Canada Maple Leaf showing on the side of their products, because it is a sign of reliability, durability, and of a group of people who will stand up for their product. There is a warranty when one buys from a Canadian company.

In every single free trade agreement that we sign, there will be companies that will suffer and workers who may lose their jobs, because they are at a competitive disadvantage. However, every time we sign one of these agreements and ratify it, we gain from it. We gain new markets, new companies come about, and companies move around.

If we do not do this, if we do not sign onto agreements, specifically multilateral agreements, then we will be cut out of other countries' markets. This would affect our automotive industry, and especially industries that are integrated across the border, because they will have difficulties moving Canadian product to be part of the final product exported to another country.

The international scene moves. We cannot just be at a standstill and simply ignore the fact that free trade agreements, bilateral and multilateral agreements, are being signed all the time by other countries. We need to keep up, and this is a great way to do it. Bill C-13 is a great bill, and we should be supporting it.

Government Orders

[*Translation*]

Mr. François Choquette (Drummond, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to rise in the House today to discuss Bill C-13, which would enable Canada to ratify the World Trade Organization's agreement on trade facilitation, the TFA.

The main purpose of the TFA is to update and simplify customs procedures, primarily as regards non-compliant goods and goods in transit. I think it is very important to talk about this issue, which will also be good for small and medium-sized exporters in the greater Drummond area.

People tend to see political parties in terms of stereotypes. Many people think the NDP is against all international agreements, which is not at all the case. We are in favour of fair international agreements that respect workers' health and rights as well as social aspects, the environment and the health of the planet, all of which are extremely important.

That is why we encourage trade that can be conducted through WTO agreements, for instance, but also why we are totally against the trans-Pacific partnership, or TPP. It is not a free trade agreement per se. Rather, it is an agreement on the rights of investors disguised as a trade agreement. I will come back to that point a little later. It is really troubling. It is worth noting that this agreement could cost us up to 60,000 good Canadian jobs, with only a negligible impact on economic growth.

The NDP has long been the champion of small business. During the 2006 and 2008 election campaigns, I helped the NDP candidate. I came back in 2011 and 2015, and every time, the main economic theme was small business. Small and medium-sized businesses are the largest job creators in the country. They are really important. We must support them, encourage them, and do everything in our power to improve their situation. Facilitating international trade and exports is very beneficial to the small businesses in my region, greater Drummond.

On that subject, I have here an article from *La Presse Affaires* of May 4, 2015, explaining the importance of SMEs in the greater Drummond area. The article is called "Drummondville, the industrial oasis along the 20". The 20 refers to highway 20. In it, the economic power of SMEs in the beautiful Drummond region is described as an industrial oasis. In our region, we are very proud of the economic diversification that we have managed to achieve over the years.

I would like to read the first paragraph of the article.

Drummondville definitely continues to amaze us. Last year, the most vibrant region in Quebec had a record \$220 million in new industrial investments, which led to the creation of 1,069 jobs, which is also a record.

When we pool our resources to encourage SMEs and to promote economic diversification, we can succeed, just like Drummondville. We really have to commend the work of the Société de développement économique de Drummondville, the SDED, and successive municipal councils, which did an excellent job. Martin Dupont, SDED's executive director, said, "Almost 30 years ago we took a chance on SMEs and diversification, and it paid off."

• (1340)

I could give several examples of why Drummondville is an industrial oasis in Quebec and Canada. It is home to the biggest

business incubator in Canada, which is quite something. In fact, that business incubator expanded again recently. That is a testament to the strength of entrepreneurship in our region. It is extremely important.

We are going to support Bill C-13, despite our concerns regarding goods in transit that are hazardous or prohibited in Canada. They may be accepted, but they will have to be checked. If the bill is passed at second reading, we will have to do everything in our power in committee to protect the health and safety of those working in proximity to these goods in transit.

The NDP wants to facilitate economic trade for our SMEs, foster economic diversification, and promote the entrepreneurship and competitiveness of the small and medium-sized businesses in the greater Drummond area that we are so proud of. There is a reason why a journalist referred to us as an industrial oasis. However, we also want to ensure that we do this through agreements that are good for Canada and that will not be harmful to Canadians.

Unfortunately, the agreement that is going to hurt Canadians is the TPP. Nobel Prize winning economist Joseph Stiglitz called the TPP "the worst trade agreement ever". Obviously, neither the Conservative government nor the new Liberal government did their homework. This agreement will be disastrous for supply management, which Quebec is fighting tooth and nail for.

This summer, I visited all of the rural municipalities in my riding, and I saw the members for Berthier—Maskinongé, Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, and Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot. We talked to hundreds of farmers from all over central Quebec to find out which issues are important to them. They told us that protecting supply management is extremely important, as is staying away from agreements like the TPP, which will hurt our economy and the agri-food industry in Quebec and Canada. People told us that we all have to work very hard on this.

Another problem farmers brought up was diafiltered milk. The Liberal government has to get moving on this issue. It has not yet dealt with the situation, and that is horrible. Hundreds of the people we met while visiting the 18 municipalities in my riding told us they are worried about the price of milk, which is determined to a significant extent by diafiltered milk entering the country illegally. Unfortunately, the Liberal government has so far failed to step up on this issue, and that is really disappointing.

In conclusion, we are in favour of free trade agreements when they benefit Canadians, promote a healthy environment and protect workers' rights. That is what really matters, and that is why I will continue to fight for greater Drummond's local economy and its SMEs.

Government Orders

•(1345)

Mr. David de Burgh Graham (Laurentides—Labelle, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Drummond for his speech, which I appreciated.

He said he travelled around his riding, which I also did. Did my colleague encourage his constituents to take part in the consultations on the TPP, so that the government can hear the opinions of Canadians and so that their voices can be heard?

Mr. François Choquette: Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his question.

The TPP is indeed an agreement that raises a number of concerns in my riding. This agreement will not benefit Canadians in any way whatsoever. I mentioned Joseph Stiglitz earlier, but other experts agree. In fact, we have an expert coming to Drummondville in a few weeks to explain the TPP agreement.

To answer my colleague, yes, we will do the work necessary to ensure Canadians are consulted. What we are hearing is that this agreement is disguised as a trade agreement, but it is really more of a financial agreement. It is going to hurt our economy. What matters to me are my constituents and the small businesses in greater Drummond, and this agreement is not going to help the economy of the greater Drummond area.

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for his speech and for mentioning that he organized an event in his riding focusing on agriculture and certain factors, especially trade agreements, that will have an impact on the agriculture of tomorrow.

In my speech, I spoke about the considerations that guide the NDP in the debate and when deciding whether to support certain trade agreements or all trade agreements presented. I spoke about the fact that we need to ensure that there is reciprocity, and that Canada needs to ensure that it benefits from an agreement. The country on the other end of the agreement can also benefit. Nevertheless, we must ensure that the net benefits to Canada are positive and that the agreements also include elements that protect the environment, workers' rights, and human rights.

I would like to hear what my colleague has to say about applying these principles and the effect on the NDP's decision-making process, in terms of determining whether to sign free trade agreements.

•(1350)

Mr. François Choquette: Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague from Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques for coming to my riding to present his private member's bill on the transfer of family farms and small businesses.

Everyone supported his bill. It was unanimous. I hope that the Liberals will pass it because it is an excellent bill that will help our businesses and our family farms across Canada.

When we think about concluding trade agreements, we have to ask ourselves whether it is a win-win situation. As my colleague said, it is extremely important that we give it some thought to ensure that these agreements are fair. Yes, we have to be able to benefit from them. Yes, our SMEs will be able to keep diversifying, be

competitive, and export, but we must also ask ourselves whether we considered human rights, and the rights, health, and safety of the workers in these countries. It is very important. Unfortunately, among the countries that are party to the TPP there are some that do not respect workers' rights. There are some that do not respect human rights and are downright dangerous in that regard. We have to be careful.

We have a responsibility to ensure that any agreement we sign is satisfactory not only on an economic level, but also in terms of social, environmental, and health concerns.

[*English*]

Mr. Brad Trost (Saskatoon—University, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to rise, and according to the clock, I will be taking us to question period.

I have to admit, I always enjoy talking about subjects involving trade. Frequently when we talk about issues in the House, they tend to be fairly specialized. Ironically Bill C-13 that we are talking about today is very specialized.

However, trade is one of those aspects, one of those things, that affect all of us in Canada. For a country approaching 40 million, it seems a bit odd to characterize it this way, but Canada is a small, open economy. We do a lot of trading. If we look at our history, this is how Canada really started and got going as a geographic, national entity with the fur trade pushing out, starting in New France, Quebec, and pushing through Rupert's Land through all of western Canada.

One thing that has been observed throughout the years is that people sometimes forget the obvious about trade. The same principles that involve individuals, one person to one person, actually apply to nations.

Trade works. I trade with the Government of Canada. It gives me a salary. I do a certain amount of work as a member of Parliament. I then go out and trade. I go to the grocery store. I give people at the grocery store a piece of paper, known as a \$20 bill, and they give me some products back, perhaps milk, bread, pizza, or whatever. Those obvious interactions that we see in our day-to-day lives are the same basic principles that need to be applied as we go forward, as we look out to the entire world. The idea that I have something of which I have too much or that is not useful to me, pieces of paper, for example, dollar bills, money, and someone else has some food, etc., that idea works in both directions.

Trade is good. Economists have long recognized that free trade in an idealized state is the absolute best. Although for reasons of national security and other reasons like that, we may not always have pure and perfect free trade. We know that as far as economic conditions are concerned, the freer the trade, the better the conditions.

This brings us today to a bill known as Bill C-13. It has a fairly long name, talking about the various amendments it is bringing forward to a variety of acts. What it is really doing is helping us fulfill some of our agreements that we have as far as the trade facilitation agreement goes. It is a bit of a technical issue.

Statements by Members

What it basically says and what we know is that, in the modern world, trade needs to have some sort of rules. For countries like Canada that operate under the rule of law, not just in theory but in practice, this is a good thing because there is so much information, so many different standards, and so many different products and ways to measure things, that it is difficult to understand. In the old days when we had a considerably less sophisticated economy, considerably fewer products, less product depreciation, and not quite international trade, rules were not so much necessary. However, now if we are going to trade something, be it electronics, be it herbicides, be it certain forms of foods, we need to understand what we are getting on both sides.

That is ultimately what the purpose of the legislation is. It is to help bring Canadian standards, in the few ways that they do not conform, into a way that other countries can understand, that we can work with, and that we can mutually benefit from.

It is interesting reading the background literature, and no other members have brought this forward. These technical standards, these technical issues, some exist just because different countries do things in different ways. Some, however, are used to deliberately discriminate and favour local businesses for political purposes. However, these technical issues, these matters of interpretation and understanding of how to trade across borders are actually more costly than the standard tariff barriers that we often think about. These are often the key issues when it comes to trade negotiations between countries, so it is very important that we get these right. Again, this benefits Canadians.

When we have these debates and when we talk about free trade, I admire and I listen to the good stories of my colleagues who talk about the small businesses, the medium-sized enterprises who are held up by these barriers. However, the one thing I always listen for and I do not usually hear it, sometimes I do, is how this benefits consumers, because each and every Canadian is a consumer, every day. We do not always know where our products come from, but of course, we are happy and proud when a product is made somewhere close to home.

● (1355)

I love to buy things made in Saskatchewan. I am from Saskatoon, so that is quite natural. However, if we can get better quality products by trading something we have that is superior to something they have that is superior, this is a win-win. We need to remember this whenever we engage in a trade negotiation.

The more efficient we can make the system, the better we can make the trade rules, the more the consumers win. This needs to be emphasized over and over again. Canadians need to export but when we export, we will import more. If we import more, that will help our consumers. Therefore, both exports are a win and imports are a win for Canadian consumers.

This also brings me now to the next thing which has been talked about today. This legislation does not deal directly with the trans-Pacific partnership trade deal, but is somewhat viewed as a—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): I want to remind the hon. members coming into the House that there is

someone speaking so please keep it down. I understand summer was great and you want to catch up. If you do not mind, if there is something you want to talk about, maybe just go to the back or outside and come back after.

I would like to ask the hon. member for Saskatoon—University to continue please.

Mr. Brad Trost: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I will conclude. I understand we are getting close to question period.

The trans-Pacific partnership has been talked because this involves trade rules and trade rules naturally are one of the fundamental issues being discussed. As much as I have encouraged and been supportive of the government ratifying the TPP, having been our party's Canada-U.S. critic for basically the last year, I am very pessimistic about the probability of the TPP being ratified. I base this upon the reality of the American political system.

There are two candidates, one who is vocally opposed to it and one who previously supported it and now does not. I also have had conversations with congressional leaders. This leads me to give the following advice to the government and to our party as we begin to take a look at our positions going forward.

With the likelihood being very small that the TPP will be successful, while continuing to urge its acceptance, we need to begin to position ourselves for the future. Acceptance of Bill C-13 helps us to do that, but we need to begin to think not where the puck is, but as Wayne Gretzky always used to note, where the puck will go. That means we need to begin to think about how to position ourselves on bilateral trade agreements with countries that are involved in the TPP if this agreement does not pass. If the United States is not going to be part of this agreement, we need to think about how we can begin to open up markets and expand markets, not just with current trading partners with which we have agreements, such as Mexico, but countries like Japan and other countries there.

This is a technical legislation, but it is necessary legislation. It is based on two basic things: free trade is good and the rule of law is necessary to have that free trade.

After question period I will be more than happy to take questions from my colleagues.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

● (1400)

[English]

HAMDARD WEEKLY

Ms. Sonia Sidhu (Brampton South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize a milestone anniversary for *Hamdard Weekly*, the flagship publication of Hamdard Media Group.

Founded in September 1991, *Hamdard Weekly* is a pillar of the Punjabi community across North America as it is the first weekly periodical to be printed in Toronto, Vancouver, New York, and California.

Statements by Members

The 25th anniversary of *Hamdard Weekly* helps to appreciate that we can have multicultural and multi-language media in Canada. It is a source of our cultural strength through diversity. Twenty-five years on, it continues to put our reports on the talent, the issues, the culture, and the interests of the Indo-Canadian community in Canada.

Once again, I congratulate Mr. Amar Singh Bhullar and Mrs. Karamjit Bhullar, the hard-working team behind *Hamdard Weekly*. We can all look forward to their next publication on newsstands.

* * *

ARVA FLOUR MILL

Mr. Bev Shipley (Lambton—Kent—Middlesex, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the historic Arva Flour Mill is located just outside of London in my riding of Lambton—Kent—Middlesex. This family-owned mill has not had a workplace accident in over 197 years. It supplies unique quality products locally and across Canada, it is a great tourist attraction, and it is the only operational mill like this in Canada. It is really an operating museum.

Earlier this year, Arva Flour Mill was subject to a federal labour code inspection, which also governs large mining operations. This will close the Arva Flour Mill. Thousands of Canadians have signed petitions asking the government to exempt this one-of-a-kind flour mill from the Canada Labour Code provisions.

I encourage the minister to do the right thing and exempt the Arva Flour Mill from the Canada Labour Code.

* * *

[Translation]

HIGH-SPEED INTERNET

Hon. Denis Paradis (Brome—Missisquoi, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it has been 15 years since Brian Tobin, who was then the industry minister, promised to get Canada connected from coast to coast. Obviously, there is still a lot of work to be done.

In Canada, nearly 100% of the urban population has fibre optic Internet service, while a million households in rural Quebec still do not have access to that type of Internet. Rural residents are not second-class citizens.

I would like to thank Réal Pelletier, the mayor of Saint-Armand, for his initiative and involvement in getting Brome—Missisquoi connected.

[English]

In 2016, high-speed Internet with optic fibre is no longer a luxury and should be considered an essential service. It is urgent that we connect people living in rural Canada. It is urgent. It is urgent that our rural communities be connected to optic fibre now.

* * *

HASTINGS COMMUNITY LITTLE LEAGUE

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it really is true, "If you build it, they will come".

The old 1950s Hastings Park baseball field was renovated and for the first time in the tournament's 65-year history, Hastings little

league hosted the Little League Canadian Championship. To make the occasion even more special, the field was renamed after Richard Saunders, president of Hastings Community Little League for a decade and current first vice.

There is no question that his decades of involvement have helped shape the lives of countless Van East youth. To the point, Hastings little league did not disappoint. It won the tournament and went on to represent Canada at the prestigious tournament held in Williamsport, Pennsylvania, the very tournament that has seen many of its participants go on to big league careers, like Canada's Jason Bay, Adam Loewen, and the Blue Jay's Michael Saunders.

Please join me in thanking Richard Saunders for his years of dedication and congratulate Hastings Community Little League for doing us proud at the Little League Baseball World Series.

* * *

●(1405)

RECOVERY DAY OTTAWA AWARD

Mr. David McGuinty (Ottawa South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to announce that my constituent and friend, Sister Louise Dunn of the Congregation of Notre Dame, is receiving the annual Recovery Day Ottawa Award for commitment and perseverance in supporting recovery for families affected by addiction.

As a high school teacher, she became concerned about the terrible impact of drugs and alcohol on her students, so at the tender age of 48, she retrained as an addiction counsellor. Thirty-three years ago, she co-founded Serenity Renewal for Families in my riding of Ottawa South.

Sister Louise has overseen the development and implementation of a wide range of unique dynamic programs that have helped thousands of individuals and families cope with the long-term effects of addiction. Sister Louise exemplifies what it is to be a Canadian by graciously helping those who are most in need.

Congratulations to Sister Louise.

* * *

JONATHAN SOBOL

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today I rise to remember Jonathan Sobol, who was tragically killed in a traffic accident at the end of August at the age of 33.

Jonathan was the executive chef of the Starbelly restaurant in my riding and a graduate of the SAIT culinary program. He was a passionate advocate for local farmers and producers. He made sure to visit the farmers who supplied the food he used in the dishes on his menu.

Statements by Members

Jonathan was committed to his community, sharing his talent and passion for preparing meals with the children and youth at Haysboro school. He taught them to plant a garden, sow their seeds, cultivate their harvest, and have it all later prepared by Chef Jonathan himself.

Jonathan was also volunteering his time at the South Health Campus hospital, assisting it in its community gardens. He brought his passion for cooking local everywhere.

On behalf of my constituents, I would like to remember and honour Jonathan as a talented, thoughtful and passionate man, who made an incredible contribution to his community.

I express my deepest condolences to the Sobol family, especially his parents Bob and Gina, and to all of those who called Jonathan a friend. He will be missed.

* * *

[Translation]

MAURIL BÉLANGER

Mrs. Alexandra Mendès (Brossard—Saint-Lambert, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, a year ago, Mauril Bélanger was running his eighth election campaign with his usual energy and enthusiasm. For Mauril, no vote was a sure thing. He believed that he had to win voters' trust.

[English]

The Hon. Mauril Bélanger knew how to inspire trust in others. He worked tirelessly for those he represented, be they constituents, Franco-Ontarians or his colleagues. He did not give up.

[Translation]

Unfortunately, the energy he invested in the 2015 election campaign quickly dissipated after he was diagnosed with Lou Gehrig's disease and the illness began to ravage his body. We all witnessed the terrible toll ALS took on this wonderful man.

[English]

However, there was a last battle to be won for Mauril. It was 2016, and he definitely wanted in our anthem "in all of us command".

[Translation]

Well done, Mauril. Thank you.

* * *

CHILDHOOD CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

Mr. Steven MacKinnon (Gatineau, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, September is Childhood Cancer Awareness Month.

Here are some statistics. There are over 10,000 kids living with cancer in Canada. More than 1,500 children will be diagnosed with cancer this year. Sadly, one in five children will not survive.

[English]

Even with those startling statistics, only 3% of all cancer research dollars in Canada go toward childhood cancer research.

Mr. Speaker, in 2007, my friend and your colleague, Chris Collins, the current Speaker of the New Brunswick legislative assembly, lost his son Sean after a four-year battle with cancer. Since Sean's passing, Mr. Collins has been dedicated to raising funds and

awareness for childhood cancer research in Canada. He is currently cycling through his second cross-country charity bike ride.

I encourage all members to support his efforts by donating to the Sears National Kids Cancer Ride.

[Translation]

This September, my thoughts are with Chris, Lisette, and Sean, and with all families affected by this cruel disease.

* * *

[English]

NATURAL HEALTH PRODUCTS

Mr. Dean Allison (Niagara West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this past weekend, I attended the Canadian Health Food Association East trade show in Toronto where I had the pleasure of meeting the folks from 88Herbs, a great company from my riding, located in the town of Grimsby.

Unfortunately, their business and the whole industry of natural health products are about to get hit with additional regulations imposed unilaterally by Health Canada bureaucrats. We are all a bit confused as to why this is happening. There are already regulations in place that were introduced by the Standing Committee on Health after meeting with hundreds of witnesses over a year review period.

The newly proposed changes will see many natural health products regulated using the same rules as drugs. Natural health products are not drugs. Therefore, why regulate them the same way? The result will simply be less freedom of choice for the consumer and reduced access to natural health products.

The current regulations have worked since they were put in place, and imposing additional ones is unnecessary and counterproductive. I strongly urge and ask Health Canada not to proceed with the new regulations of natural health products so businesses like 88Herbs can continue its excellent work.

* * *

● (1410)

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

Mr. Darshan Singh Kang (Calgary Skyview, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am a proud Canadian, a proud Albertan, and a proud Sikh.

We live in a nation where Canadians can practise their beliefs without fear of persecution.

Early this week a racist flyer was posted on the library door at the University of Alberta against people who wear turbans. Faith is important to countless Canadians, and the turban is a central part of Sikhism. I condemn this racist act, which has no place in our schools, our communities or our nation. However, it persists.

Statements by Members

I take pride in knowing that these attitudes do not represent the majority of Canadians because we want to raise our children in peace. I feel for the individual who posted this flyer because he or she has difficulty understanding that our nation is strong because of our cultural diversity.

I echo the words of the Minister of National Defence today, “Proud to be Canadian, proud of my service to Canada, proud of my turban”.

Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa, Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh.

* * *

[*Translation*]

RIVIÈRE-DES-MILLE-ÎLES PARK

Ms. Linda Lapointe (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I recently had a chance to visit the Éco-Nature centre and Rivière-des-Mille-Îles Park.

Éco-Nature's mission is to protect, conserve, and thoughtfully improve the Rivière des Mille Îles by creating educational programs on the environment as well as ecotourism initiatives.

Essentially, the Rivière des Mille Îles is 42 kilometres of fresh water dotted with 101 islands where, every year, over 150,000 people come to enjoy water sports and outdoor activities.

Éco-Nature just received a large grant from Canadian Heritage that will increase the number of visitors to its facilities.

Lastly, I want to congratulate Jean Lauzon and Michel Aubé on their work to launch this innovative social economy enterprise over 30 years ago, one that is dedicated to preserving and improving the Rivière des Mille Îles, the namesake of my riding.

* * *

[*English*]

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I think I speak for all members in the House when I say that it has been a busy summer. From Williams Lake to Anaheim Lake to Quesnel to Prince George to Vanderhoof, I met with the hard-working friends and families of my beautiful riding of Cariboo—Prince George. I met them on the doorsteps and in the coffee shops, whether it was talking to the father of three at the 90th annual Williams Lake stampede or the line worker at L&M forest products in Vanderhoof. They all expressed serious concern about the fact that no new softwood lumber agreement has been reached. Instead of offering assurances that a new deal would be reached, the Minister of International Trade had this to say: It is a complex issue.

It took the Liberals 10 months to realize that trade deals do not magically negotiate themselves. We are 23 days away from the end of the grace period, with no deal in sight. It is simply shameful that the Liberal government is once again ignoring the 150,000 British Columbians employed by the natural resources sector. Once again, it appears that western Canada has been shut out.

WORLD BONE MARROW DAY

Mr. Majid Jowhari (Richmond Hill, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, September 17 was World Marrow Donor Day. For that occasion, I rise to share a story of my summer. It is a story of commitment, community engagement, patience, and kindness. It is of the efforts of Ms. Niki Rad and Ms. Babain of Richmond Hill to mobilize over 35 young volunteers in organizing a stem cell registration event in Richmond Hill. In working closely with Canadian Blood Services territory managers Ms. Sharr Cairns and Ms. Beth Frise, they provided for more than 700 patients in Canada waiting for a stem cell match.

This summer, Richmond Hill made me proud to see a community united, with love in their hearts, swabbing their cheeks, hoping to be the one match that would cure a Richmond Hill girl of cancer but would also help others in need.

I encourage all to participate in this initiative.

* * *

NORTHERN JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM

Ms. Georgina Jolibois (Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am so inspired by the enthusiasm shown by the young northern first nations and Métis students for leading the way in creating small businesses driven by local people.

Vice-principal Mrs. Gail Gardiner-Lafleur is offering the Junior Achievement program to her class in Beauval. As a group project, the class will learn how to create small businesses in the area of food sustainability in northern Saskatchewan.

Ms. Teri Huntley has been teaching the Junior Achievement program at the La Loche Community School. Successful small businesses by local students were created. Last year, Fontaine twin sisters made beaded earrings to sell to their inspired customers. Denesuline Apparel was created by Kurtis Herman. Collin Montgrand built Montgrand's Photography. Jeffrey Kline started up his coffee shop.

I encourage other schools across northern Saskatchewan, on and off reserve, to offer the northern Junior Achievement program to help young entrepreneurs.

* * *

● (1415)

ALBERTA ECONOMY

Hon. Jason Kenney (Calgary Midnapore, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in recent decades, Alberta has been an engine of Canada's prosperity. Tens of billions of dollars have been generated by our industry and have been shared with Canadians. Hundreds of thousands of good-paying jobs have been created for people in every corner of our country. However, today Albertans are hurting. Nearly 100,000 full-time jobs have been lost in the last year. Insolvencies and bankruptcies are at near record highs. Thousands of small businesses have closed, and people are losing their homes.

Albertans understand that commodity prices fluctuate, but what they do not understand are governments that are making a bad situation much worse, that are jamming on the brakes in the midst of a recession.

The Liberal government is part of the problem, raising income, business, payroll, and other taxes and now threatening to impose a huge job-killing carbon tax. It is delaying and shutting down critical pipeline projects that would give us access to world markets.

It is time to stand up for Canada's energy industry. It is time to be proud of the wonderful work of our men and women in the energy sector.

* * *

CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT

Ms. Pam Goldsmith-Jones (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize how important public dialogue is for building public confidence and public trust. This summer, thousands of Canadians participated in town hall meetings on climate change, electoral reform, veterans issues, seniors issues, and national defence. Even more important, citizens stood up and offered their expertise in business and on the environment to help lead those discussions.

In my case, I would like to thank Tim Schoulz and Megan Dias on electoral reform; James Glave, Jim Pawley, Anna Stucas, David Hocking, Merran Smith, Peter Truheit, and Matt Rockall on climate change; Anne Titcombe, Sue Elliott, Pat Hunt, and Alison Leaney on seniors issues; and Harry Greenwood on veterans issues. It has been a remarkable summer of creating consultation and connection right across the country, and all parliamentarians are very grateful.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[English]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Hon. Rona Ambrose (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am deeply concerned about the Liberal government's motivation for deploying our men and women in uniform to sub-Saharan Africa. Our soldiers are not pawns on the Prime Minister's political chessboard to use as his fastest way to a UN Security Council seat.

There is no transparency about this dangerous mission. There is no commitment to a vote on it. Canadians deserve an answer.

How can they trust that the Prime Minister is not just using our troops as pawns to achieve his own political goals?

Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have been extremely transparent about my mandate letter on re-engagement in the peace operations of the United Nations. When it comes to our important part in the world, I made it quite transparent on the recent trip I took to Africa with retired general Roméo Dallaire and Madame Louise Arbour. We have been extremely transparent. We announced, in Canada, the number of troops we will be committing to peace operations before we actually went to the UN ministerial peacekeeping summit.

Oral Questions

When we have more information and do a thorough analysis, we will communicate with Canadians properly and debate it in this House.

Hon. Rona Ambrose (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today we learned, through the media, that the Prime Minister has entered into negotiations with China on an extradition treaty.

According to Amnesty International, the Chinese justice system's use of torture is widespread and systematic, and the repression of human rights is a regular occurrence. Does the Prime Minister not understand that our openness to China should be about encouraging them to adopt our values for human rights, as opposed to us giving in to theirs?

Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we announced our national security and rule of law dialogue during the Prime Minister's visit on September 12 as part of a comprehensive discussion on expanding our relationship with China. The U.S. and the U.K. had similar dialogues. Rule of law discussions included extradition and transfers of offenders, where we stressed that Canada is governed by very high standards.

The promotion and protection of human rights is an integral part of Canadian foreign policy and is a key priority in our relationship with China.

● (1420)

Hon. Rona Ambrose (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it seems like the Prime Minister's principles cannot withstand anything more than a stiff breeze. Back in August, his Immigration minister explicitly rejected a formal extradition treaty with China so long as China still had the death penalty, but today, the Prime Minister is at the table hammering out an agreement.

I follow the news. I do not recall any headlines that China has abolished the death penalty.

What has changed in China in a month to lead the Prime Minister to completely abandon Canada's principles on human rights?

Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, one thing for certain is that our government believes in dialogue, and through dialogue, we can have change. With this dialogue, we will be able to push human rights. When it comes to agreements like this, we will be pushing on the issue of the death penalty, because human rights are an integral part of our government's mandate.

*Oral Questions***TAXATION**

Hon. Rona Ambrose (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, later today, this House will vote on the Liberal clawback of the tax-free savings accounts. Our party is standing up for the taxpayer and will vote against this unfair tax hike on retirement and retirees.

Conservatives believe in letting Canadians keep more of their hard-earned money and in giving them every possible opportunity to save it. Instead of expanding opportunities for Canadians to save for themselves tax free, why does the Prime Minister always think that he knows better than Canadians when it comes to their own hard-earned money?

Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we want to be clear that we are working on behalf of middle-class families and those Canadians who want to get into the middle class. We are ensuring that we have a retirement system that works for Canadians. We focused on doing that by working in collaboration with the provinces to enhance our Canada Pension Plan.

We continue to see TFSAs as an important part of our retirement system and are continuing them along the path where they will be increased with the CPI. In total, we will have a strong retirement system for all Canadians.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Rona Ambrose (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Prime Minister unveiled his latest tax increase aimed at Canadian families and workers.

The analysis done by the Minister of Finance shows that the increase in CPP premiums will lead to job losses and a slowdown in our economy for the next 12 years.

Will the Prime Minister admit that this tax increase will make life more difficult for Canadians who are looking for work, paying their bills, and saving for retirement?

Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we know that it is very hard for Canadians to save enough money to retire in dignity. That is why we found a way to work with the provinces to improve the Canada pension plan. This way, the situation for a quarter of the 1.1 million Canadians who are currently having a hard time retiring will improve.

* * *

[*English*]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Liberals have repeated across the country how much they hate Stephen Harper's targets on greenhouse gases. They even warned, in their platform, of the "catastrophic" impact of the Conservative plan.

We agree. It was inadequate. The Conservative plan was, as the minister said, "fake", so why are the Liberals copying it?

Hon. Jim Carr (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in the Vancouver declaration, we and all the provinces and territories agreed to implement GHG mitigation policies in support of meeting or exceeding Canada's 2030 target of a 30% reduction below 2005 levels of emissions, including specific provincial and territorial targets and objectives, and to increase the level of ambition

of environmental policies over time in order to drive greater GHG emission reductions, consistent with the Paris agreement.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we need only to look at article 4 of the Paris agreement to see that they have yet to do anything to fulfill our international obligations and they know it.

It was the same thing with the Kyoto protocol. The Liberals did nothing and we had one of the worst records in the world on greenhouse gases. They were forced to admit that they had no plan to respect the Kyoto protocol. It was an exercise in public relations.

Why can the minister not admit that it is the same thing in this case? For the Liberals it was pretence. The Liberals were a bunch of phonies when they signed the agreement in Paris. They had no real intention of reducing greenhouse gases. For the Liberals, this is just another public relations exercise.

● (1425)

[*English*]

Hon. Jim Carr (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are working together now to develop pan-Canadian solutions with provinces and territories, unlike the previous government.

We are taking action already on important issues, like clean electricity, reducing methane emissions from the oil and gas sector, and investing in public transit and green infrastructure.

Our government has been clear from the outset that we are taking a different path from that of the Harper government, which set targets with no plan in place to meet them and undertook no action on climate change.

* * *

[*Translation*]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Ms. Hélène Laverdière (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, while the Prime Minister is in New York trying to win a seat on the United Nations Security Council, allegations of torture against two of our intelligence agencies have resurfaced.

Torture is morally wrong. It is ineffective because information obtained through torture is unreliable. Torture violates all of our commitments. Nevertheless, the ministerial directive that allows the use of information obtained through torture is still in place.

Is the government prepared to repeal that directive?

*Oral Questions**[English]*

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the reports conducted by Mr. Justice O'Connor and Mr. Justice Iacobucci are extremely important reports.

The core recommendation in both of those about additional scrutiny, particularly through a parliamentary process, is in fact a recommendation that we are moving on right now with Bill C-22 before this House.

More broadly, the fact is that the entire national security framework is under review. We are consulting Canadians; more than 7,000 are already participating in that process. We are determined to keep Canadians safe—

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

* * *

*[Translation]***IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP**

Ms. Hélène Laverdière (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to know whether the directive that allows the use of information obtained through torture will remain in place.

[English]

Meanwhile, today we learned that the government is negotiating an extradition treaty with China. The justice department has always been against such an agreement because Chinese courts do not use the same standards as Canadian courts, torture and physical abuse remain prevalent, and the death penalty is still widely used, including against political dissidents.

Is this what the Prime Minister calls standing up for human rights?

Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government has been very clear. We need to start a dialogue, and we will be able to promote the objectives of the Canadian government.

We believe in human rights. It is through dialogue that we can actually start a conversation and be able to have those difficult conversations with nations where there are issues with human rights. Without dialogue, we cannot move the yardstick forward. Being loud from here in Canada does not help the people who are actually affected by human rights violations.

* * *

*[Translation]***SOFTWOOD LUMBER**

Hon. Denis Lebel (Lac-Saint-Jean, CPC): Mr. Speaker, since this Parliament began, I have been saying that the softwood lumber issue is urgent and that hundreds of thousands of jobs are at stake.

Trips to New York are all well and good, but nothing ever comes of them. This government is all talk and no action. It never delivers results.

Will the government let these workers keep their jobs? In 2006, Canada signed an agreement that worked quite well. Why is this

government incapable of signing an agreement? Dialogue is a good thing, but a monologue where only the Americans are talking is not getting us anywhere.

Mr. David Lametti (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this issue is a priority for our government. We are in the midst of serious negotiations on this issue. This summer, we had a very productive meeting with industry producers and workers in Saguenay.

Even the spokesperson for Unifor in Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean praised the efforts of the Minister of International Trade. We do not want to reach just any old deal. We want a good deal for Canada.

Hon. Denis Lebel (Lac-Saint-Jean, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the president of a union affiliated with the FTQ, which received a larger tax credit than others from this government, will obviously agree and have nothing but good things to say.

The fact is that things are at a standstill. Sixty-five per cent of Canadian softwood exports go to the United States. In my riding, 70% of the economy relies on forestry, and these people have delivered nothing.

It is fine to say that discussions are ongoing. However, when the minister returned last week, she said that they would have to go to court.

Are we treating our American partners with respect by taking legal action against them?

● (1430)

Mr. David Lametti (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we held consultations across the country. We understand the differences in regional positions. We understand the nuances of Canadian industry. It is part of what we are doing to move things along with our American partners. We have not yet ruled out any options in this matter.

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*[English]***GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES**

Mr. Blaine Calkins (Red Deer—Lacombe, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday we found out that the Liberals decided they were entitled to line their own pockets with so-called moving expenses for their own political staff. For instance, the Minister of Environment and Climate Change gave more than \$20,000 to one of her Liberal staffers for the move, but documents reveal that money was not for movers or hotels at all.

If the total cost paid for services was over \$20,000, but there were no costs associated with the actual move, exactly where did the taxpayers' money go?

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians expect public resources to be used responsibly and economically, and we are committed to living up to these expectations.

Therefore, I will let members know that any assistance in relocation was done in accordance with the rules.

Oral Questions

We have set the standard high. We are committed to working with Canadians to ensure that we have an open and transparent government. We will ensure we continue to raise the bar.

Mr. Blaine Calkins (Red Deer—Lacombe, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I wish her luck explaining the next several years of this.

The Liberals' sense of entitlement is never ending. The Minister of Foreign Affairs approved \$146,000 to relocate nine political staff. The Prime Minister gave a whopping \$220,000 to five political staff, one of whom was handed \$126,000 alone. These costs are at the discretion of the ministers and the Prime Minister.

At a time when Alberta families are losing their homes, how can the Prime Minister justify these ridiculous expenses?

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when one is committed to an open and transparent government, luck is not needed. Transparency is needed, and we encourage all members to hold this government to account.

We have built a diverse team of passionate, hard-working, and extremely qualified Canadians to deliver the change people voted for. The team in Ottawa came from coast to coast to coast to serve Canadians and deliver on our promise to grow the middle class and those working hard to join it. This meant that many people had to move to Ottawa, with their families and children, across the country to serve in Ottawa. As part of this process, some employees received assistance in relocating. Any assistance—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Elgin—Middlesex—London.

Mrs. Karen Vecchio (Elgin—Middlesex—London, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am shocked at the level of Liberal entitlement when it comes to spending other people's money. Liberal staff received more than \$1.1 million in payouts to relocate to Ottawa. These cash payouts included more than \$100,000 to a single Liberal staff member. This should be no surprise, given that the Liberal whip took \$70,000 to move down the street.

With unemployment rising and families struggling to make ends meet, why did the Liberals think it was somehow okay to spend taxpayers' hard-earned money on these outrageous staff expenditures?

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Once again, Mr. Speaker, Canadians expect public resources to be used responsibly and economically, and we are committed to living up to these expectations. We committed to an open and transparent government, and that is what we are doing. Any expenses incurred were in accordance with the rules. We will continue to raise the bar.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we already knew that this government was on a spending spree and had no respect for taxpayers' money. Here is yet another in a long line of examples. Two PMO staffers racked up outrageous relocation expenses. One claimed over \$125,000 and the other \$80,000.

Some Canadians have a hard time putting money aside. Will the government tell them who exercised poor judgment in approving

these expenses? Which two staffers did the Liberal regime treat so generously?

• (1435)

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians expect public monies to be used responsibly and economically. We are committed to living up to those expectations. The team in Ottawa came from coast to coast to serve Canadians and deliver on our promise to grow the middle class and help those determined to join it. Relocation expenses were reimbursed in accordance with the rules.

* * *

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Mr. Romeo Saganash (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is at the UN, where two of his ministers recently promised to implement the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

How can this be the same government that approved the permits for the Site C hydroelectric dam without consulting indigenous peoples?

The Minister of Justice has a constitutional obligation to ensure that indigenous peoples are consulted before those permits are issued. Is this what the new nation-to-nation relationship means to this government, violating the rights of indigenous peoples in such a careless manner on this issue?

[*English*]

Mr. Jonathan Wilkinson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in the fall of 2014, the former government approved the project and set a number of legally binding conditions with which the proponent must comply. The project is now in the construction phase.

As we outlined in the interim principles, project reviews are continuing within the current legislative framework and in accordance with treaty provisions. This includes not revisiting projects that have been reviewed and approved. I would note, however, that the proponent will need to comply with all applicable conditions.

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, what about the silence over there from the justice minister? I remember when she was a passionate defender of indigenous rights against Site C, when she said that it would damage Canada's international reputation and that it ran roughshod over aboriginal title; but now that she has the legal responsibility to protect indigenous rights, she has gone to ground, she is sitting there smiling away. Where is the moral courage?

I would like her to stand up and tell indigenous Canada if she still believes Site C project approvals run roughshod over aboriginal title, yes or no. It is a simple request.

Mr. Jonathan Wilkinson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as we stated in the announcement of the interim principles and the principles on January 27, and with the recent establishment of the panel that was reviewing EA processes, we are working to modernize and significantly improve how environmental assessments are conducted and major project decisions are made. As part of these processes, indigenous peoples will be meaningfully consulted and, where appropriate, impacts on their rights and interests will be accommodated.

* * *

JUSTICE

Hon. Rob Nicholson (Niagara Falls, CPC): Mr. Speaker, for more than 140 years under both Liberals and Conservatives, Atlantic Canada has had representation on the Supreme Court of Canada. It was not just a good idea; it is a constitutional convention. The Prime Minister has called this into question.

Surely, with four Liberal premiers down there and 32 Liberal members of Parliament, there must be one of them who is prepared to stand up for Atlantic Canada.

Hon. Jody Wilson-Raybould (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that our government introduced a process for the appointment of Supreme Court of Canada judges, to make it open and transparent. I look forward to the independent expert panel bringing back very qualified candidates, respecting regional representation, who are functionally bilingual, and represent the highest standards of jurists in this country. I know there will be a number of jurists from Atlantic Canada who will find themselves on that list.

Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, for 141 years, Atlantic Canada has had representation on the Supreme Court, but now the Liberals are prepared to overturn a 141-year constitutional convention and shut out Atlantic Canada. Why are the 32 Liberal MPs from Atlantic Canada prepared to allow their region to be the only region without representation on the Supreme Court?

Hon. Jody Wilson-Raybould (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member's question allows me to highlight the new process that the Prime Minister put in place for Supreme Court of Canada appointments. We respect the idea of having an open and transparent process to gain access to applications from a diverse group of qualified jurists from across the country. We respect the principle of regional representation and I am confident that when the independent expert panel brings back names to me to make recommendations to the Prime Minister, there will be high calibre Atlantic Canadians on that list.

* * *

• (1440)

JUSTICE

Hon. Jason Kenney (Calgary Midnapore, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the deadly drug fentanyl is plaguing western Canada. In the last 18

months, well over 400 Albertans have died from fentanyl overdoses. We need to send a message to drug pushers who are poisoning Canadians with fentanyl that to do so is tantamount to a death sentence.

When will the Liberals take action and introduce heavy mandatory sentences for fentanyl traffickers?

Hon. Jane Philpott (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member opposite for raising this important matter in the House. The matter of the opioid crisis in this country is a serious one. There are escalating challenges with access to fentanyl, including the fact that people are overdosing and dying as a result. We are working in a collaborative way. The response to the opioid crisis needs to be comprehensive and collaborative. I will be working with my colleague, the Minister of Public Safety, as well as many other colleagues across the country, to address this serious problem.

Hon. Jason Kenney (Calgary Midnapore, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister for her response, although she is not committing to tougher penalties. The Government of Alberta is not taking greater action and the Liberals today at the health committee voted down a motion by my colleague for Calgary Confederation for an emergency study on the fentanyl crisis at the health committee. We know that fentanyl is primarily produced in China. Much of it is smuggled to Canada, so did the Prime Minister raise these illicit fentanyl exports from China with his counterparts during his recent visit?

Hon. Jane Philpott (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the matter of the opioid crisis, including the fentanyl crisis, is a very serious one. There is no single player that is going to resolve this problem. It will require multiple departments of our government working with provincial and territorial colleagues, working with health care providers, and working at all levels to address access to fentanyl, including information for prescribers and the general public. All appropriate measures will be undertaken.

* * *

PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT

Mr. Erin Weir (Regina—Lewvan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Minister of Public Services appeared before committee to discuss the Phoenix boondoggle. The minister was very clear about one thing: it is not her fault. She tried to blame the previous government, her own officials, and pay centre employees—anyone but her. Today, the entire Phoenix pay system crashed.

My question is simple: whose fault is it this time? When will the minister take responsibility and ensure that all federal workers are properly paid?

Oral Questions

Hon. Judy Foote (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this government is committed to a secure, reliable, and modern IT system. We are working really hard to fix the issues around Phoenix. Our priority is to make sure that employees who work get paid for the work performed. That is what we are doing. We are working very hard to do that. We are not blaming employees who are working hard on this file. We have employees who are working to make sure that other employees get paid. That is where the focus is, making sure that people get paid for work performed.

* * *

[Translation]

DAIRY INDUSTRY

Ms. Ruth Ellen Brosseau (Berthier—Maskinongé, NDP): Mr. Speaker, dairy producers continue to pay the price for the Liberals' inaction. After promising to fix the problem of diafiltered milk, which is costing Canadian producers millions of dollars, the Liberal government has yet to take any action whatsoever. Once again today in committee, the minister had nothing new to offer: no plan, no vision, no solution. This is not at all reassuring. The government should be ashamed.

I call on the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food to do his job. When will he put an end to the consultations and finally take action to fix the problem of diafiltered milk?

[English]

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my hon. colleague's question and concern. However, in committee today we did discuss this issue and it is fair to say that most of us at least agreed that we do not want a date; what we want is a solution. This is something that we inherited and we intend to fix it, and we will fix it.

* * *

[Translation]

CANADIAN HERITAGE

Ms. Julie Dabrusin (Toronto—Danforth, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on Sunday, Tatiana Maslany won the Emmy for her role in the Canadian television series *Orphan Black*. The Minister of Canadian Heritage launched extensive consultations on the creation, discovery, and export of Canadian content in a digital world. This conversation will give Canadians the opportunity to think about ways to better promote the creative Canadian spirit.

Can the minister give us an update on the progress of these consultations and tell us how Canadians can participate?

• (1445)

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Toronto—Danforth for her excellent question. I also want to congratulate Tatiana Maslany on winning the Emmy.

Our artists and creators are among the most talented in the world and it is time to proclaim it loud and clear. Of course in the digital age they are facing major challenges. That is why at Canadian Heritage I have launched the biggest project in our history for the

creation, discovery, and export of content. I invite everyone to participate in these consultations.

Canada has a golden opportunity to become a leader in creativity and innovation and we are going to seize that opportunity.

* * *

[English]

AIR TRANSPORTATION

Mrs. Kelly Block (Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canada is the only major market in the world without a low-cost airline. The five million Canadian passengers who fly out of a U.S. airport each year are telling the Liberals with their feet that Canada needs a low-cost airline like Jetlines to compete. Unfortunately, Jetlines will become another casualty of the Minister of Transport's endless dithering. Will the minister wake up, get out of the way, and get Jetlines up in the air?

Ms. Kate Young (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government is working collaboratively to address the Canada Transportation Act review and develop Canada's future transportation system. We are analyzing the application by Jetlines and Enerjet for an exemption to foreign-ownership limits in that context. Any decision made will be in the best interest of Canadian travellers.

Mrs. Kelly Block (Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the minister did not need five months to kill thousands of jobs when he blocked the Toronto island airport expansion. MPs from all parties and even several ministers have voiced their support for Jetlines. They all want to see another airline serve Canada's secondary airports using Bombardier aircraft. The only hold-up is that minister's indecisiveness. His apathetic attitude will cost Canadians even more jobs. Jetlines made its request last May. How much time does the minister need to make a decision?

Ms. Kate Young (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as part of our engagement process, the minister recently held a round table on the traveller experience in order to hear from Canadians on this important subject, because we want to ensure that travellers have the best travel experience. I will repeat that our government is working collaboratively to address the Canada Transportation Act review and develop Canada's future transportation system.

* * *

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Mr. David Yurdiga (Fort McMurray—Cold Lake, CPC): Mr. Speaker, last week, residents who lost their homes in Fort McMurray wildfires were shocked to learn that rebuilding their homes is going to cost a lot more. A recent Liberal decision to put a 276% tax on drywall will raise the cost of a home rebuild in Fort McMurray by thousands of dollars.

Oral Questions

When will the Liberals reverse this short-sighted decision and quit punishing Fort McMurray residents, who have already suffered enough?

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in accordance with the relevant legislation, allegations of dumping and subsidization are investigated based on complaints that are received. When those complaints are received, there is a decision-making period that takes about 90 days. Then if the decision is subject to objection, it can be referred to the Canadian International Trade Tribunal.

The law needs to be applied.

The Speaker: I want to remind the hon. member for Cypress Hills—Grasslands of Standing Order 16(2), which says:

When a Member is speaking, no Member shall pass between that Member and the Chair, nor interrupt him or her, except to raise a point of order.

Let us not have any further interruptions when someone is speaking.

The hon. member for Prince Albert.

Mr. Randy Hoback (Prince Albert, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this surprise tax on drywall into western Canada is a real issue for Canadian businesses. We have been hearing from western Canadian contractors, drywallers, and other small construction businesses that this tax will affect their bottom line and lead to job losses.

With no jobs to spare in western Canada right now, what will the Liberals do to ensure that more jobs are not lost as a result of the decision to tax U.S. drywall?

•(1450)

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when there has been an allegation of dumping, the decision needs to follow the appropriate process. We will ensure that that process is followed in the most expeditious manner to get a proper decision.

As I say, there is a procedure in place to receive complaints and objections. That is the International Trade Tribunal, which stands ready to receive the matter and to hear all of the competing points of view.

* * *

PORT OF CHURCHILL

Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill—Keewatinook Aski, NDP): Mr. Speaker, this has been a tough summer for Canadians in terms of job losses, and northern Manitoba has been one of the regions hardest hit.

Let us go back to 1997 when the Liberals privatized the port and the rail line in our region and sold it to a U.S. billionaire. This summer, that billionaire shocked all of us and shut our port down.

Will the government listen to the northerners, the UCTE, PSAC and so many others and bring the port back under Canadian public control? Will the government stand up for good Canadian jobs and save this vital, strategic Canadian asset?

Mr. Greg Fergus (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Lib.): First, Mr. Speaker, my heart goes out to the people and the employees who

have been affected in Churchill. I am deeply disappointed in the decision by OmniTRAX to issue layoff notices.

My minister has been in direct contact with local leaders in the northern delegation, and our government has been in ongoing discussions with provincial and municipal leaders, businesses, and the community as we monitor and evaluate the situation closely.

* * *

[Translation]

SOFTWOOD LUMBER

Ms. Karine Trudel (Jonquière, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in recent months, the Minister of International Trade and the Prime Minister have been very optimistic about softwood lumber. However, the minister announced last week that she is preparing for another legal battle with the Americans.

During the last dispute, the Canadian industry lost billions of dollars and jobs disappeared like snow on a warm day, especially in Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean. The government will not be able to keep its promise and reach an agreement by October 12.

Can the government be transparent and admit this?

Mr. David Lametti (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for her question.

We should first recall that the Conservatives did not initiate the negotiations and did not seek a new agreement when they were in power. When we came to power, we immediately addressed the issue. It is a priority for us.

We are conducting negotiations with our American counterparts and taking into account regional distinctions in Canada. Above all, we are taking into account Quebec's forestry sector. It is important that we advance this file—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Thornhill has the floor.

* * *

[English]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Hon. Peter Kent (Thornhill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, last week the Minister of Foreign Affairs denied there were any strings attached to Kevin Garratt's sudden release from China, but just the day after his release, Canada quietly announced that negotiations had begun with China on an extradition treaty, just weeks after the Minister of Immigration denied any such possibility.

Given China's history of extrajudicial imprisonment, torture, and execution, are the Liberals really negotiating an extradition treaty, or are they just playing the Chinese, going along for the ride as they are with so many issues domestically?

Mr. Omar Alghabra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs (Consular Affairs), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this gives me a great opportunity to welcome Kevin Garratt and his family back to Canada.

Oral Questions

As the Minister of National Defence said earlier, we are engaged with China in a host of discussions on a variety of topics. We want to remind Canadians that we have high standards for anything we engage in and anything we sign. No agreement has been signed. Rest assured, we will always defend human rights and Canadian interests.

Hon. Peter Kent (Thornhill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we also learned in that same quietly posted notice that Canada has opened what is called a high-level dialogue on national security and the rule of law with China, and that one of the topics will be cybersecurity and co-operation in combatting cybercrime. Really?

Have the Liberals decided that after any number of cyber-attacks on Canadian government departments, if they cannot beat them, they will join them?

• (1455)

Ms. Pam Goldsmith-Jones (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are working to expand our relationship with China through principled rules of engagement established through our national security and rule of law dialogue announced when the Prime Minister was in China on September 12.

The U.S. and the U.K. are having similar dialogues. All extradition in Canada is governed by a formal process and must meet our very high standards. Fundamentally, the promotion and protection of human rights is an integral part of Canadian foreign policy and an essential piece of our policy with China.

* * *

IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

Hon. Michelle Rempel (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, refugees are being forced to use food banks because the Prime Minister does not have a plan to support the refugees he brought here.

Gail Nyberg of the Daily Bread Food Bank reports:

I suspect it is going to be a larger problem as we go forward.... Once your EI runs out...and you don't have the kind of [necessary job] skills, you're basically faced with 20 years of poverty before you get onto old age.

This is a question we asked in committee. How many refugees will require social assistance payments by the end of this year, and what will the cost be to Canadian taxpayers and to the refugees themselves?

Mr. Arif Virani (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the issue of food security is an important one for all Canadians, newcomers and people who have been here for several generations. Have there been some issues with refugees using food banks? Indeed, there has. Are we working hard on those issues? Indeed, we are. We have secured housing for refugees. We are working on securing jobs for them.

I put it to my friend opposite, if we had no plan, then I am wondering why the UN is studying our position at the refugee summit on this very day.

[Translation]

Mrs. Eva Nassif (Vimy, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, almost a year ago, Canada elected a new government. One of our main promises was to

resettle and integrate Syrian refugees. In today's news, we see that 13 countries are interested in our model for private refugee sponsorship.

Can the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship talk about the success of this initiative and the changes that have been made to our sponsorship procedures?

[English]

Mr. Arif Virani (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I was saying, it is a tremendous day to be a Canadian.

Over the past two days, our government and our leader have been celebrated and welcomed by the UN and by the president for our refugee resettlement efforts.

[Translation]

Thousands of Canadians got involved and actively participated in integrating Syrian refugee families. Now, 13 other countries want to learn from Canada's experience. Today, we are proud to launch the global private sponsorship partnership with the UN and George Soros.

* * *

[English]

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Mrs. Cathy McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is on another swanning trip at the UN, where he is sprinkling taxpayers' dollars around like fairy dust.

Meanwhile at home a new study has shown indigenous Canadians are losing limbs, their vision, and even dying from diabetes, a preventable, treatable disease. This is totally unacceptable and immediate action is required.

When will the Liberals stop neglecting business at home and ensure appropriate programs and medical care are available for indigenous Canadians?

Hon. Jane Philpott (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we can care for people around the world at the same time as we care for Canadians.

I am in fact working very hard with my colleagues in the provinces and territories, as well as, of course, indigenous leaders across this country to address these very problems.

I, like my colleague, am very concerned about the rising rates of diabetes, particularly among indigenous peoples. There is much work to be done. I look forward to instituting a number of new measures that will make great progress on this very serious problem.

Oral Questions

[Translation]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach (Salaberry—Suroît, NDP): Mr. Speaker, over a month ago, the Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard assured me that an action plan to dismantle the *Kathryn Spirit* in Beauharnois would be ready by the end of August and that the preparatory work would begin this fall.

For the past few weeks there has been nothing but radio silence.

Residents of Beauharnois have two questions for the minister. Has the provincial government finally been given a copy of the action plan? Will the construction of a stone wall around the *Kathryn Spirit* start this fall as planned?

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her question.

I had the opportunity to talk to my colleague about this issue, which is very important for the people of her riding and those in neighbouring regions. I can assure my colleague that we will still meet the deadline that we discussed this summer. I do not share her pessimism.

I would like to commend the municipality and my Liberal caucus colleagues for bringing this matter to my attention and to the attention of the Minister of Transport. I believe that a suitable solution to this problem will be implemented in the coming weeks.

* * *

• (1500)

[English]

TAXATION

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this summer my family welcomed our new son, Francesco. Sunny ways was followed by a baby boom on this side of the aisle.

Stability and support for families is paramount to my young family, as it is for so many others throughout my community and our country. Families expect their government to ensure a strong and prosperous future for generations to come.

Can the Minister of Finance please update the House on the steps the government is taking to ensure Canadian families have those supports?

Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for Kingston and the Islands for reminding us of something we know.

The last decade of low growth has been tough for middle-class families. That is why last December we introduced a tax cut for nine million middle-class Canadians. It gives a single person on average \$330 more this year and a family on average \$540 more this year. It is also why we introduced the Canada child benefit, which gives nine out of ten families \$2,300 more this year.

Later today we will be voting on Bill C-2 to formalize these measures. I urge all members in the House to vote in favour of middle-class Canadians and in support of this legislation.

[Translation]

RAIL TRANSPORTATION

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what a shame to saddle one's child with such a heavy debt.

Three years have passed since the Lac-Mégantic tragedy. On June 23, the leader of the official opposition came to Lac-Mégantic to announce her party's unequivocal support for the rail bypass bill. In a unanimous report released in June, the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities asked the Minister of Transport to take action. People want to see something tangible, as well they should.

What has the Minister of Transport done since June to expedite the Lac-Mégantic rail bypass bill?

[English]

Ms. Kate Young (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government is committed to improving rail safety. In budget 2016, we are investing \$143 million to improve rail safety and the transport of dangerous goods.

The Minister of Transport had the honour of meeting with citizens of Lac-Mégantic to hear their concerns. He is aware that the municipal council and residents of Lac-Mégantic would like a rail bypass outside the city. We are awaiting the final results of the rerouting feasibility study before making a decision on this file.

* * *

[Translation]

HEALTH

Mr. Rhéal Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Health would have us believe that she is helping sick people, but she announced plans to take \$160 million away from them and put it in her government's coffers. She has declared war on Quebec's health care system.

Does the Minister of Health really think that cutting transfers to Quebecers, demanding that they hand over \$160 million, and attacking Quebec's National Assembly is going to help sick people in Quebec?

[English]

Hon. Jane Philpott (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his question, but I would like to say that it is quite the contrary. Our goal is to be collaborative. No one wins when we are combative in managing health care in this country.

In fact, my communications with my colleague, the minister of health from Quebec, have indicated that we need to uphold the Canada Health Act. It is important that if Canadians have paid for care through their taxes, they get that care and they do not have to pay again. We will uphold that tax. We will make sure they have access to the care that they need.

[Translation]

Mr. Luc Thériault (Montcalm, BQ): Mr. Speaker, even Quebec Liberals are lamenting Ottawa's decision to cut billions in transfers and fine Quebecers \$160 million, so the minister is clearly out to lunch.

Government Orders

Never has a government done so much so quickly to undermine the quality of care in Quebec. People are waiting 18 hours to see an emergency room doctor and six months for an appointment, yet the minister would have us believe that cuts will solve the problem.

Does the minister realize just how insulting that is to Quebecers' intelligence?

[*English*]

Hon. Jane Philpott (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we will work collaboratively with all provinces and territories in this country to address health care needs. We will continue to increase the Canada health transfer, as we have already indicated, for next year.

However, it is also important, as my colleague points out, that we innovate. In fact, Canadians should have access to good care. That is why we uphold the Canada Health Act. I look forward to working with my colleagues to find those good solutions and implement them for all Canadians.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*Translation*]

INCOME TAX ACT

The House resumed from September 19 consideration of the motion that Bill C-2, An Act to amend the Income Tax Act, be read the third time and passed.

The Speaker: It being 3:05 p.m., pursuant to an order made earlier today, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at third reading stage of Bill C-2.

Call in the members.

• (1505)

[*English*]

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

(*Division No. 104*)

YEAS

Members

Alghabra	Alleslev
Anandasangaree	Arseneault
Arya	Ayoub
Badawey	Bagnell
Barsalou-Duval	Baylis
Beech	Bennett
Bittle	Blair
Boissonnault	Boudrias
Bratina	Breton
Brisson	Caesar-Chavannes
Carr	Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)
Casey (Charlottetown)	Chagger
Champagne	Chan
Chen	Cuzner
Dabrusin	Damoff
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Di Iorio	Drouin
Dubourg	Duguid
Dzerowicz	Easter
Ehsassi	El-Khoury

Ellis	Erskine-Smith
Eyking	Eyolfson
Fergus	Fillmore
Finnigan	Fisher
Fonseca	Foote
Fortin	Fragiskatos
Fraser (West Nova)	Fraser (Central Nova)
Fry	Fuhr
Gerretsen	Gill
Goldsmith-Jones	Goodale
Gould	Graham
Grewal	Hajdu
Hardie	Harvey
Hehr	Holland
Housefather	Hussen
Hutchings	Iacono
Joly	Jones
Jordan	Jowhari
Kang	Khalid
Khera	Lametti
Lamoureux	Lapointe
Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)	LeBlanc
Lebouthillier	Lefebvre
Lemieux	Leslie
Levitt	Lighthbound
Lockhart	Long
Longfield	Ludwig
MacAulay (Cardigan)	MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Maloney	Marcil
Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)	
May (Cambridge)	
McCrimmon	McDonald
McGuinty	McKay
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLeod (Northwest Territories)
Mendès	Mendicino
Mihychuk	Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Soeurs)
Morneau	Morrissey
Murray	Nassif
Nault	O'Connell
Oliphant	Oliver
O'Regan	Ouellette
Paradis	Pauzé
Peterson	Petitpas Taylor
Philpott	Picard
Plamondon	Poissant
Qualtrough	Ratansi
Rioux	Robillard
Rodriguez	Rota
Rudd	Ruimy
Rusnak	Saini
Sajjan	Samson
Sangha	Sarai
Schieffe	Serré
Shanahan	Sheehan
Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)	Sidhu (Brampton South)
Sikand	Simms
Sohi	Sorbara
Spengemann	Tabbara
Tan	Tassi
Thériault	Tootoo
Vandal	Vandenbeld
Virani	Whalen
Wilkinson	Wilson-Raybould
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NAYS

Members

Abouttaif	Albas
Albrecht	Allison
Ambrose	Anderson
Angus	Arnold
Ashton	Aubin
Barlow	Bergen
Berthold	Bezan
Blaikie	Blaney (North Island—Powell River)
Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis)	Block
Boucher	Boulerice
Boutin-Sweet	Brassard
Brousseau	Brown
Calkins	Cannings

Government Orders

Caron	Carrie
Choquette	Christopherson
Clarke	Clement
Cooper	Davies
Deltell	Diotte
Doherty	Donnelly
Dubé	Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)
Dusseault	Duvall
Falk	Gallant
Garrison	Généreux
Genius	Gladu
Godin	Gourde
Hardcastle	Harder
Hoback	Hughes
Jeneroux	Johns
Jolibois	Julian
Kelly	Kenney
Kent	Kmiec
Kwan	Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Laverdière	Lebel
Liepert	Lobb
Lukiwski	MacGregor
MacKenzie	Malcolmson
Masse (Windsor West)	Mathysen
McCauley (Edmonton West)	McColeman
McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)	Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound)
Moore	Mulcair
Nantel	Nicholson
Nuttall	Obhrai
O'Toole	Paul-Hus
Poillievre	Quach
Ramsey	Rankin
Rempel	Richards
Ritz	Saganash
Saroya	Scheer
Schmale	Shipley
Sopuck	Sorenson
Stanton	Stewart
Strahl	Stubbs
Sweet	Tilson
Trost	Trudel
Van Kesteren	Van Loan
Vecchio	Viersen
Wagantall	Warawa
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PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.
(Bill read the third time and passed)

* * *

● (1515)

FOOD AND DRUGS ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-13, An Act to amend the Food and Drugs Act, the Hazardous Products Act, the Radiation Emitting Devices Act, the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999, the Pest Control Products Act and the Canada Consumer Product Safety Act and to make related amendments to another Act be read the second time and referred to a committee.

The Deputy Speaker: I wish to inform the House that, because of the deferred recorded division, government orders will be extended by nine minutes.

When the House last took up this question, the Hon. member for Saskatoon—University had finished his remarks and was about to start questions and comments. We will ask for questions and comments to the hon. member for Saskatoon—University.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, maybe we could just start off the questioning by asking about the importance of the World Trade Organization and, as I said earlier today, of the agreement that was achieved back in December 2013. It was quite a significant agreement from the World Trade Organization.

Ultimately we need to see 108 countries, I believe, ratify the agreement. Hopefully Canada will be able to ratify it shortly. There have already been 90 or 91 countries that have ratified it to date.

I am wondering if the member could provide his thoughts or comments in regard to how important it is that Canada endorse and ratify this agreement, because it would send such a positive message to the world, and in particular to the World Trade Organization, on what is likely one of its most significant accomplishments since the inception of the organization.

● (1520)

Mr. Brad Trost (Saskatoon—University, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are in a bit of a unique situation here in Canada. The political trends, particularly in Europe and in the United States, now tend to be away from freer trade.

In Canada, we have not yet seen that, possibly because we have had such a good experience with growth, and also possibly because it is a smaller economy than others, either the trading block of the European Union or the United States. We are more trade dependent.

I think it is an important signal. First, it helps to send the message to poorer countries in the world that Canada wants to engage in trade, and we want to grow their economies and our economy, back and forth. Second, it sends a political message out to the world—in a minor way, but we are working on that with other things, encouraging the government to back other trade legislation—that there are historically growing, prosperous countries that continue to support a basic fundamental principle of economic growth.

[Translation]

Mr. Robert Aubin (Trois-Rivières, NDP): Mr. Speaker, this is the first time I rise to speak since returning from vacation. Allow me to say hello to you. It is always a pleasure to see you lead our proceedings.

Bill C-13 seeks to implement the agreement on trade facilitation concluded by members of the World Trade Organization. This bill amends a number of Canadian statutes. I sincerely believe it is imperative to scrutinize these changes in committee. For example, major changes are being made to regulations on Canadians' health and safety.

I would like to draw the attention of my colleagues to two clauses in particular. The first is on rejected goods. By accepting Bill C-13, an importing country could hereby return goods that do not comply with its health standards. If the bill were passed, Canada would no longer be required to keep questionable goods indefinitely. Moreover, if it were not possible to identify the shipper, Canada could simply destroy the dangerous goods.

Government Orders

The second clause I want to focus on deals with goods in transit. At present, Canadian regulations prohibit the transit of any goods that do not meet national technical standards. For instance, if a food product is banned by Health Canada, its transit within our borders is simply prohibited.

The bill ends that prohibition. Products could pass through our borders even if they do not meet Canadian regulatory requirements regarding health and environmental protections, since they would not be destined for the Canadian market.

Clearly, specific measures or conditions could be applied to certain statutes under the administration of Health Canada, and of course the NDP wants to ensure that any changes made to the way goods are treated do not compromise the health and safety of Canadian workers, who would be at risk during the transshipments.

Given that I represent a riding where marine transportation plays an important role, I feel it is my duty to ensure that workers who might have to handle those products are not in any way at risk. That is why I would like the committee to call on as many experts as possible in order to highlight any potential consequences of this change. The health of workers must not be compromised in any way.

I will be voting in favour of this bill at second reading, so that we can shed as much light on it as possible and get as many answers as we can to all our questions.

The NDP has always supported good trade measures. How do we distinguish between a good trade measure and a bad one? Once these regulatory changes are raised, we should try to see whether there are any economic benefits to this WTO agreement and whether it will facilitate trade.

For the benefit of those watching, I would like to point out that the NDP's support for any international trade measure depends on the findings of a careful study of, among other things, respect for human rights in the various countries concerned and respect for environmental rights. In fact, respect for environmental rights is becoming increasingly important and should be a major element of every agreement. The protection of workers, which I alluded to, is also one of the elements studied. The last aspect is the strategic interest of the agreement to Canada.

Canada's geography already provides a link to major world economies because we have access to three large oceans, which facilitate international trade.

Accordingly, cutting administrative red tape and streamlining customs procedures can improve the predictability of trade and reduce costs at the border for Canadian exports. This in turn means that SMEs in developing countries could also benefit from streamlined regulations resulting from this agreement.

This looks promising because all partners win. We call this a win-win situation.

• (1525)

Conversely, I will digress briefly and refer to a bad agreement that is being proposed by the government, the TPP. To quickly give you my views on this agreement, I need only quote the Canadian Centre

for Policy Alternatives, which has proven that the agreement's so-called trade benefits are nothing more than a smokescreen:

It is a vast overstatement to say the TPP grants Canada new access to Pacific Rim countries when 97% of Canadian exports already enter the TPP economies tariff free.

Behind these figures and these words, there are 60,000 jobs that could disappear. In Mauricie alone, dairy, poultry, and egg producers will be the big losers. The Fédération de l'UPA in the Mauricie region estimates that 300 farms will be impacted by the trade implications of the TPP. When I say "impacted", it is clearly understood that they will be negatively impacted. These policies are detrimental to Quebec producers, local communities, and well-paid jobs generated by the industry.

Pierre Lampron, member and president of the UPA in the Mauricie region, made it very clear who would pay the price of these policies when he said, "At the end of the day, it is our producers who will pay the price, because a pound of cheese produced outside Canada is one pound less produced by local businesses". He was likely implying that Quebecers and Canadians can only eat so much cheese.

I hope that the government will listen to reason when it comes to the TPP. After that aside, I will now come back to the benefits that the trade facilitation agreement will bring to our SMEs.

It is true that the implementation of the TFA could reduce the administrative burden on our SMEs. Small and medium-sized businesses spend a lot of money on administration, and reducing those costs could improve their export potential. However, the federal government must do a lot more for SMEs. The government could keep the election promises it made to support SMEs. After promising to lower their taxes from 11% to 9%, the government is depriving SMEs of the tax relief required to invest and create jobs.

In Trois-Rivières, over 2,000 small businesses would have benefited from this measure, but the government prefers to give tax breaks to large corporations that do not put those tax savings back into the Canadian economy.

By abandoning our small businesses, the government is also abandoning the middle class, since, according to the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, one-third of business owners earn less than \$33,000 a year, and 41% work more than 50 hours per week. I would remind the House that one has to earn at least \$45,000 in order to benefit from the most recent tax cuts.

With this budget, the Liberals are turning their backs on hard-working families just trying to make ends meet, but it is true that small businesses depend largely on international trade. Therefore, in order to ensure the success of small businesses internationally, the government needs to develop a specific support policy taking into consideration the following two facts: first, Canadian small businesses have very little presence in international markets—a measly 10% to 14%—, and second, those that do export their products are still far too exposed to the vagaries of the American economy.

To improve the situation, the government needs to make it easier for small businesses to access funding when they are trying to succeed in international markets. Small businesses often do not have the resources to carry a lot of inventory and keep up with demand.

Government Orders

I see I am running out of time. I would have liked to say so much more. I will probably have a chance to make a few more points as I answer questions, but let me wrap up by saying that following a careful assessment, I can support TFAs as long as they are concluded with strategic partners that respect basic human rights.

I would also remind the House that, while the TFA might be beneficial for small businesses, the government needs to do more. Finally, the TFA's measures can help developing countries, although I did not have time to address this issue and I hope to come back to it.

I will stop there and I look forward to questions from my esteemed colleagues.

• (1530)

[*English*]

Mr. Arnold Chan (Scarborough—Agincourt, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to hear that my hon. colleague and his party will be supporting Bill C-13 at second reading to get it to committee. I want to delve a little more deeply and examine the questions he ultimately is concerned about that might be presented at committee, particularly, as he noted, with respect to protecting the safety of workers.

This legislation clearly deals, in part, with non-compliant goods and goods in transit that may not be compliant with existing Canadian regulations. The intent is simply to give the Government of Canada authority to provide exemptions to allow goods to continue in transit, keeping in mind that it would still have to protect Canadians and workers.

Could the member perhaps explain what his specific concern is and what would make him more comfortable in supporting this legislation at third reading with respect to simply giving the government the authority to look at the particular situation in question and then grant an exemption where it thinks it is appropriate?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Robert Aubin: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for his question.

At this point, it is relatively easy to support this bill, even at second reading, because it makes only minor changes to Canadian legislation.

To answer his question, I imagine that the first questions asked in committee will be about the health and safety of the workers directly involved in the transshipment of goods that must remain in or pass through Canada.

We simply want to ensure that all workplace health and safety standards will be respected under the new agreement. The agreement only needs to be ratified by two-thirds of signatory countries to come into force. Therefore, Canada's support is not needed because some 78 countries have already ratified the agreement. Nevertheless, we are staying the course to ensure that workers' health and safety remain a priority every step of the way.

[*English*]

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I would like to correct the record on what the Minister of National Defence said earlier today in the House.

The minister rose to say that we announced a national security and rule of law dialogue during the Prime Minister's visit on September 12. While the announcement was made on September 12 and in conjunction with a trip, the Prime Minister concluded his trip to China on September 2.

• (1535)

The Deputy Speaker: I thank the hon. member for Laurentides—Labelle for this clarification and bringing it to the attention of the House at the first instance.

Questions and comments. Resuming debate, the hon. member for Brampton South.

Ms. Sonia Sidhu (Brampton South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to speak today about Bill C-13, the legislation that would allow Canada to implement the World Trade Organization agreement on trade facilitation, otherwise known as the TFA.

As members may know, Canada played a key role in the negotiation of the TFA at the WTO. The TFA focuses on streamlining, harmonizing, and modernizing customs procedures. It has enormous potential for reducing trade costs and times. The TFA would enhance predictability and transparency of customs decisions for traders, expedite the release of goods through the use of modern technologies, and increase the efficiency of customs procedures through improved coordination between border agencies. In these negotiations Canada ensured that the TFA would provide a full range of trade consultation measures while preserving our ability to protect the health and safety of Canadians and the environment.

I would like to speak today about some of the legislative amendments that are required for Canada to join the ranks of 92 other WTO members, including the EU, the U.S., and China, who have ratified the TFA.

While Canada's customs system is compliant with the vast majority of provisions in the TFA, certain statutes do require amendment for Canada to fully implement the TFA and maintain safeguards on the health and safety of Canadians and the environment. These amendments relate to two provisions of the TFA: article 10.8.1, rejected goods, and article 11.8, goods in transit.

Article 10.8.1 requires WTO members to allow importers to return to the exporter goods that were rejected on account of their failure to meet certain health and other technical requirements, unless another means of dealing with the rejected goods is provided for in that country's laws—for example, seizure and disposal. Therefore, governments that wish to retain the ability to treat incoming goods other than by permitting their return will need to be able to point to specific provisions in their laws or regulations providing authority to do so.

Government Orders

Article 11.8 prohibits the application of technical regulations to goods moving through a WTO member's territory from a point outside its territory to another foreign point, known as goods in transit. This provision would allow foreign goods to move through Canada, for example, from Europe to the United States, without complying with our technical regulations.

The transit through Canada of some goods, such as pharmaceutical drugs, cleaning products, or pesticides, that do not comply with technical regulations is currently prohibited by certain federal statutes, which need to be amended. To ensure that the Government of Canada's statutes and regulations comply with this article of the TFA while maintaining safeguards to the health and safety of Canadians and the environment, amendments to five statutes administered by Health Canada are required. Those statutes are the Canada Consumer Product Safety Act; the Food and Drugs Act; the Hazardous Products Act; the Pest Control Products Act; and the Radiation Emitting Devices Act.

Bill C-13 identifies criteria under which non-compliant goods could either be returned to the exporter, re-consigned in accordance with article 10.8.1 of the TFA, or alternatively, seized, detained, forfeited, and/or disposed of by inspectors or customs officers. This means that non-compliant goods such as drugs, medical devices, cosmetics, food, tanning equipment, children's toys, hazardous products, and pesticides that pose unacceptable health and safety risks could be seized and not returned in certain cases. In other cases, in the absence of significant risk factors, products could be returned or re-consigned.

● (1540)

These amendments will enhance the predictability and transparency in how rejected goods are treated at the border, and will help ensure that the health and safety of Canadians and the environment continue to be protected.

In regard to article 11.8, most importers are aware of the prohibitions on the transit of unregistered or unauthorized products, although sometimes companies request one-off permission to transit such products through Canada.

Presently, these activities are expressly prohibited by legislative or regulatory requirements, and are routinely denied.

Preventing products that do not comply with technical regulations from transiting through Canada can be considered a trade barrier. This is because the health and safety of Canadians and the environment can in fact be protected in an equally effective and less trade-restrictive manner.

The legislative amendments proposed in the bill specify that Canada's technical regulations would not apply to goods in transit through Canada as long as certain requirements to protect health, safety, and the environment are met. More specifically, Bill C-13 includes requirements designed to mitigate the risk that certain goods in transit could be diverted into the Canadian market or compromise the health and safety of Canadians or the environment as a result of accidents or spills.

For example, labelling requirements for certain goods in transit would enable inspectors, border officers, handlers, and sellers to distinguish between goods destined for import and those just passing

through. Such labelling would denote the origin, intended destination, and product safety and handling procedures for goods in transit.

By implementing the proposed amendments to the Food and Drugs Act, the Pest Control Products Act, the Radiation Emitting Devices Act, and the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999, Canada would meet its international obligations under the TFA with respect to article 10.8.1 in dealing with the treatment of rejected non-compliant goods, and with respect to article 11.8 to improve the flow of goods across its borders.

Bill C-13 would enable Canada to update and better coordinate customs processes that will help bring economic benefits to Canadians. I support this bill, and I urge all hon. members to support this bill, which would enable Canada to do its part to bring this agreement into force, and ensure that the health and safety of Canadians and the environment remains protected.

Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is lovely to be back in the House of Commons. I would like to thank my colleague for her speech.

Certainly, I am always happy to hear about trade and new trade happening. If I think back to our Conservative government, when we were in government, and the 44 countries with which we introduced trade deals, I think it is wonderful.

I specifically appreciated how the member looked to the technical details of what is involved in trade, a lot of times, because if we do not get those right, they can be a barrier. I wonder if the member could comment on whether she thinks there is some ability to leverage what we learned in this specific deal, so that we can deal with interprovincial trade in a better way. Many times there, as well, we see that it is technical differences between specifications in the provinces that are causing the barrier to trade.

I would be interested to hear what the member has to say about that.

● (1545)

Ms. Sonia Sidhu: Mr. Speaker, as members know, we went back to Canadians during the campaign and reminded them that our priority is pro-free trade.

We support increased trade with other countries because it is good for Canada. In my riding of Brampton South, I see how businesses and connections from all over the world benefit our economy and families when we are setting Canada's standards high.

I am supporting this bill and all the global work done by the minister on this file.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre Nantel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Brampton South for her speech.

Government Orders

Any measure that will help SMEs take on the challenges they face every day is praiseworthy. As my colleague from Trois-Rivières said, not enough of our SMEs are in the export market, so Canada's decision to sign and ratify these agreements is a great thing, especially because the agreements are for SMEs, business people, products, jobs, and workers, unlike the TPP.

I would like my colleague to comment on that. This agreement seems to please investors more than it does the manufacturing sector.
[English]

Ms. Sonia Sidhu: Mr. Speaker, as my hon. colleague knows, the government supports free trade as we open markets for Canadian goods and services, grow Canadian businesses, and create well-paying jobs. It will also boost our economy and is good for Canadians.

Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our industry committee is currently studying a manufacturing strategy for Canada. We are looking at pharmaceuticals and cosmetics manufacturers as well as people working in the food industry, and looking at the opportunities to increase exports for SMEs.

Could the hon. member comment on the bottom line improvements that this type of an agreement could give the SMEs when they are trying to develop into emerging markets?

Ms. Sonia Sidhu: Mr. Speaker, the Government of Canada completed the legal review of the Canada and European Union comprehensive economic and trade agreement. Our government supports free trade. It is how we open the market to Canadian goods and services, grow businesses, and create high-quality jobs. CETA would remove trade barriers, give unprecedented access to a market of 500 million people, widely expand free trade between Canada and the European Union, and increase opportunities for the middle-class.

Mr. Mel Arnold (North Okanagan—Shuswap, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I heard multiple times in the member's speech and comments in answer to questions that she supports free trade and her government supports free trade. The trans-Pacific partnership was drafted over a year ago. The government has had over a year to look at it. Liberals say they have been consulting and are continuing to consult. Are they simply going to wait until the U.S. makes a decision on this, or is the Government of Canada ready to approve this free trade agreement, the trans-Pacific partnership, that would open up more access to 800 million people, similar to this agreement?

Ms. Sonia Sidhu: Mr. Speaker, our government is working hard toward this, as is Bill C-13. We fully support the bill. The TFA would increase trade by modernizing and simplifying customs and border procedures and lowering trade costs as well.

[Translation]

Mr. Luc Thériault (Montcalm, BQ): Mr. Speaker, Bill C-13 is basically a technical bill stemming from a World Trade Organization agreement. It will streamline border services' administrative procedures in all 162 member states, making them faster, more transparent, and less arbitrary.

In terms of trade, the impact here will be minimal. Our main buyer is the United States, with which we already have agreements that cover more ground than the WTO agreement. Bill C-13 will remove a number of irritants for exporters whose goods might otherwise

have been held up at customs. While such situations can be frustrating for people who get tied up in red tape, they are few and far between.

Certainly some aspects of the bill merit closer scrutiny. Chief among these are the importation of hazardous materials and prohibited pesticides for which less control is not desirable. Nevertheless, we will support Bill C-13 in principle.

Quite frankly, although this bill is large, it is not very substantial. The only thing the WTO member countries could agree on were the technical details. The last WTO agreement was concluded 22 years ago. There have been nothing but obstacles since then. The Seattle round never got off the ground. The Doha round is moving at the speed of a zombie in an unending coma. There is something not right in the world of trade.

The irrelevance of the Bali package, the Marrakesh protocol, and the subsequent Bill C-13 is a testament to that. We seem to be forgetting that behind the multilateral trade agreements was a desire for lasting peace, and a strong humanitarian motivation.

GATT played a big part in the decolonization movement and the dismantling of the empires that followed. That is not at all what drives trade discussions these days. Natural resources and manufactured goods currently move freely, with some exceptions. In fact, 85% of all goods move freely without quotas or tariffs. On average the remaining tariffs are 5.5% on all the goods traded on the planet. Essentially, free trade already exists.

When it comes to freer trade, the discussions currently underway are focused on two things. The first is agriculture. It is a sensitive subject. Agriculture is not like other sectors. Most people in developing countries depend on it. When prices skyrocket, people in urban areas go hungry because they are unable to afford food. When prices drop, people in rural areas lose their land because selling prices are lower than production costs. They are at a major disadvantage compared to large American and European farmers who are heavily subsidized. Our producers, who are under supply management and are not subsidized, face the same threat.

In short, unfettered free trade threatens food sovereignty, social peace, and land use, which are also sensitive subjects. This explains why the discussions are so difficult. What is more, we are at the table with a number of ultra-liberal and intransigent countries. These countries are net exporters of agriculture products and want the borders to be thrown wide open. They form what we call the Cairns Group, the same group that is attacking supply management. Canada is among those ultra-liberal countries.

Government Orders

Harmonizing standards has been another focus of many stalled discussions. Countries have always had laws and regulations that reflect their notion of the common good. Some of the more lenient societies, such as the United States and English Canada, are more geared toward free enterprise. Others are more restrictive, with the state setting itself up as the guardian of the people's will and the common good. Those are two opposing models of society. When trade agreements seek to harmonize standards, the problem is that their provisions always end up restricting the state's ability to act.

No trade agreement will ever require universal education. That is not what trade agreements are for. They can place restrictions on states that want to prohibit GMOs, however. No trade agreement will ever say that a 0% tax rate constitutes unfair competition, but a state that intervenes in the economy by supporting businesses whose growth is desirable because they are considered strategically important would be accused of unfair competition.

Given our quasi-free trade situation, trade agreements no longer have much to do with trade as such in terms of customs tariffs and import quotas. What they do is affect states' ability to act for the common good.

● (1550)

They make interventionism or stringent regulations illegal. They codify an economic model and make illegal anything that deviates from it. It is no wonder that everything is blocked. The bulk of Canadian agricultural production is from monoculture destined for export. There is good reason to liberalize the entire agricultural sector and ensure that countries do not have the right to ban GMOs, since Canada is one of the largest GMO crop producers in the world, or require that they be labelled.

I have no ill will toward Canada. I am speaking in Canada's interest and the same goes for government interventionism. Canada has one of the worst records in the world when it comes to supporting its businesses. It invests very little in R and D, so that is normal. Since it has a subsidiary economy, its businesses are not terribly innovative.

Canada also wants very strict agreements that prevent other governments from intervening in the economy and definitions of subsidies that cover everything. In 2016, it is defending an economic model from the 1990s. It is one of the most intransigent countries at the table, and this intransigence largely explains why everything is being blocked at the WTO and why we are discussing such an irrelevant matter as Bill C-13 here today.

I do not take issue with that. That is Canada's prerogative. The problem is that my society does not work like that. We have innovative enterprises in Quebec, homegrown enterprises, and an ownership economy. We have large government institutions that intervene in the economy and regulations that seek to protect the public and defend the common good, but many people do not like them because they see them as barriers to trade.

We are claiming our right to build a distinct society in North America, a society that reflects who we are. Since market forces are pushing more toward uniformity, then we need an active government that enjoys a healthy dose of freedom.

For 20 years, trade agreements have taken their toll: our middle class ended up in direct competition with exploited workers in developing countries. Free to trade everywhere without having to adapt to different regulations, multinationals uprooted their production chains and encouraged tax havens that would allow them to hide their earnings abroad and avoid paying taxes. They stopped contributing to the communal pot, forcing governments to cut services.

We can continue to repeatedly deal with these obstacles, pretend that the rounds of negotiations are not moving as slowly as zombies, and discuss austerity measures, such as those set out in Bill C-13, or we can start fresh and consider how trade can become a real instrument for progress for humankind, not just for multinational corporations; consider how producing while destroying the environment or exploiting children is a form of unfair trade; and consider how the diversity of peoples and their economic and regulatory models contribute to the world's wealth.

I know that I am not in the right country to say these things and that Canada is too attached to the 20th century and its development model. However, I also know that my country, Quebec, would resolutely choose the 21st century, social progress, and sustainable development because they are in our best interest.

In the meantime, I will discuss Bill C-13 in the Parliament of Canada in preparation for the day when my people will be able to take control of these debates. Then everything will be different.

● (1555)

Mr. Pierre Nantel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I congratulate my colleague from Montcalm for his speech. He obviously knows a lot about this topic. We are lucky to be able to learn from his expertise.

I would like to ask him whether it seems obvious to him that, during all this time, the people who are discussing and developing these major contracts between investors are seeking to secretly influence governments. Rumour has it that the TPP could be ratified very soon.

Are there not major issues on which Quebec must stand and be counted? I am thinking about the unbelievable Netflix clause that would mean that we could not intervene in the delivery of what are commonly known as over-the-top services on the Internet. These types of hidden clauses have a huge impact on culture and perhaps even on agriculture.

I would like to hear what my colleague has to say about that.

Mr. Luc Thériault: Mr. Speaker, far be it from me to claim to be an expert. I would like to thank my honourable colleague for saying that my speech was well researched.

While I can say we will support the principle of the bill and then find, in the clause-by-clause study, where the devil is hiding—because they say that the devil is in the details—my point is not to have an arrogant attitude toward Canada or believe that it should not protect its interests. I just wanted to show in an objective and structured way that there are two competing economies in Canada.

Government Orders

There is the branch plant economy, as we saw with Rona. In Canada, all guidelines, all parameters are set by Bay Street, in Toronto. Quebec, however, has developed an owners' economy. Therefore, it is hard to understand why we are so attached to our head offices.

Canada and Quebec have two different and competing economies. In fact, they are objectively different. When, this country speaks, instead of Quebec, about international agreements with such organizations as the WTO, it is not protecting Quebec's interests.

• (1600)

Mr. David de Burgh Graham (Laurentides—Labelle, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for my colleague. He obviously does not believe in Canada.

If, as he wishes, Quebec were independent, how would it engage in that kind of trade at that level? Would it have the power to do that?

Mr. Luc Thériault: Mr. Speaker, I have no doubt that, as soon as Quebec is no longer subordinate to the federal Canadian state, it will have no trouble taking its seat at various international tables and speaking on its own behalf.

When that happens, we will stand up for our farmers and supply management. We will not send others to speak on our behalf. I talked about the Cairns group. I am appalled at the way they attack supply management, the way Canada lets them speak on our behalf, and the fact that Canada is even part of the group, given the need to protect supply management. It comes as no surprise that, a year after this government was elected, our farmers are still waiting for it to keep its promise.

Ms. Linda Lapointe (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government firmly believes that trade can help us achieve our development goals by creating new economic opportunities and increasing productivity and growth in Canada and around the world.

The high cost of international trade disproportionately affects developing nations, especially the least developed countries. Our government is focusing on initiatives that can both support global growth and reduce poverty, including the ratification of the World Trade Organization agreement on trade facilitation. This agreement, also known as the TFA, aims to facilitate the cross-border movement of goods by cutting red tape. It will simplify the documentation required to clear goods at the border and the procedures used by border agencies. Faster, simpler, more predictable border procedures will lead to lower costs for traders.

Governments, meanwhile, will benefit from more efficient border procedures, fewer opportunities for corruption at the border, and improved revenue collection. Lower trade costs can increase the volume of trade, help increase national revenues, and reduce poverty. Countries that are making efforts to reduce trade costs, for instance by improving logistics, generally enjoy more rapid growth.

Most economic gains from the TFA will flow to developing countries, since developed countries, including Canada, already satisfy the vast majority of the TFA provisions. The TFA will also help promote economic diversification in developing countries.

Implementing the TFA could help developing countries broaden the range of products they export and the new markets they can

enter. According to the World Bank, the number of new products exported by less developed countries could increase by up to 35%.

Developing economies will need technical assistance and help in strengthening their capacities for implementing the TFA reforms and taking advantage of the opportunities it presents for reducing poverty. The TFA allows developing countries to implement it according to their capacities and to outline what they need in terms of assistance. It also requires WTO members to provide practical support for addressing those needs.

The World Bank found that the return on investment generated by trade facilitation projects was among the most profitable development efforts. According to the World Bank, reducing obstacles in the supply chain and accelerating administrative procedures at the borders can increase GDP six times faster than eliminating tariffs.

Canada is in a good position to provide that aid. From 2010 to 2015, we invested nearly \$47 million to support trade facilitation through bilateral, regional, and multilateral programs. For example, Canada provides \$12 million in trade facilitation aid to the Trademark East Africa integrated border management initiative. That represents approximately 10% of the project's total funding.

This initiative considerably reduces delays at the border and trade costs between members of the East African community, namely Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, and South Sudan, by creating a single customs territory and supporting improvements to border and customs management practices.

Before this initiative was launched, many declarations had to be made at the border of each East African country. Customs clearance and the payment of custom duties could not be completed until the goods arrived at their destination. As a result, customs clearance was a very slow process. This trade facilitation initiative helps integrate customs procedures through automation and the creation of single border crossings. East African ports are now open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. As a result, the average cargo clearance times have gone from three days to eight hours in that region. Such results could lift millions of people out of poverty.

The implementation of the TFA could produce similar results in other places. The full potential of this agreement will be reached once it comes into force.

• (1605)

The agreement cannot take effect until two-thirds of the WTO members have ratified it. To date, 81 of the 108 WTO members that need to ratify the agreement have done so. The legislative amendments set out in Bill C-13 will allow Canada to ratify the TFA and bring it into force as soon as possible.

Government Orders

I strongly encourage all members of the House to support Bill C-13 to allow Canada to do its part and reap the benefits of this agreement.

Mr. Pierre Nantel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for her speech.

Given her knowledge of what SMEs experience, specifically those in retail, can she help us gain a better understanding of how the measures in this bill will actually benefit Quebec or Canadian exporters?

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

In fact, I have worked with SMEs and in retail. This agreement will definitely help SMEs from across Canada export their goods to these countries. It is the first multilateral agreement concluded since the World Trade Organization was established in 1994. It is a very good agreement. It is a fine victory for multilateralism. I thank the member for his question.

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when we look at the World Trade Organization and what it has been able to accomplish, this agreement is probably the most significant of its accomplishments since its inception. As such, I think that passing it through the House of Commons and then ratifying it would be a wonderful endorsement for the world organization of trade. Would she not agree that is an important reason for us to do that, because as a nation we believe in trade?

• (1610)

[Translation]

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

Canada is a trading nation. Yes, this agreement will benefit us. It will facilitate trade and modernize and simplify customs and border procedures by reducing tariffs on trade.

Everything about this agreement is positive, and I believe that all parliamentarians agree that this will speed things up. I am very pleased with it. Once Canada has ratified the agreement, the other G20 countries that have not yet done so will quickly follow suit. I am very proud of Bill C-13 and I invite all my colleagues to support it.

[English]

Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a bit of a different tack. When we talk about trade, Canada is signatory to international treaties that restrict Canada's trade in endangered species. There is an upcoming meeting on the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species. Some countries want to tighten the restrictions on the trade of ivory coming from endangered species, including elephants. I understand that Canada may not be taking a positive position on that. I wonder if my hon. colleague would care to comment on that.

Does she believe the Government of Canada should participate with other countries and agree to the bans on trade of products from endangered species?

[Translation]

Ms. Linda Lapointe: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question.

I would say that Bill C-13 will streamline tariff agreements and help countries party to them.

[English]

Ms. Tracey Ramsey (Essex, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, who is on the trade committee, for her wonderful speech today. My question has to do with the CBSA.

It has been brought up numerous times at the trade committee that there are issues at our borders. Bill C-13 speaks to that as it will require more safeguards in place at the border because we are talking about some dangerous products that will be travelling through those borders. Therefore, I would like to ask my colleague if she believes that the CBSA requires additional support to make our borders more efficient and secure.

[Translation]

Ms. Linda Lapointe: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague who, like me, is a member of the Standing Committee on International Trade.

We are definitely looking closely at certain aspects of border crossings. Today, in committee, we talked about certain things that were happening at customs. However, that is not really what we are talking about here. Some products could move within Canada, but what we are talking about here is making things easier for other countries, helping them export, and helping our SMEs get into other countries.

[English]

Hon. Deepak Obhrai (Calgary Forest Lawn, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise in the House to speak to this bill for the important reasons I will outline in my speech.

First, let me say that I started in the House 19 years ago next to the curtain and I am right back beside the curtain, starting another journey.

Coming back to the issue, during the period of time that I was the parliamentary secretary for foreign affairs, for international human rights, and for international development, one of the reasons that I went around the world was to promote international trade for Canada. The previous Conservative government worked very hard to make free trade one of its priorities, because it recognized that being a country rich in natural resources, as well as innovation, with a small population, free trade agreements with other countries were extremely important for the country to prosper. As such, Conservatives are very proud to have been associated with a government that saw the need for free trade agreements.

My colleague, the former minister of trade, now the member for Abbotsford, signed the treaty at the WTO, which we are now talking about in the House for implementation purposes. This is a technical bill that, again, follows a process in which we need less bureaucracy and more space to carry out international trade.

Government Orders

In today's international world, we see that protectionism is rising. We have seen that south of the border with both candidates talking about protectionism, yet all indications are that NAFTA has been positive for all countries. Even with regard to CETA, today the Minister of International Trade issued a statement in Europe that there are still a lot of areas to cover. There is a lot to cover on the free trade agreement with India. Nevertheless, this is what the government should focus on. It should ensure that our negotiators continue to be aggressive in finding more markets for our products in this country.

As we face the downturn in both the oil and resource industries, but most importantly the oil industry, it has had an impact right across Canada and it is having even more of an impact on my province of Alberta, where there is story after story of people losing their jobs. These days, when I travel through downtown Calgary, it is amazing to see the streets so empty and the business towers becoming empty downtown. This has a serious impact on our country. We need to understand that while we are a very big country with different resources in different parts of the world, each is interdependent on the other. We should not forget that.

We should also remind people like the mayor of Montreal, Denis Coderre, and everyone else, that ultimately the prosperity of Canada is the prosperity of Montreal, as well as Quebec. He does not live in an isolated city. The provinces tend to work together to help each other represent Canada. That is important. We never distinguish what one province or another is doing. Rather, we talk about what Canada as a whole could provide to the world in terms of not only trade but other aspects related to trade, and we have been very successful in doing that.

However, we are now facing a crisis at this time. Pipelines have not been built. Even the NDP government in Alberta, as a matter of fact, is raising the issue of getting our natural resources to tidewater. Yet, very interestingly, the situation is arising where we need to create an environment, which this bill would do, to ensure that Canadian companies have the opportunity to fairly, and I repeat the word "fairly" very strongly, compete around the world.

● (1615)

This is why the issue of supply management comes to mind. We have to be very careful when supply management is involved that we do not sell our country to other foreign countries that are trying break into our market. We must ensure there is a level playing field for our farmers. I am, of course, talking about the supply management that will be part of the free trade agreement that we are signing, the TPP, and everything else. It is critically important that the government, through the implementation of this agreement, get that message.

I am glad the Liberals are implementing this agreement, but I guess they have no choice. However, as I listen to other Liberal MPs, it seems like suddenly they have discovered free trade and that this bill is something on which they had been working. As we know, the current government came into power not even a year ago, and it is now mostly implementing many of the positive aspects that the previous government had done around the world.

It also surprises me that, now, after environmental targets, the Liberals are going to go back to what we had said would be the

targets. Therefore, it was amazing when the current government came out and said that Canada was back. Canada was always back.

On this agreement, all due credit goes to the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade officials who worked very hard. It was a privilege for me to work with them for the last 10 years. I recognize their expertise and dedication in working toward this objective. This is what they have been doing. Therefore, when the government raises the idea that nothing existed before the Liberals came into power, that is absolutely wrong. My colleagues on the other side need to recognize that we work together as a country. We work together on these issues to ensure we give Canadians what they are looking for, which is clearly very important in this part of the world: jobs and the economy.

The economy comes first, which is why the carbon tax, from my point of view, is a regressive situation. A tax tends to slow the economy down. When we are trying to meet targets, a whole problem arises out of this thing, which is that we cannot create an environment where Canadians cannot work freely, innovate, and carry on what we have been doing for years in our country.

My party is in support of the bill, but the former minister of trade and the previous government should have full credit for working this out there, signing free trade agreements, and working to ensure we have a regime in our country and an environment where our businesses can go out and take the world on, because we are first class in the world.

● (1620)

Mr. Kyle Peterson (Newmarket—Aurora, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, like the member for Calgary Forest Lawn, I am also very close to the curtain, and I do not know where I will be in 14 years. Who knows where he will be in a couple of months, but we appreciate his comments today.

I would like to make something clear. I do not think that anyone on this side or anyone in the government is taking credit for this being a Liberal initiative. The Prime Minister was in Turkey last November saying that we were going to quickly ratify this agreement. Therefore, clearly in November we could not possibly take credit for something as we had just been elected.

I do acknowledge the good work that his friends on that side of the House have done, and the good work of the member for Prince Albert, the member for Battlefords—Lloydminster, and the member for Chatham-Kent—Leamington who sit on the international trade committee with us. They have all contributed well to the international trade debate.

If Bill C-13 passes, could the member elaborate on what it will mean for the people of Calgary and how this will perhaps help the economy there and his constituents?

Hon. Deepak Obhrai: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member did ask me a good question, but I thought the answer would have been "thank you very much". However, he has asked me to elaborate.

Government Orders

The most important thing in Bill C-13 is that it would take away the red tape. There is a great amount of red tape in international trade, including within our country. The bill works toward reducing it through the WTO, which would force other countries to do that too. Therefore, we could carry on with a level playing field and fewer hurdles for our people in red tape.

I remember going to Vietnam and other countries that wanted to be part of the WTO. We taught them and trained their officers on how to do this, because they had no expertise. Nevertheless, Bill C-13 would make it easier for countries to trade with each other, which is good for everyone.

• (1625)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Robert Aubin (Trois-Rivières, NDP): Mr. Speaker, for five years now I have been listening closely to my hon. colleague's speeches. I am quite familiar with his rhetoric on the economy.

My question is simple. Given all the measures that were put in place by the previous government, how is it that Statistics Canada is telling us that only 10.4% of SMEs, which let us not forget create the majority of jobs in Canada, succeed in moving into export market? Is that because the old Conservative measures fell flat or because the cuts at Statistics Canada prevent us from getting reliable figures on which we can agree?

[*English*]

Hon. Deepak Obhrai: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for listening to my rhetoric for five years. Hopefully, he will get something out of it.

This is precisely what we are talking about. The bill would remove the red tape so SMEs can get more involved in the free trade market around the world. I went on many trade missions where SMEs came with me. In fact, I was a SME. In one of my previous speeches, what he called rhetoric, I said that the biggest hurdle for small businesses was red tape. This is what international trade means. This is taking away the red tape so small businesses can go and look for markets.

However, one of the biggest and the most important things is that our government has signed free trade agreements with other countries. When we have a free trade agreement and we remove many of the restrictions and the red tape, it allows SMEs to access the markets in other countries, and this is a good thing for Canada.

Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the riding of Sarnia—Lambton is a border community, so we have seen benefits from the North American Free Trade Agreement. About 40% of the trade in Canada is there. I guess we are also a port city. We are really looking forward to seeing the TPP and the agreement with the European countries signed. It seems to be taking a long time.

I am happy this bill is coming forward at this time, and I would like to see the pace picked up on the ratification.

With all of his years of experience in the House, could the member say what he thinks Canada should be doing to encourage a faster signing of all these deals?

Hon. Deepak Obhrai: Mr. Speaker, when I first came to Parliament, I went to Doha for a WTO meeting, called the Doha Round. There was a huge number of countries in the WTO. This was going to be the agreement that would open up trade around the world. Unfortunately, all of that optimism slowly dissipated as more and more protectionism came from these countries.

The member has very rightly pointed out that the opening up of the markets and of free trade routes is one of the ways that not only Canada prospers, but everybody in the world prospers. If we look back at history, when there was free trade all around the world, there was a massive income increase. When the protectionism comes, then the whole world economy goes down and everybody suffers.

Taking that into account, it is a good thing to ratify this.

[*Translation*]

The Deputy Speaker: Order. 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 Calgary Shepard, Taxation; the hon. member for Vancouver Kingsway, Health; the hon. member for Timmins—James Bay, Indigenous Affairs.

[*English*]

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to speak to Bill C-13. I will not read the entire name of the act because it would amend a number of different acts, but we are referring to it as a trade facilitation agreement.

This is an agreement that was concluded by the previous Conservative government, and one that really would go a long way to helping out our small and medium-sized enterprises, those business where the owners have always been apprehensive about engaging in exports because of all the hassles they experience dealing with customs officers, brokerage agencies, and trying to get their goods across the border.

However, this TFA, the trade facilitation agreement, would greatly simplify all customs procedures. It would cut through the red tape that so many businesses experience at the border. It would expedite the release and clearance of goods. Often we see goods get caught up in storage. If they are dealing with food products that have an expiration date, we have to ensure that these goods, especially fresh meats and fresh vegetables and fruits, get over those borders quicker. As well, we want to ensure that those imports that so many of our businesses rely on are not getting tied up in that bureaucratic red tape at the border. Essentially, this whole process would make international trade for all Canadians, specifically for our small and medium-sized enterprises, much more predictable.

Government Orders

We have to always remember that when the Conservatives were a government, we worked very strenuously to reduce red tape for all businesses right across the board. Bill C-13, which was negotiated by the previous Conservative government, really would go a long way in cutting back that red tape that is unfairly burdening our businesses and small enterprises, often the family-run operations, with extra paperwork and processes. Business owners do not have the time, energy, or staff to make that happen.

It is interesting to note that this was a WTO commitment. As any of us who have been involved in trade know, negotiations and dealings at the World Trade Organization are extremely slow. We often think about the wheels turning very slowly on things in Ottawa, but nothing moves slower than what we see at the WTO.

This negotiation started back in 2004, and only concluded in December 2013. It took nine years to negotiate. Those of us who were around when the Doha Round started to try to advance the WTO and expand the number of products that were going to be covered through trade under WTO, the number of countries that were going to be in the WTO, and how much tariff rate barriers were going to be reduced are glad to see that this is one part of the WTO that has successfully reached a conclusion. It is imperative upon all member states of the WTO to ratify these agreements.

It would come into force as soon as two-thirds of all the member states of WTO have signed on to the FTA. Currently, my understanding is that about 81 have signed on. It means that Canada and so many other countries need to get this ratified as quickly as possible. Back in May 2015, as a government, the member for Abbotsford, when he was minister of trade, tabled this document in the House to start this process.

Two main issues are addressed in this trade facilitation agreement: article 10.8, which deals with the treatment of goods rejected on account of their failure to meet certain health and other technical requirements; and article 11.8, which would prohibit the application of technical regulations to goods moving through a WTO member's territory from a point outside its territory to another foreign point. Therefore, these are goods in transit.

This would not impact on Canada's ability to protect the health and safety of our consumers. The goods that Canadians receive, especially food products, would still live up to our high phytosanitary and health standards. It would also not impact on how any of these goods have any impact on our environment.

As I said, this is the first time we have actually seen the WTO agreement reach any ratification level in 20 years. What we are seeing is that this would increase global merchandise anywhere from \$750 billion to \$1 trillion. Developed economies would see a growth of \$310 billion to \$580 billion per year. World export growth would increase 2.7%; that is 21 million jobs that could be produced around the world. We would like to see some of those jobs created in Canada.

• (1630)

We talk about trying to get through some very difficult times in our economy. As we see the energy sector continue to struggle in western Canada, as we continue to experience a sluggish economy across the country and jobs continually being shed, from one end of

this country to the other, under the current government, we need to have something that gives clear direction and stimulus to the economy. One way we can do that is by approving the TFA. The other thing we can do is approve the trans-Pacific partnership, the TPP.

I am so proud of our record as the previous Conservative government. We signed trade deals with more than 46 countries. Compare that to the Liberal record, which is three countries. Now the Liberals are signing on to the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement. Of course, that was negotiated by our previous government. They have an opportunity to finalize the regulatory and legislative processes to put the trans-Pacific partnership in place.

I am concerned, from what we are hearing in the opposition benches, that the government has a wait-and-see attitude when it comes to the TPP. All members of the trans-Pacific partnership are part of the WTO and are part of the TFA we are talking about, the trade facilitation agreement. The key point on TPP is that rather than wait and see what happens in the U.S. elections, we need to be more aggressive and move forward.

We are talking about major gains. The Chief Economist of Canada released a report just last week that said that if we are part of it, Canada's gains in GDP will be \$4.3 billion a year. If we are not part of the TPP, our losses will be \$5.3 billion a year. These are big numbers.

Again, we want to grow the economy. As Conservatives, we want to see more Canadians employed. If the United States, because both candidates for president seem to be anti-trade in their rhetoric at this moment in the election cycle, does not sign on to the TPP, it actually presents a greater opportunity for Canadian farmers, Canadian manufacturers, and Canadian exporters to grab a greater share. The potential to grow would be beyond \$4.3 billion.

In my riding of Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, beef production is by far the main economic stimulator. Hog production is as well. If we do not have access to those trans-Pacific partnership countries, we will see a major decline. Estimates by the Chief Economist himself are that beef exports could drop by two-thirds. That will be a real stab in the back for all Canadian farmers, from one end of this country to the other, but especially in western Canada. We need an opportunity, and this is the opportunity, to grow jobs and expand our economy.

If the United States becomes more protectionist because of the current nominees for president, it presents a greater opportunity for Canada in the TPP, the WTO, and other trade agreements.

Government Orders

I urge the Liberals to ratify the Conservative- negotiated trans-Pacific partnership. I urge them to make sure that we get Bill C-13 passed and that we continue to stand up for all of our export-based industries. If we truly believe that we are a trading nation, we have to support them by reducing tariffs and red tape. Bill C-13 does that, and so does the trans-Pacific partnership. The Liberals should get on side and get the TPP passed immediately.

•(1635)

Mr. Kyle Peterson (Newmarket—Aurora, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is clear that we agree on many things in this debate. Obviously, every party is agreeing on Bill C-13. I also think we agree that free trade is good, but it has to be fair trade.

I appreciate the hon. member's comments in regard to the TPP.

I have the good fortune of sitting on the international trade committee. What we are doing is listening to Canadians. We have listened to a lot of Canadians, and there are a lot of Canadians who really want this ratified quickly, but there are just as many Canadians who have some concerns about it. We are trying to find that balance. However that plays out, it will play out, but I think we all know that if the U.S. does not ratify it, the deal will not be there.

I spoke with many food processors and hog producers from the hon. member's province, and they are excited, actually. One of the markets they are very excited about is Vietnam, because there is a growing middle class there, and they enjoy pork products, especially Canadian pork products.

I am wondering if the hon. member would be willing to work with our government, in light of the TPP not happening, in perhaps getting some unilateral trade agreements with countries like Vietnam and Japan to get those great goods to markets and create jobs here in Canada.

•(1640)

Mr. James Bezan: Mr. Speaker, as we just heard the member say, the TPP may not be signed. The Americans may not sign it, but that does not kill the deal. I do not think the Americans will sit on the sidelines forever after the election, if all the other member states move forward.

It is important to note that if the United States decides to become more protectionist and does not sign the TPP, it is highly likely that it will also try to renegotiate NAFTA. If that is the case, if it is going to turn into a protectionist, navel-gazing country, as we have seen from the two presidential nominees, we need to find alternative markets. That is why the TPP is so important.

The member mentioned Vietnam. Hog producers and cattle producers see the opportunities that exist in Malaysia, Vietnam, Korea, and especially Japan, which has some of the highest tariff rate quotas in the world. If we are going to reduce those tariffs and all those costs, we have to get on side and sign the TPP.

Ms. Tracey Ramsey (Essex, NDP): Mr. Speaker, there are a few things I would like to correct in the member's speech. When he mentioned the chief economist and the report that came out about a week and a half ago, he said that there would be \$4.3 billion over one year. The \$4.3 billion that was mentioned would be over 24 years, and \$4.3 billion is the amount the previous Conservative government, which included the member, actually negotiated as

compensation for our supply management sector. Essentially, it is a wash. We would see no benefit at all, according to our chief economist and these numbers, from the trans-Pacific partnership.

While we know that beef and pork would see the benefits of trade with Japan, would the member not agree that we should pursue the bilateral agreements we were previously doing before we entered into the trans-Pacific partnership so that those sectors could see the benefits of that trade?

Ultimately, I want to speak to his piece about our getting in. He said that it is important that we get in so that we have preferential market access. That is absolutely not true. There is a certification process that takes place after ratification by our Parliament, and all the cards are held by the U.S. The U.S. is not going to enter into an agreement where Canada has preferential access to those markets before it does.

Was the member aware of the certification process and the fact that ultimately, whether we ratify it or not, the U.S. holds all the cards in this deal?

Mr. James Bezan: Mr. Speaker, she is partially correct about the \$4.3 billion. It is an annual increase by 2040, because we have to slowly reduce those tariffs. There is a timed phase-in as tariffs are reduced and eliminated. However, it does result in a huge increase.

We can sit here and argue about the small print, but the reality is that if we are not at the table, if we are not signing this deal, we are not going to have the opportunity to access all those markets.

The U.S. does not hold every card in its pocket. It may decide to walk away. If it walks away, the certification process changes. The member states that are there will still have the opportunity to move ahead with this deal.

Because it would vacate its opportunity to have preferential access to those markets, the U.S. will ultimately want to stay in when reason sets in for the presidential nominees as the selection cycle matures and Americans make their choice in November.

We need to understand that we should be leading on this, not following the United States. Right now we are distracted by politics and very ramped up, torqued rhetoric.

Mr. Alexander Nuttall (Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte, CPC): Mr. Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to address the House of Commons today to discuss Bill C-13, an act that would allow Canada to implement the trade facilitation agreement.

Trade is an incredibly important tool for growing the Canadian economy and economies throughout the world. Its benefits to our economy are vast. It has helped put Canada on the strong economic footing we have enjoyed for the last few years.

Government Orders

Trade deals are designed to enhance businesses to allow them to be competitive and productive and to deliver goods around the world in an environment that is less encumbered by trade barriers. A trade deal is a tool by which governments can deliver new hope and opportunity to Canadians. Trade provides businesses with new clients, people with new products, consumers with cheaper goods through more competition, governments with closer ties, developing countries with greater economic growth, and developed countries with greater economic security.

It is no wonder that I will be supporting the trade facilitation agreement today, which seeks to reduce barriers to trade throughout the world.

Why is this so important for the Canadian economy? Let me describe the state of the economy today. Manufacturing has been consistently contracting this year. According to StatsCan, there are more than 40,000 fewer Canadians employed in manufacturing today than there were last year. That means that there are over 40,000 families that have lost economic means due to the sharp reduction in manufacturing employment, 40,000 families that are finding it difficult to send their children to post-secondary education, 40,000 families that are finding it difficult to pay a mortgage or rent, and 40,000 families that may even be finding it difficult to put food on the table.

What new hope or opportunity is the government offering? It is not a plan for economic growth, not a plan to create jobs, and not a plan for Canadians to be personally responsible. The only focus of the government is bigger government and more reliance on the government.

This brings me to the trade facilitation agreement that seeks to reduce barriers, increase the speed and ease at which goods can be moved through and to jurisdictions, and essentially to reduce government intervention and the size of government in the trade of goods between jurisdictions and through jurisdictions.

While the trade facilitation agreement is designed to increase competition and access to markets around the world, the current government is making our manufacturers and businesses less competitive.

When Canadian manufacturers are less competitive against businesses internationally, our economy sheds manufacturing jobs, and we end up with more unemployed folks right here in Canada. There is no strategy to create jobs in Canada from the Liberal government. In fact, I would argue that there is nothing but a Liberal unemployment strategy.

What is it that the government is doing to breed a less competitive Canada and to ensure increased unemployment?

I spent the summer travelling our country and conducting economic round tables, touring manufacturing plants, visiting new small businesses, finding out the state of the sharing economy, and determining how to create more jobs for those who are not working. Number one at every single round table was the need for freer and more free trade.

In no particular order, I would like to outline the concerns I heard about what is happening domestically here in Canada.

The Liberal government's failure to lower taxes on Canadian small business and entrepreneurs, after promising to lower them from 11% to 9%, is hurting.

The Liberal government would be carbon taxing the provincial carbon tax, without providing any concrete information so businesses can start planning for costs and people can budget these costs into their home budgets.

The Liberal government would be introducing payroll taxes and increasing the costs for employers and employees by as much as \$2,000 a year.

Finally, Liberals have failed to waive EI contributions for one year with the hiring of young people between the ages of 18 and 24. To quote the Liberal platform, what was said was:

to encourage companies to hire young Canadians for permanent positions, we will also offer a 12-month break on Employment Insurance premiums. We will waive employer premiums for all those between the ages of 18 and 24 who are hired into a permanent position in 2016, 2017, or 2018.

While it is understood that small businesses gain substantial benefits from trade, as we can see, small businesses and their opportunities are being damaged by Liberal government policies that are stifling our Canadian competitive advantage in the world.

● (1645)

In fact, the policies of the Liberal government are damaging businesses so much that last month alone 39,000 self-employed workers went home. To repeat: 39,000 small businesses closed their doors and are no longer in operation in the month of August alone.

I know from the riding I represent, Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte, that we are feeling the pain. Our economy is built around manufacturing, agriculture, and small business jobs that will benefit from the trade facilitation agreement and greater trade opportunities overall. However, these self-employed workers are being negatively affected by the high tax practices of the current Liberal government. Since the Liberals assumed government, our unemployment rate in the greater Barrie area has soared from 6.1% to 8.7%. Specifically, the increase in payroll taxes, the proposed provincial carbon taxes, the removal of the hiring tax credit, and effectively increasing taxes on Canadian small businesses from 9% to 10.5% are all measures that are creating dismal job results to date and the worst economic data since the great recession.

While manufacturing employees and self-employed workers have been so negatively impacted by Liberal government policies, the resource sector has and will feel the effects of these taxes as well. This is a sector that has lost over 100,000 jobs since the drop in the oil price. While the government is continuing with the former Conservative government's approach to the trade facilitation agreement, it is also adding pain to these through the high tax, no pipeline approval policies that we have witnessed to date.

Government Orders

Freer trade is designed to open up access to economic growth for the future. There is no group that better embodies our collective future than our young people and our youth. Unfortunately, these domestic policies are once again constricting our youth despite the many commitments made to us by the Prime Minister during the last election.

While the Prime Minister promised an increase in \$300 million for youth employment, he also promised 40,000 jobs for youth each and every year for the next three years. Unfortunately, the reality of the government's domestic policies is again showing itself, but this time among the youth of our country. The August job numbers show that there were 48,000 fewer jobs for young people this summer, not the 40,000 job increase that was promised for youth.

While the Liberal government continues with our previous government's work on the trade facilitation agreement, its domestic policies are driving people out of work and to unemployment. Instead of following through with waiving EI contributions for the hiring of our young people, the government turned its back on youth and left them in the unemployment line with an unemployment rate of 13%.

When all is said and done on this topic, I do support freer trade, the reduction of tariffs and other barriers, and government interventions that stifle opportunity. I stand in support of this legislation because it would create greater opportunity not only for Canadians but also for many developing countries around the world. What I cannot do is pretend that this by itself would help unemployed Canadians find jobs. The government needs to stop raising tax after tax, running away from promise after promise, and finally develop a strategy for growing our economy and putting unemployed Canadians back to work.

• (1650)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Darrell Samson (Sackville—Preston—Chezzetcook, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be back in the House, to see my colleagues again, to develop legislation, and to analyze various policies.

I found my colleague's speech interesting. He certainly told us all about what the Conservatives did. However, there were a lot of mistakes in his speech, particularly with regard to the investments the government has made since it took office.

The government has committed to investing a historic \$120 billion in infrastructure, a very impressive figure. Investments in youth, families, and children are also quite impressive. People are still talking about them. He forgot to mention all of these points.

The question I would like to ask him is this: since his government was supposedly such a proponent of world trade, why was Canada one of only four G20 countries to ratify this agreement? Why did the new government move forward with this bill so quickly? The Conservatives were in power for 10 years and they did not do it.

• (1655)

[*English*]

Mr. Alexander Nuttall: Mr. Speaker, as Conservatives, we are happy that the government is continuing our work on this file. We are obviously supporting this moving forward. However, there are

certainly many pieces of our economy that are hurting right now. We also believe that we should be focusing on our unemployed workers in western Canada who have felt the results of the drop in oil prices, and the unemployed workers in Ontario who have felt the results of a manufacturing sector that is being hurt badly. Quite frankly, our youth who bought into, believed, and invested in the promises that were made to them need to be taken care of as well.

Unfortunately, by the government's backing off of its promised tax reductions for small business and its walking away from and breaking promises to our youth, in particular on providing benefits to businesses to hire youth, we are in a very bad job environment.

Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the New Democrats are supporting this bill at this stage in principle and look forward to studying its impact in detail at committee. However, one of the things this bill does is facilitates the transit of goods through Canada that may or may not conform with Canadian law, such as health care products and pesticides.

I wonder if my hon. colleague has any comment to share. As far as the New Democrats are concerned, while we all want to facilitate trade, we want to ensure that we do not allow Canada to be used as a conduit to ship goods that may be environmentally dangerous or dangerous to the health and safety of workers, or products derived from endangered species. Does he have any concern with respect to that or will he join will the New Democrats in making sure that this bill does not have that unintended consequence?

Mr. Alexander Nuttall: Mr. Speaker, we will work with the government and the House to ensure that Canadians are protected. That is what this bill does. It provides for our regulations and standards to exist when goods are being shipped to Canadians. We will continue to support that going forward.

Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for a great speech and for highlighting the importance of trade agreements and the impact they can have on job creation.

I was just in Atlantic Canada and heard from my friends there the importance of these kinds of trade agreements. They told me that they could sell their lobster for \$10 a pound here, but with the TPP could get \$100 a pound from various other countries in the world. I want to encourage that and I wonder what the member has to say on it.

Mr. Alexander Nuttall: Mr. Speaker, as Conservatives, we are certainly for opening up new markets, finding new places to send our goods, and putting Canadians back to work. That is something that we need to have the government move on, and hopefully it will do so very soon.

Mr. Daniel Blaikie (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in support of sending this bill to committee at this time.

Government Orders

One of the things I find really refreshing about this debate is that there is a certain amount of simplicity to this bill as compared to other types of trade measures that often come before the House. That is not to say that the bill could not stand to be improved. I think my hon. colleague from Vancouver Kingsway made some good suggestions as to how the committee might look at improving this bill.

For those Canadians listening at home, the object of the bill is relatively simple. It allows two things, in order to bring us into compliance with the TFA signed with the WTO. First of all, it would allow Health Canada to either send back or allow for the disposal of goods that come to Canada and do not meet certain health requirements. It would also allow the transit of goods across the country that may not be in compliance with standards that they would have to meet in order to stay here, but could be moved from coast to coast and then on to another destination.

These are the kinds of issues that it makes sense to talk about when we talk about trade, in trying to reduce barriers and trade-offs. That was part of what I think was driving that exchange initiated by the member for Vancouver Kingsway.

What is refreshing about it is that we see the government initiating a trade measure that does not, as we have seen so many times from Liberal and Conservative governments, sell out Canadian sovereignty in order to make life a little more convenient for foreign corporations. That is the kind of thing we are seeing with CETA and TPP.

It is really nice and refreshing for New Democrats, because New Democrats do support trade. We support reasonable measures to promote trade, but not having to have a debate about the nature of Canadian sovereignty and the ability of a democratically elected government in Canada to legislate to protect the environment and workers here. That is very nice. I wish we could do it more often in this place.

That is one of the reasons I am taking a certain delight in this debate, despite some Canadians who may be listening at home finding the debate kind of bland.

We are not talking about a trade deal, for instance, that would lock Canada into extra patent protection for large pharmaceutical companies that already have a 20-year life on their patents and would raise the costs of pharmaceutical drugs here. One of the reasons the NDP has been advocating for a national pharmaceutical plan, or a national pharmacare plan, has been to reduce the cost of drugs.

We do hear from the new Liberal government that it wants to reduce the cost of health care in ways that make more care more accessible to Canadians. However, instead of pursuing a national pharmacare program, we have seen it lending support to deals like CETA and the TPP that are going to do more to increase the cost of drugs for Canadians than whatever the government may do, short of signing a national pharmacare plan, to reduce those costs.

It would be a Pyrrhic victory for the government to bring in a national pharmacare plan—and I will be very pleased and also very surprised if that comes to pass in the term of the government—and then sign a deal like the TPP or CETA that would raise the cost of

those drugs and nullify the benefit of the national pharmacare plan. If the effort to bring in such a plan just backfills the pockets of pharmaceutical companies, which are potentially going to receive less money under a pharmacare plan because the unit cost of drugs will go down, we are not obligated to sign a deal like the TPP just to put that money right back in their pockets. We are interested in the net gain for Canadian families, not for international pharma.

It is nice to talk about trade. We have heard the new Minister of Labour say that there has been a problem with the temporary foreign worker program, for instance, and that it has been abused. I would like to talk about how we reduce legitimate trade barriers without having to have a whole conversation about how we are going to create a shadow temporary foreign worker program that is hidden in an international trade deal with 12 other parties, a program that cannot be changed, when we know that even when the program was being administered only by the Canadian government, there were plenty of problems with it.

We were fortunate that the government was able to act unilaterally to try to curb some of the worst abuses of that program, a program that not only was making life difficult for Canadian workers who were then competing with temporary foreign workers but also making it hard for those temporary foreign workers who in many cases were being asked to pay obscene amounts of money in their home country just to get to a job, which when they came to Canada, was not what they were promised. Under threat of deportation by their employer, they had to put up substandard wages and substandard working conditions that were not part of the promised jobs.

That is not what it means to talk about reducing legitimate trade barriers. We should not have to conflate all of those issues together, and then be told that if we are opposed to enshrining a broken TFW program in an international trade deal, we are not in favour of trade.

• (1700)

We should not have to be told that, if we have a meaningful plan and believe in having affordable pharmaceutical drugs for Canadians, somehow we are anti-trade.

This is the kind of thing we should be talking about when we are talking about trade: trade-offs. Some may be reasonable, some may not. We may ultimately be in favour of some, and ultimately not others. It will be because we think that the trade-offs are, on balance, better for Canadians or, on balance, worse. However, the practice of successive Liberal and Conservative governments of ramming through a whole bunch of bad public policy and taking away the right of democratically elected governments in Canada to change those policies when they do not work and calling that a debate about simple trade is the dishonesty that needs to come to an end. At least we have been spared that dishonesty in this debate and, if nothing else, I am glad for that.

Government Orders

• (1705)

Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think of Elmwood—Transcona as the rail centre of Canada with the Symington yard there and the CN yards. Trade, obviously, is a big part of the hon. member's constituency. Yet, in 2014-15, exports dropped by another 7% over the previous year. Even with the free trade deals, even with all the promotion of free trade, we were not trading.

Maybe the hon. member would comment on how the bill we are now discussing might actually result in some trade and may get some trains moving through Elmwood—Transcona and whether there are any other hindrances to trade that free trade deals do not address that maybe we should be considering.

Mr. Daniel Blaikie: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for the question and for his knowledge of Elmwood—Transcona. Certainly, as a member of Parliament representing a rail community, I see two sides to the element in the bill that is about transporting dangerous goods from one corner of the country to the other.

On one hand, I am optimistic and glad at the thought that it might help increase rail traffic, because there are many people in my riding, definitely, who would benefit from that. On the other hand, we are also a community through which those very goods would be passing, so it is important to me. I would implore those on the committee to take seriously the warnings of the member for Vancouver Kingsway and to ensure that, however that comes to pass—and I am confident and hopeful that there is an appropriate way to do that—it would not put at risk either people working on the railway or people living in those communities.

I will end by saying I think the member is quite right. In spite of all the trade deals that have been signed, still we see that real wages have gone down and that untold tens of thousands of manufacturing jobs have left the country. Paper access to markets is not the same as real access. We have given a lot away, in terms of Canadian sovereignty, in order to secure paper access to markets that has not necessarily resulted in real economic benefit for Canadians. That has to be part of the debate. That is what we in the NDP are trying to make part of the debate on the TPP, and I would appreciate the member's support in doing that.

Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I was the trade critic for three years in this House and privileged to represent our party in that regard. One thing I learned in that capacity is that trade is often a tertiary issue, meaning that trade determines who we are trading with and upon what terms we are trading, but the fundamental question really is, "What are we producing to trade?" It brings to mind the fact that successive Liberal and Conservative governments have failed to deliver a national industrial plan so that we can actually build the Canadian economy—take our blessings and our natural resources and actually build those to provide secondary and tertiary production. Then we would not be just shipping raw resources but actually creating the good jobs here in Canada to get that secondary value, that value-added production, out of those goods. We would not be shipping off raw goods and importing highly finished goods in return, which is often the case, still, in 2016. We are shipping important goods like coal, copper, and canola, but we are importing cars, equipment, and machinery.

I wonder if my hon. colleague has any thoughts as to how Canada can get more out of our natural resources and how we can improve the production and high-level manufacturing of goods in Canada, so that we can not only trade with countries but actually trade high-value goods with the rest of the world?

Mr. Daniel Blaikie: Mr. Speaker, my colleague is absolutely right that we need a trade framework that enables a Canadian government to have a plan and take action on such a plan.

With the Unifor negotiations with GM going on, a lot of experts on television recently have been talking about the auto industry, which has been no small part of the conversation about how, since the signing of NAFTA, we have seen tens of thousands of manufacturing jobs in the auto industry flee Canada and go to Mexico. Over time, that becomes the question.

Yes, we want to trade with other people, but we started off with things to trade. If we do not have a strategy and do not engage in a proper trade framework, we may wake up decades later—not overnight but later, which is the point we are getting to with some of the agreements—and realize we just do not have anything to trade anymore; and we are not capable of generating the kinds of quality jobs here at home that are going to sustain our communities. That should not have been the point, signing those agreements back then. Advocates of those agreements did not say that was the point.

We need the courage to look at the data and say, if that is what is resulting from these agreements, then we need to stop doing the same thing and expecting different results.

• (1710)

Mr. Kevin Waugh (Saskatoon—Grasswood, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege for me this afternoon to speak on Bill C-13, the trade facilitation agreement.

As we all know, and as we have stated here in the House for the last day and a half, Canada is a trading nation. It always has been and always will be, despite what is decided this year, this decade, or this century. Canada is known for trading.

From the early days, the traders came over to this country and settled many centuries ago. We should also be reminded of our first nations, because they were the first real traders of this country and they continue to be a valuable asset to this country.

I think our previous Conservative government raised the bar on trade. We started with the five agreements and we are at 51 now. With a country so rich in resources, we all agree that trade is essential in growing our economy here in Canada.

Canada needs to be a part of this trade agreement. As members know, it takes two-thirds of the WTO membership to make this happen. When we get there, hopefully we will be part of the solution.

This agreement seeks to level the playing field, and it would also help developing countries. I have a couple of instances in which I am going to talk about developing countries. So often we talk in the House about big business, but I am going to talk about how we in Canada, with our innovation, can help those in need throughout the world. I think that is an important part of this equation.

Government Orders

At the end of the day, this is all about making sure we have global standards that truly are enforceable. We talked a lot about the trans-Pacific partnership, and we will talk more in the House this coming year. On TPP, there is no question that it is the most comprehensive trade agreement in the world today, and I truly believe we must be a part of it.

We should reflect on the great work done by the previous government and the lead minister on the TPP, the member for Abbotsford, B.C. My province of Saskatchewan certainly salutes him. We averaged \$23 billion in trade annually from 2012 to 2014. The TPP would eliminate the tariffs on almost all of Saskatchewan's key exports and would provide access to new opportunities, especially in the Asia-Pacific region. Saskatchewan would benefit immensely from agriculture and agrifood.

We recently toured the Port of Vancouver, and I was delighted to see the rail cars come from Saskatchewan, with the word "Saskatchewan" on them, in the Port of Vancouver, dumping their grain into the ships for export worldwide. It was a thrilling moment to see the end part of that. Of course, being from Saskatchewan, I know that this is an important time in our province with the harvest that is going on. Our grain and agrifood is certainly a big part of who we are in this country.

Two weeks ago, I had the opportunity to tour a potash mine in Allan, Saskatchewan. It was a real eye-opener to see what goes on in the potash industry. We spent the better part of the morning underground and then toured the facility on the surface as they prepared to ship Saskatchewan product to the world. Again, potash cars heading west with Saskatchewan product gives our province a sense of pride in the work that is being done by our men and women in the province of Saskatchewan each and every day. We all know that potash feeds the world, and even underdeveloped countries.

I should add that a number of new developments in potash have started in my province. We have the big miners, like BHP putting through their mine in Jansen. However, I want to talk about another mine that is coming up, K+S, originating from Germany. It is in the southern part of Saskatchewan.

Not only are the big producers benefiting from this agreement, but a number of the smaller ventures are also benefiting, such as mines like Karnalyte, which is starting a project in Wynyard; Gensource; and many other small operations that are exploring the possibility of exporting their product worldwide.

Also, pulse crops are really big in our province of Saskatchewan. Recently, I was flying back to Ottawa from Saskatoon and a delegation from the University of Saskatchewan was on the flight. They were going to Ethiopia to help partner with that country.

• (1715)

Ethiopia, as we all know in the House, is struggling, but the University of Saskatchewan has reached out, trying to develop Ethiopia's farming industry and pulse crops. People believe that pulse crops can be grown in Saskatchewan and also in Ethiopia. Canadians, as we all know, have great innovation skills and we love sharing our knowledge worldwide to make this a better place to live. That is what I mean about helping underdeveloped countries such as Ethiopia reach their potential.

I know several businesses in Saskatchewan that trade daily with countries around the world. I am going to name one in my city, Nutana Machine. It is in the city of Saskatoon. It supplies mining equipment, not only in our province but around the world. Imagine the sense of pride of the workers at Nutana Machine when they see their work being produced in Saskatoon. We talked about products produced and shipped over to Europe, and Nutana Machine now because of the Internet can deal with problems. If it does have an issue in Europe when it ships the product over to Europe, and Romania is one place that I have seen where it has shipped some goods, then the company can deal with it on the Internet and can actually see the end product. It is built in Saskatoon and then it is shipped to, let us say, Romania and they can see the end product and how it is working over there. Nutana employs right now a healthy workforce who live in our province of Saskatchewan. They certainly help our local economy.

Most of our farm-machinery outlets reach out to the world with their products and their knowledge. In the small community of St. Brieux, with a population of just over 600, is a farm manufacturer called Bourgault Industries. It does millions of dollars a year of business overseas. Looking at its website, we see it is advertising employment opportunities for assembly workers, for painters, for welders, for engineers, and for maintenance. All this is in a community of 600 people in St. Brieux. The company travels to Europe several times a year. In fact, I actually have a relative who works at Bourgault in St. Brieux. He travels to Europe several times a year, not only building relationships, which as members know is an important part of business, but has also adopted a second family from Germany who go back and forth. Bourgault Industries is one of the big success stories in our province.

I come from Humboldt. It is in the area called the "iron triangle". Manufacturing firms have set up everywhere around the Humboldt community in places like Annaheim, Englefeld, and as I mentioned, St. Brieux. They are communities that probably would not exist today if not for some previous trade agreements. All of these communities have welcomed experienced workers from all over the world to come to Canada and start a new life. They have fit in well in our communities in Saskatchewan. They have contributed greatly to the economy and well-being of rural Saskatchewan. I would say that rural Saskatchewan would be a ghost town without these trade deals.

My late father was born too soon. He was the head flour miller for Robin Hood. He started his career in Ontario, went to Moose Jaw, and later to Saskatoon. He moved to Humboldt to help the Humboldt flour mills. Even in the 1960s, the flour that he produced was sent all over North America. I can imagine now if he were living today, hearing about this opportunity to show the world his product and the quality he could provide to others in other countries.

Government Orders

This agreement, as we all know, would give Canadian businesses access to over 60% of the world's economy. The gains from tariff elimination and improved market access in agriculture are especially significant in the markets of Malaysia. We have talked about Vietnam here in the House, and also Japan, but let us think about the market of Japan. Thirty-two per cent of tariff lines on agriculture and agri-food products would be duty free upon entry. That is a real opportunity for our economy, especially for our beef and pork producers, who would have access to that huge market. This would have a big impact on small- and medium-sized businesses. Trade missions to other parts of the world are a normal process in this country. There is not a province or a territory now that does not do trade missions worldwide. We have one from our province right now in South Korea.

Canada must act quickly on Bill C-13. There are 800 million new potential customers waiting for Canada. Canada is known for its hard work. We are known for our quality products and innovation. Let us not get in the way of this process.

● (1720)

Mr. Kyle Peterson (Newmarket—Aurora, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I always appreciate when the hon. member for Saskatoon—Grasswood gets to speak in the House. He is always very thrilling to listen to, and I am wondering if he might consider a career in broadcasting after this career. I am not suggesting he has a face made for radio. I am sure he would be a great TV personality in Saskatchewan, so we appreciate his comments.

I am on the trade committee and we had the privilege of travelling to Saskatoon when we were doing cross-country consultations. Hearing from the pulp producers, the pork farmers, and the beef farmers impressed me a lot, as well as the size of some of these Saskatchewan farms. Coming from Ontario, I did not get a chance to appreciate until I was out there how big these farms are and what big operations they are. The Saskatchewan market, frankly, is not big enough to sustain those farms, so they have to find other markets. I am all for helping Saskatchewan growers and producers and everyone involved in that supply chain make sure there are markets for their goods.

I am wondering if the hon. member has given any thought to other markets. If the TPP does not come to fruition, is he willing to work with the government to go into Vietnam and Japan? We are already in Korea. There is also Malaysia. These markets are literally begging for Saskatchewan products. Will he help us get his products to those markets?

Mr. Kevin Waugh: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague across the way for the kind remarks.

Yes, the population of our province is just over 1.1 million. We were stagnant for years under an NDP provincial government. Now we have a progressive government in Saskatchewan and we are open to the world, and it is showing. I imagine when the trade commission went through Saskatchewan and Saskatoon, the glass was half full. They want to trade their product.

I go to major league baseball games in the United States, and one of the greatest thrills I have is getting a hot dog and putting mustard on that hot dog, because I know that mustard came from the province

of Saskatchewan. It gives me great pleasure to say I am from Saskatoon in Saskatchewan in major league ballparks.

Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise today to recognize the hon. member across the way. I did some of the hydraulic work in the flour mill in Humboldt, so I am familiar with the prairie ingenuity.

I was at the Ontario outdoor farm show last week and heard that the machine manufacturers in Ontario are now producing more agricultural machines than Manitoba and Saskatchewan. Being originally from Manitoba, that might not be good news but it is good to see competition.

Those manufacturers are not talking about free trade deals, they are talking about how hard it is to get their product through the paperwork and through the processes of the Government of Canada. It hurts them because they do not have enough people in their offices to do all that paperwork. Maybe the hon. member could comment on how the bill might help the good folks in Saskatchewan get product to market.

Mr. Kevin Waugh: Mr. Speaker, these businesses are small. Like I just mentioned, in the community of St. Brieux of 600 people, 200 work at Bourgault. They employ a third of the community. Anything that we can do with this TFA to make it easier for small and medium-sized businesses, certainly we are all for that.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre Nantel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech, which I very much enjoyed. I also really enjoy working with him. We agree on all kinds of things, but I do not think we agree on the TPP.

I would like to know if he is aware of this part of the TPP agreement, which I will read.

[*English*]

It says:

Canada reserves the right to adopt or maintain a measure that affects cultural industries and that has the objective of supporting, directly or indirectly, the creation, development or accessibility of Canadian artistic expression or content, except: (a) discriminatory requirements on service suppliers or investors to make financial contributions for Canadian content development; and (b) measures restricting the access to on-line foreign audio-visual content.

Knowing how familiar the hon. member is with all these topics, what do we do with such an exception that simply ties our hands behind our backs? What do we do?

● (1725)

Mr. Kevin Waugh: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague. I have enjoyed the heritage committee. This is not a heritage issue, although he did bring this up.

For our province, it is simple. We need this agreement. We need the TFA. We need the TPP. With every trade agreement there is good and bad. There is no question about that, but we can work as governments to facilitate and make things easier for every company and country involved in these agreements.

As we mentioned before, there are 81 that have already signed on. We must be quick and sign on to this agreement.

Mr. Blake Richards (Banff—Airdrie, CPC): Mr. Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to stand and speak to Bill C-13. It is an opportunity to discuss the importance of trade. It is good to have a bill that I feel I can support the government on, because they are few and far between. It is a pleasure to be able to do that.

Obviously, to speak to the importance of trade we have to look at the fact that one in five jobs in Canada depend on trade. Sixty percent of our GDP is linked to exports, so that is obviously very significant. It creates jobs in the country and opportunities for businesses, particularly small business owners. History has shown us that trade is one of the best ways to create jobs, growth, and long-term prosperity. As trade increases so does our nation's prosperity. We are putting more money into the pockets of hard-working Canadians.

Under the previous Conservative government we had one of the most ambitious pro-trade agendas, probably the most ambitious in our country's history. We were able to conclude free trade agreements with 38 countries. That included Colombia, the European Free Trade Association, Honduras, Jordan, Panama, Peru, South Korea, and the 28 member-states of the European Union as well. We also concluded, signed, and brought into force foreign investment protection agreements with 24 countries. That is more than any other government in Canada's history as well.

Just to speak to a few of those, one of our historic achievements was the Canada-Korea Free Trade Agreement. It was actually Canada's first free trade agreement with the Asia-Pacific region, one of the fastest growing regions. We also had the opportunity with a number of other countries. Ukraine is one that comes to mind as well. The Canada-European Free Trade Association agreement is another one that we certainly hope to see ratified. There is the TPP as well.

It is a pleasure to stand and support the legislation and continue to push for trade and growth in our economy.

The Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

The Deputy Speaker: The question is on the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried. Accordingly, the bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on International Trade.

(Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and referred to a committee)

Private Members' Business

● (1730)

The Deputy Speaker: I see the parliamentary secretary to the government House leader standing, perhaps on a point of order.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I am sure if you were to canvas the House you would see a will to see the clock at 5:39 p.m., so that we can move on to private members' business.

The Deputy Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to see the clock at 5:39 p.m.?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: It being 5:39 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business, as listed on today's Order Paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[English]

GENETIC NON-DISCRIMINATION ACT

Mr. Robert Oliphant (Don Valley West, Lib.) moved that Bill S-201, An Act to prohibit and prevent genetic discrimination, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

He said: Mr. Speaker, it is a great honour to be here today as we consider in the House the first bill that is coming to us from the Senate, and I am proud to be its sponsor.

This legislation was first introduced by Senator James Cowan and has already received unanimous support in the other place. Today I hope to convince members of this chamber to give it the same enthusiastic support in the House and thus change the lives of millions of Canadians.

Genes are the building blocks of our lives. They tell us who we are and where we come from, our inherited strengths, and our susceptibilities. Our genetic makeup is more fundamental than our ethnicity, our gender, our race, or even our sexual orientation. It is the foundation of who we are as human beings.

Since the discovery of the human genome, we know that our genetic codes contain information that can prevent illness, thwart disease, improve or even save lives. The late U.S. senator Ted Kennedy observed the discovery of the human genome would affect the 21st century as profoundly as the splitting of the atom or the invention of the computer in the 20th century.

When Senator Cowan first introduced the bill in 2013, there were only 2,000 genetic tests available. Now today, after three and a half years, there are more than 48,000 genetic tests for diseases like Huntington's disease and early onset Alzheimer's. There are tests for genes associated with ALS, kidney disease, breast and ovarian cancer, and certain forms of colon cancer, and the list is growing at a truly exponential rate.

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Canadian scientists last year discovered the gene that was associated with cystic fibrosis. Just this summer researchers have found the gene associated with metastatic, fast-moving prostate cancer, explaining why with some men prostate cancer moves slowly and in others it advances very quickly, perhaps informing treatment or helping people determine their options. This probably explains why my father lived for over 20 years with prostate cancer and yet some of his friends died after only 18 months.

Canadian health care institutions conduct tens of thousands of these tests each year. The information gleaned from them allows Canadian researchers and physicians to diagnose diseases, guide treatment, inform reproductive planning, and warn of adverse drug reactions. They are also used for clinical trials by innovative pharmaceutical and biotech companies to find new treatments for old diseases.

In most cases having a genetic makeup does not mean that a person will automatically or even necessarily develop a disease or condition, only that one might. However, knowledge is power and this opens up the possibility of taking concrete steps to reduce the possibility or the chance that a disease or a condition will develop in the first place.

Perhaps the most famous example of this is actor Angelina Jolie. People will probably know that her mother died of cancer. When she looked at that, she decided to undergo the test and determined that indeed she was a carrier for the BRCA1 gene. Women with this genetic mutation have as high as 87% chance of developing breast cancer and as high as 60% chance of developing ovarian cancer. Ms. Jolie opted to have preventative surgery and reduced her chance of getting breast cancer from 87% down to 5% and reduced her chance of getting ovarian cancer by some 98%. She wrote in *The New York Times*, "I can tell my children that they don't need to fear they will lose me to breast cancer".

The benefits of genetic knowledge should be not limited though to celebrities. Every one of us in the House may want to undertake a genetic test at some point. Famous or not, none of us should be denied access to a genetic test and none of us should be afraid of having a genetic test for fear of discrimination.

In the course of working on this legislation with Senator Cowan, I came to know the story of a young man who was only 24 years old who had family members who had tested positive for Huntington's disease. Given that kind of family history, he had to weigh out his options about whether he should actually have the test to see if he carried the same genetic makeup. He took the difficult decision to have that test and he shared that decision with his employer.

• (1735)

On a Friday, he found out he had tested positive and, indeed, had the gene. His employer asked him what the result was, and he was honest and told him. The Monday following, he went to work and was fired. He was a video editor. His employer was afraid, for some reason, for his equipment.

Of course, this young man did not have the disease, does not have the disease, and will likely not develop any symptoms for this disease for maybe as many as 20 years. Huntington's is an area of huge research right now. There are clinical trials going on right now

for drugs which would perhaps delay the onset even further. However, he is being discriminated against now for a disease he might never have if medical science works the way it should.

This bill is inspired by the belief that all Canadians should profit from the advances in genetic science. To achieve this goal, the genetic non-discrimination act seeks to ensure that the knowledge that we have through genetic research is protected from potential abuse and that there are as few impediments as possible to getting tested.

In Canada, unlike most western countries, if one has a genetic test, there is no protection from a third party using that information, those test results, perhaps to one's detriment. This is the problem of genetic discrimination and that is what Bill S-201 seeks to address.

Genetic discrimination can take many forms. As in the first story, it can take the form of employment determination, denial of a promotion, denial of child custody, and there are cases of this, an increase in insurance premiums, or even cancellation of an insurance policy. Each one of these is a heartbreaking story.

Dr. Ronald Cohn is a clinical geneticist, now pediatrician-in-chief, at SickKids hospital in Toronto. He testified in the Senate about parents feeling they had to refuse genetic testing, even though it could point to the best way for treatment or care, for fear that their child, who may be sick, could face future discrimination. He spoke of parents who had spent years searching for diagnoses, who broke down in tears as they had to decline genetic testing because of concerns over genetic discrimination.

He described one young patient whose symptoms were consistent with two different diseases, and the only way to promote the diagnosis and get the right treatment was to actually have a genetic test. However, the parents felt unable to consent for fear of discrimination. Dr. Cohn told senators that without the test, he could not properly care for the young girl. Without legislative protection, her parents could not agree to have the test done. This is not a choice or decision a parent should ever have to make.

Canada is one of the few industrialized countries in the world without some sort of legislative protection for its citizens' genetic information. Our laws lag behind Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, and Spain. The United States has had this sort of anti-discrimination law in place over eight years, with the federal genetic information on discrimination act. Twenty-four American states have passed additional legislation limiting the use of genetic information by life, disability, and long-term care insurers.

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Renowned award-winning genetic researchers with international experience are expanding the reach of precision, personalized or targeted medicine. The future of medical care is rapidly changing. There has been no more significant advancement in anything medical than the discovery of the human genome. Without protection, Canadians will not benefit from these huge advances in medical science. This affects the health of every Canadian that we are here to serve. It affects the future of medical science in our country. Personalized or targeted medicine is the future of medicine and Canadians deserve protection to ensure they get the best care, and that we do not waste health dollars and ensure we have the best public and personal health.

I call Bill S-201 a three-legged stool. Each piece of the legislation is crucial to fighting discrimination. They are, in order of importance: the proposed new genetic non-discrimination act, or what I am now calling the GNA to fight discrimination against RNA or DNA; then the amendments to the Canada Labour Code; and, finally, amendments to the Canadian Human Rights Act. Each part is essential. This bill cannot be arbitrarily disassembled any more that a stool can lose a leg or two and still support us.

● (1740)

Principally, the very first thing is that the bill would create a new genetic non-discrimination act, a GNA, with three new criminal offences. It would prohibit requiring anyone to undergo a genetic test, or to disclose the results of a genetic test, as a condition of providing goods or services. It would also prohibit the collection, use or disclosure of the results of genetic testing without that person's consent. Of course, the bill contains exemptions for healthcare practitioners and for research.

To my mind, this is not controversial. None of these prohibitions are controversial and they are urgently needed. The new genetic non-discrimination act is the single most important part of this bill. The GNA is necessary to fight DNA or RNA discrimination.

It states clearly and unequivocally that society condemns genetic discrimination. It is unacceptable behaviour, and it will not be tolerated. The criminal sanctions are set high to serve as an effective deterrent. The bill does not target sectors or industry; it targets bad behaviour. It names the bad behaviour and ensures that there are laws to protect people against those behaviours.

Our job as federal legislators is to put into place laws that will protect Canadians. We have the criminal law power to do that work. That criminal law will state what is unacceptable conduct, and then prohibit that conduct. That is what Canadians expect us to do on their behalf.

Second, Bill S-201 would amend the Canada Labour Code with a set of amendments, providing a complaint procedure for employees in federally regulated workplaces who encounter genetic discrimination. I know this number is not large, but nonetheless they are important and this could serve as a model for other jurisdictions.

Last, there is a set of amendments that adds "genetic characteristics" as a prohibited ground of discrimination under the Canadian Human Rights Act.

This is a three-legged stool with an act, with criminal penalties, changes to the Labour Code, and changes to the Human Rights Act,

holding us up as a robust piece of legislation that will protect our rights as Canadians and ensure the best health of Canadians.

It is interesting. I have heard that there is some sense that we should not have a stand-alone act, but it is fine to simply put this into the Canadian Human Rights Act.

Peter Engelmann, a labour lawyer and human rights advocate, former counsel to the Canadian Human Rights Commission, told senators why, in his opinion, the specific protections as were proposed in the genetic non-discrimination act were critical, and why just amending the Human Rights Act alone was not sufficient.

The reality is the way human rights legislation works is it is reactive instead of proactive. It puts the burden or the onus on complainants. They bear the costs. They bear the burden and the stress of taking a complaint forward, which is after the fact not before the fact. There are not significant deterrents in it. Sometimes people are very vulnerable in difficult positions in which they should not have to be.

The act would ensure we have, together, one act that would make it a crime against Her Majesty, against the state, and thus would ensure that we would have adequate protections to do that.

Senator Cowan presented an earlier incarnation of this bill and tested its constitutionality. The Senate has deemed, indeed, that we do have the federal power to enact this sort of legislation to ensure that Canadians are protected.

Law professors, experts, will disagree. Essentially, I hope the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights will examine that thoroughly. I am convinced it will find that we do have the federal authority, the federal power, as we do in other areas of legislation, to enact this sort of bill.

The federal government has that power in securities, in tobacco marketing and other things under so-called provincial jurisdiction, however, we believe this is the right thing for the federal government to do.

● (1745)

Canada is behind. Canada needs to step up to the plate. Canada needs to do this now. We are behind and we need to act. This is our chance, as legislators, to bring better health to Canadians and ensure that Canadians have access to genetic tests. We, this day, will be able to save lives.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre Nantel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I congratulate my colleague on his involvement in such important causes.

Private Members' Business

My colleague compared the bill to a three-legged stool, so I wonder if he can offer any reassurance that each of the three legs will be of equal importance. Nobody wants a wobbly stool. Should we be at all concerned about one of those legs being less sturdy than the others? I am thinking of discrimination against individuals, specifically.

[English]

Mr. Robert Oliphant: Mr. Speaker, as the bill stands now, there are three legs that would hold up equally. The reality is that if we take one out, though, the stool would not hold up.

The Canada Labour Code amendments are there principally because we have the responsibility, in the federal legislature, to ensure that federally regulated employees, whether they work in a bank or anywhere, have a means to make sure they are not prevented from having a genetic test for discrimination.

The Canadian Human Rights Act is an important thing; necessary, but not sufficient. To make this a robust piece of legislation, I honestly believe we need a genetic non-discrimination act, which would work in conversation with others but would largely serve as a deterrent.

My hope is that there be no convictions under the bill; that the bill would be robust, would stand, would ensure that Canadians have access, and would ensure Canadians are never discriminated against, because employers and others know the costs of discriminating.

Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for an excellent, detailed, and passionate presentation.

Last week, I spoke with members of the Huntington Society. They also pointed out that we are behind, that we are the only G7 country that does not protect genetic information.

Would the hon. member explain why it is important that Bill S-201 have criminal penalties in addition to the legislation we are putting forward?

Mr. Robert Oliphant: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for the question because I think it raises an important point. I was a member of a human rights commission and then, at one point, chair of the commission. We recognized that it was an important conversation about human rights, and that was the nature of that human rights discussion, where we would use alternative dispute resolution. We would have a caseworker and we would work on those things.

We agree that is possible as part of the bill but, more important, we think we need to have a robust, strong piece of legislation that would have criminal penalties that would be commensurate with the actual life-and-death nature of this discrimination. People have to have knowledge. Knowledge is power. That power can help them actually save their lives and the lives of their children. This disproportionately affects some communities in Canada. That is what I have begun to learn, that there are pockets in Canada that have particular genetic makeups that actually mean they are more at risk for having certain diseases. It could be the Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean area, Cape Breton, the Mennonite community, or the Ashkenazi Jewish community. There are different communities that have particular problems, in a genetic way. The bill would wake people up, cause them to take control of their own health care, and actually

move us, as a society, to a more sustainable health care system. It is targeted medicine, so that people would get the right tests, at the right time, the right treatments, and the right options.

● (1750)

Mrs. Karen Vecchio (Elgin—Middlesex—London, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am truly honoured to stand here today at the beginning of a new session to speak on such important legislation, Bill S-201, an act to prohibit and prevent genetic discrimination. I thank the member opposite from Don Valley West for sponsoring this Senate bill that allows us to have active debate on this issue.

I was first made aware of this piece of legislation from a visit by Ovarian Cancer Canada in May. The regional director from Saskatchewan and Manitoba, along with ovarian cancer survivor, Lauren Richards, came to my office to discuss their types of cancers, their concerns, and what we as members of Parliament and government can do to help the thousands of victims of this terrible disease.

Through our discussion, I was advised that ovarian cancer is the most fatal cancer for women in Canada and that 2,800 women would be diagnosed this year, with an additional 1,750 dying from this disease. Unfortunately, because of the symptoms of ovarian cancer, the diagnosis can be very confusing and disease go undetected. Lauren advised me that many physicians diagnose this disease as a bladder infection. Meanwhile the disease continues to spread. Because of this, the mortality rate is such that more than half of the women die within five years. The words for this are “just brutal”.

My own office assistant, Kim, was diagnosed in 2000. Luckily she is with us today, as it was detected very early and she has not just become one of those statistics. Kim is now tested annually, as doctors know of her medical history, but the question is what can we do to help people like Kim and Lauren, women who have this disease and who, in over 50% of cases, will die in five years? The answer is genetic testing. Genetic testing would not only provide an individual with a sigh of relief to find out whether or not they are a carrier of a mutated gene, but it would also allow individuals to get the appropriate care and treatment to deal with the diseases.

In 2015, former justice minister MacKay tabled similar legislation prior to the fall election. This legislation was especially supported by the Jewish community, which has a disproportionately higher number of genetic markers. I was made aware of this during my meeting with officials of Ovarian Cancer Canada, who advised me that their own colleague would not have this testing done, due to insurance concerns.

When preparing for speeches, many of us in the House read a lot of news articles and studies to do with the issue in question. One case from California in particular came to my attention. A young boy was transferred out of his school because of the results of his genetic testing. He had tested positive for genetic markers for cystic fibrosis but did not have the condition. This is a clear case of discrimination.

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I believe that when we look at this issue we need to decide if it is about the quality of life and the betterment of our health decisions or the ability to discriminate. Currently we are the only G8 country that does not have legislation to protect our citizens from genetic discrimination. Similar legislation in the United States, Australia, the United Kingdom, and New Zealand, to name a few, already includes safeguards for their citizens.

I understand the concerns of insurance companies that have spoken out against this legislation, but in countries like the U.K. they have come up with solutions and proposals. Studies that have looked at the impact on the insurance companies, who are concerned about people over-insuring themselves to secure a large payout for their family when they pass on, have found that over-insurance is not truly an issue, as over 97% of those companies' policies fall below those considered limits. I recognize that the regulation of insurance companies is a provincial responsibility, but I believe that as a federal government we can set the tone for human rights across Canada.

During my preparation for this speech, I read the different proposals forwarded to other governments by insurance companies. Rather than saying that this is a provincial regulation, we can work collaboratively to make sure that we are protecting Canadians.

It is not just for diseases like ovarian cancer and breast cancer, but for people who have parents with Huntington's disease, heart disease, and many other diseases, for which this genetic testing would be very helpful. There are so many uses for this type of screening to help people make their choices about their health care needs. Personally, I have a mother who had a triple bypass, and whose mother and family members had a number of heart disease issues, including my aunt, uncle, and great uncles.

Just a couple of years ago, my sister, a very active and fit 48-year-old woman at the time, was diagnosed with a heart condition and now has a defibrillator implant. For me personally, this does cause concern. Do I have the same issue or will I find out that I do like my sister did when she passed out in her family's hallway? Will my daughters and sons have this condition? Does my husband carry the gene for prostate cancer like his grandfather?

• (1755)

As the leader of the Senate Liberal caucus said in January 2016, scientists here in Canada are unlocking keys to our DNA and the results are revolutionizing medicine. As he indicated, just because individuals have the markers, it does not mean they will develop the condition, but just knowing can change so many things for them, such as lifestyle, diet, exercise regime, and particular medications or perhaps surgery as necessary.

An extremely popular example of this is Angelina Jolie. When she discovered she had a genetic disposition for breast cancer, she dealt with it by having a double breast mastectomy. As a mother caring for many children, she had the hardships somewhat relieved for her. This is an example of providing peace of mind not only for her but also for her children.

As I indicated earlier, I had the opportunity to speak to an ovarian cancer survivor who luckily had been diagnosed early. However, we

must keep in mind that misdiagnoses can occur and do, especially with these types of cancers. The ability to save a life is crucial.

With respect to discrimination, there have been situations in Canada where people have lost their jobs following positive test results for specific diseases. People have lost out on promotions and have come under scrutiny on the job due to their potential conditions, and it is not just with respect to employment insurance. Due to positive results, families have not had the opportunity to adopt children. Instead of having the opportunity to raise a family, individuals go without, and they may not even have the condition but have just tested positive for it.

It just does not make sense for us as parliamentarians to not support such an important piece of legislation. We need to set the bar and we need to set that now. We need to do what is best for Canadians, and supporting this legislation is just that. I urge all members to take an important stand and support Bill S-201, an act to prohibit and prevent genetic discrimination. I urge members to look at the health of people and to allow provincial regulators to find solutions to assist Canadians who have tested positive for gene markers. I urge Canadian researchers and our medical professionals to work together to encourage testing, especially in cases where there may be something that could be detected, which would allow Canadians to make their own personalized health care plans.

I would truly like to thank Ovarian Cancer Canada for coming to my office and informing me of what we can do and how we can be part of the solution that would make a difference for all Canadians, now and in the future.

Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak to Bill S-201, an act to prohibit and prevent genetic discrimination. I am proud to indicate the full support of the NDP caucus for the bill's goals and principles.

I will take a moment to congratulate my hon. colleague for Don Valley West who, as long as I have been in the House, has been a paragon in standing up for the principles of human rights and anti-discrimination in a number of areas. I congratulate him on his stewardship of this bill.

Originally introduced and passed in the Senate as a private member's bill, the last version of Bill S-201 proposes to make amendments to the Canada Labour Code and the Canadian Human Rights Act. It would also introduce a series of new offences and penalties for genetic discrimination in contracts and in the provision of goods and services.

New Democrats strongly believe that the federal government must work to prevent genetic discrimination in order to ensure that Canadians can make use of such testing without fear to improve their health care planning and treatment options.

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New Democrats are proud to stand with health care providers, medical ethicists, community organizations, and the overwhelming majority of Canadians in support of genetic privacy and in opposition to discrimination based on genetic information. This is why New Democrat MPs introduced legislation similar to Bill S-201 on three previous occasions, including former MPs Libby Davies, Bill Siksay, and Judy Wasylycia-Leis.

It has been said that New Democrats are Liberals in a hurry. In this case, it is certainly true that the NDP was ahead of the game. Frankly, if Parliament had followed the NDP lead in 2010 when this legislation was first introduced by NDP MPs, Canada would not be the only G7 country without this important protection today.

By its very nature, our genetic information is deeply personal. Genes are the basic building blocks of heredity in all living organisms. They are made up of DNA, and DNA contains the instructions for building proteins that control the structure and function of all the cells that make up our bodies. Privacy protection is therefore an essential element of maintaining public trust in the value of the rapidly proliferating field of genetic testing and treatment.

Like many other significant innovations, the information made available through genetic testing offers both tremendous benefits and potential risks.

On the one hand, genetic information can be used to diagnose genetic conditions and identify predispositions to genetic disease. This helps folks seek treatment early and adopt lifestyle habits to minimize the possible harm of a genetic condition. It also helps health care professionals tailor therapies to a patient's specific genetic profile.

On the other hand, without appropriate legal restraint, genetic information can be misused to subject Canadians to discrimination based on the traits revealed by genetic testing. For example, if an insurance company learns that an applicant is at higher risk for certain disease, this may affect the cost of the policy it is willing to offer that person, if it is offered at all. If an employer knows that an applicant is at higher risk of developing a genetic condition or illness, the employer may be unwilling to hire that person or continue to employ him or her.

Currently, there is no law in place that specifically protects Canadians' genetic privacy. Only a voluntary code of conduct governs how the results of genetic testing can be used by employers and insurance companies, and that is not good enough.

Moreover, existing Canadian privacy and human rights legislation is wholly inadequate to address genetic discrimination, because it fails to address cases of "future disability, perceived disability, or imputed disability", and it fails to proactively prevent discrimination. Instead, it offers remedies after the discrimination has already occurred. The person who is discriminated against must make the complaint and then seek appropriate legal action, which is often a costly and time-consuming endeavour. This puts Canada out of step with our country's major industrial counterparts.

As Richard Marceau, general counsel and senior government advisor at the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, has pointed out:

Canada's wait-and-see approach has resulted in a serious legislative gap that no longer exists in any of our G7 partners or in countries like Israel, which enacted comprehensive safeguards as far back as the year 2000.

In liberal, democratic societies in a market economy, the 14 years that followed clearly indicated that legislative protections would not destroy the insurance industry, no more than they would cause employers to go bankrupt. Experience shows that these fears are unfounded.

● (1800)

Canadians from coast to coast to coast expect their government to take immediate action to close this gap and protect their genetic privacy, and none more so than those directly touched by genetic conditions and illnesses. I recently had the honour of participating in Ovarian Cancer Canada's Walk of Hope at Queen Elizabeth Park in Vancouver. Ovarian cancer is the most fatal women's cancer. In Canada every year it claims approximately 1,800 lives, and nearly 2,800 Canadian women will be newly diagnosed with the disease every year. Because it is often caught in its late stages, 55% of women diagnosed with ovarian cancer will die within five years. Although existing research has confirmed a strong link between genetics and ovarian cancer, women may fear testing and some do not get testing because their genetic privacy remains unprotected.

According to Elisabeth Baugh, the CEO of Ovarian Cancer Canada:

While all women are at risk for ovarian cancer, women with specific gene mutations are at greater risk than others. Knowing about your genetic makeup enables informed decisions about preventive action... To support this, we need assurance that genetic information won't be misused by employers or insurers.

This view has been echoed by Ovarian Cancer Canada's partners in the Canadian Coalition for Genetic Fairness, an alliance of organizations dedicated to establishing protections against genetic discrimination for all Canadians. These include the ALS Society, Alzheimer Society, Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation, Canadian Congenital Heart Alliance, Cystic Fibrosis Canada, the Canadian Organization for Rare Disorders, Huntington Society of Canada, the Kidney Foundation of Canada, Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada, Muscular Dystrophy Canada, and many others. These groups advocate on behalf of the families directly affected by genetic conditions and illnesses, folks who are witnessing the disturbing prevalence of genetic discrimination first-hand.

According to the coalition:

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Cases of genetic discrimination have been documented in Canada and are continuing to grow as more genetic information becomes available....

To assume that someone's DNA will result in a disease or disorder is faulty, misleading...speculative [and dangerous]...

Every person has dozens of genetic mutations that could increase or decrease his or her chance of getting a disease such as diabetes, heart disease, cancer, Parkinson's or Alzheimer's disease.

Indeed, a groundbreaking study from the University of British Columbia documented precisely how widespread this discrimination has become. UBC researchers surveyed 233 Canadians with a family history of Huntington's but no symptoms of the disease. They found that nearly 30% of subjects experienced unfair treatment at the hands of insurance companies.

It is clear that by prohibiting genetic discrimination Canadians would be empowered to make more-informed choices about their own health without having to fear negative repercussions. New Democrats believe that no Canadians should ever have to forego critical testing because they lack protection from discrimination. That is why New Democrats strongly support the principle behind Bill S-201. If passed at second reading, we will work hard to engage in a rigorous study of this legislation at committee because it is vitally important that we get the details right. Countries that have enacted laws to prevent genetic discrimination have taken various approaches, and we should learn from each experience to craft a comprehensive made-in-Canada approach to genetic privacy.

All Canadians are affected by genetic discrimination, and leadership is needed at the federal level to ensure that genetic testing is only used to improve and save lives. I hope that the federal government will work with the provinces and territories because many employers and insurers in this country fall under provincial jurisdiction and we want to see the legislation and approach replicated at all levels so that every Canadian, no matter if he or she works in a provincially or federally regulated workplace or regardless of where he or she seeks insurance, is covered by this bill.

I want to conclude by saying that there is one improvement to the bill, which I will identify right now. While it would prevent discrimination, we need to ensure that insurance companies are not able to offer incentives to people to get a lower premium on insurance if they voluntarily subscribe to genetic testing. Those are the kinds of positive proposals the NDP will bring to the table. I congratulate my friend and the government for bringing this important legislation to the House.

• (1805)

Mr. Sean Casey (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to speak to Bill S-201, an act to prohibit and prevent genetic discrimination. I would like to thank Senator Cowan for bringing this bill forward and the Senate for giving such thoughtful consideration to this matter both at committee and in its chamber.

Genetic discrimination is an important issue, particularly as more genetic tests become available to Canadians. Senator Cowan has been a champion against genetic discrimination for several years, working with stakeholders in the medical community and driving the public debate on the risks of genetic discrimination in areas like insurance access and workplace practices.

For his work, I know he has received an advocacy award from The American Society of Human Genetics. I also want to thank the hon. member for Don Valley West for sponsoring Bill S-201 here in the House and for his work in bringing this important issue to the attention of both the public and the House.

I also wish to recognize the work of the committee in the other place on Bill S-201. The committee's work exemplifies constructive debate and collaboration by members of different political parties. There is clearly support from across the political spectrum for the objectives of this bill.

As a government, we are committed to ensuring that Canadians have access to the best possible health care, including both preventive and medical treatments. The health of Canadians is of utmost priority for our government. We understand that genetic testing promises great benefits in the fields of health care and medical research.

Genomic-based research has already changed the way health care providers practise medicine. Genetic testing is one of the tools that is revolutionizing the way a diagnosis is made and has helped detect and, in some cases, treat many conditions. In recent years, improvements in technology have dramatically reduced the costs and time required for genetic testing. At the same time, therapies are becoming better tailored to the genetic characteristics of individual patients.

For these reasons, genetic testing is becoming a normal part of medical practice. Some medical experts believe that whole genome sequencing, in which a person's entire genetic makeup is mapped out, perhaps in childhood, will become the new diagnostic norm before long. However, there is increasing evidence that some Canadians are reluctant to undergo genetic testing that doctors believe will help with their health care. They have concerns about how the results of the testing could be used to their disadvantage in the future, most notably in the insurance and employment contexts.

The committee in the other place heard from numerous witnesses who spoke of persons who had been treated in an adverse way because of genetic information revealed about them through genetic testing. The government takes seriously the importance of access to genetic testing in Canada and the need to prevent inappropriate disclosure of genetic test results. The cabinet, therefore, supports the overall objectives of Bill S-201 and, in particular, the bill's proposed amendments to the Canadian Human Rights Act, the CHRA.

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These amendments would add genetic characteristics to the list of prohibited grounds of discrimination under the CHRA. They would also specify that, where the ground of discrimination is a refusal to undergo a genetic test or to disclose or authorize the disclosure of the results of a genetic test, the discrimination shall be deemed to be on the ground of genetic characteristics. By adding genetic characteristics as a prohibited ground of discrimination, the CHRA can help to address concerns about the misuse of genetic information in a meaningful way. This is an important step forward.

Anti-discrimination laws, such as the Canadian Human Rights Act, aim to promote equality of opportunity in workplaces and in access to goods and services. They are also aimed at preventing arbitrary disadvantage based on personal characteristics that individuals cannot change about themselves. The CHRA currently prohibits discrimination on 11 grounds, including race, age, sex, and disability.

• (1810)

For those who are concerned about potential discrimination by federal employers based on the results of genetic testing, it is important to note that the CHRA already offers some protection against discrimination based on genetic characteristics. For example, discrimination based on perceived disability due to predisposition to a disease revealed through genetic testing falls within the scope of the existing ground of discrimination based on disability.

Bill S-201 would make existing protections more explicit, as well as expand protection beyond genetic characteristics that would be elated to other prohibited grounds of discrimination, such as disability. This would allow people who were subject to discrimination on the basis of genetic characteristics to make their case in precisely those terms.

Making a formal claim of discrimination can be an intimidating process and one that is often pursued without legal representation. For those who believe they have been discriminated against on the basis of their genetic characteristics, it would now be easier to bring such a claim, since they would no longer have to interpret the law of disability related discrimination or otherwise try to link their claim to another ground in order to establish discriminatory treatment.

Explicit protection for discrimination based on genetic characteristics would also raise awareness of the Canadian Human Rights Act protections and remind federally regulated employers and providers of goods and services of their human rights obligations.

For these reasons, the government supports the CHRA amendments proposed in Bill S-201. The proposed amendment represents an important step forward in creating the framework to address these potential disadvantages toward preventing genetic discrimination in Canada. I look forward to further discussion about the scope and impact of these changes to the CHRA as the bill is considered by a parliamentary committee.

However, it must be recognized that Parliament is limited in its ability to unilaterally address the concerns of stakeholders because there is no federal jurisdiction over private contracts of insurance, nor over employment or services in provincially regulated industries. For this reason, the government will also engage with the provinces and territories with a view to developing effective strategies

regarding genetic testing and appropriate protection of the results of this testing.

The minister has informed me that officials in the Department of Justice are already working with officials from other government departments to determine how best to pursue discussions with the provinces and territories about the many different issues arising from the potential uses of genetic information. I know the government would welcome advice and input from Senator Cowan and the hon. member for Don Valley West.

The government looks forward to engaging in discussions that will complement Bill S-201 and can lead to practical and substantive protections for all Canadians.

• (1815)

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this is my second speech of the day and the second time today I am agreeing with a bill coming from the government side, so lightning does strike twice. In fact, I am even agreeing with my friend from Don Valley West. I think it is fair to say that we have not always agreed on things that have been discussed in this place, but I very much appreciate the energy and the hard work he brings to this and other causes we have discussed over the last year.

I will be supporting, and I believe most, if not all, of my colleagues will be supporting, this piece of legislation, which aims to end genetic discrimination in Canada.

I think it is important to review that this approach has a history of multi-partisan support. Our previous Conservative government proposed Bill C-68. There have been various bills from I think all three of the major parties at different times. I think ours was the first government bill proposed on this issue, and it did not make it through in time to pass.

It is good to see that there is a consensus on this issue. It is something that is particularly important to all members of this House.

I want to identify some background on genetic discrimination and then go through what I see as three principal arguments in favour of moving forward with this legislation.

As other colleagues have discussed, genetic tests now, as science continues to develop, allow us to know all kinds of information about what diseases we may be exposed to or may be more likely to contract as a result of our genetics. This information is helpful to all of us as we seek to combat or prepare for the possibility of disease.

Private Members' Business

All of us have an interest in ensuring that this area of science is developed and that people access information that allows them to live healthier and more informed lives. Yet it is currently possible for an employer to discriminate against someone on the basis of a genetic test. It is possible for an insurance company to deny an insurance claim on the basis of a genetic test someone had. This is what has come to be called genetic discrimination; it is when someone is treated differently on the basis of information that is revealed by a genetic test. The bill aims to combat that.

As other colleagues have mentioned, I think there will be a requirement for complementary provincial legislation as well. I am open to hearing amendments. Generally speaking, I like the bill the way it is, but yes, there is a need for complementary provincial legislation, and hopefully we will see federal engagement, working with the provinces, to encourage the development of that complementary legislation.

I would like to identify what I see as three principal arguments in favour of the bill. First, genetic discrimination is discrimination. It is very clearly a kind of discrimination. I think all of us in this place accept that discriminating against someone on the basis of any identifiable characteristic does not have a place in Canada.

Our genetics are very much beyond our control, in the same way that any number of other characteristics are, so if we accept the basic principle of non-discrimination, then of course, that applies. There are some exceptions, of course, in our established human rights jurisprudence, things like a bona fide occupational qualification. We allow exceptions, in terms of our human rights law on discrimination, in those cases.

It is very important to note the way genetic testing works. Genetic testing identifies the possibility that people could develop an illness in the future. It demonstrates that they might be at a higher risk for something in the future. However, it is not a present limitation on their qualifications. The fact that people might develop a certain disease in the future that would prevent them from doing their jobs would not in any sense qualify as a legitimate basis for discrimination in the present time, before they have developed the ailment, an ailment that they may in fact never develop in the future. This is discrimination without justification, without the justification we see typically identified in our human rights jurisprudence.

● (1820)

The other thing to acknowledge about this kind of discrimination is that it is discrimination that is often associated with other discriminations. There are certain identifiable groups that, because of their genetic structure, are more likely to face certain kinds of genetic challenges. These groups in particular have been vocal in identifying the specific problem of genetic discrimination as it particularly adversely affects their own community.

We welcome the input of those groups that have been supporting this on the basis of particular cultural communities, as well as the many groups representing awareness about different diseases that have come forward and talked about this as well. Genetic discrimination is discrimination, and on that basis it is unacceptable.

Second, I want to highlight that Canada really has been an outlier when it comes to genetic discrimination. In fact, we are the only

country in the G7 that does not, in some way, have legislation that is confronting this challenge. We need to be conscious of that. It does not necessarily mean that we have to do what the rest of the world is doing, but we should, at the same time, sit up and take notice when Canada is out of step in this way. Other countries have seen the value of protecting people's ability to access genetic information without worrying that it could somehow lead to discrimination against them, that it could somehow limit their opportunities going forward.

I think it is important that Canada gets in line with what the rest of the world is doing and that we get in line with what is happening in other parts of the G7 in order to protect these fundamental rights.

The third point I want to make is the issue of perverse incentives. I want to talk about this in two parts. Ideally we would have as much research happening as possible. We would not allow the emergence of any kind of disincentive for research or participation in research. Also, we would not want any kind of disincentive for people to get medical information about themselves that would be useful for them in the future.

What we see with the current reality is that it actually creates perverse incentives in both of these areas. First of all, there may be cases where people are reluctant to participate in research, because in the process of that research they will gain information about themselves, or there will be advances in genetic research which could lead to further discrimination against people like them, people who share their kind of genetic makeup.

We could imagine cases in which a person chooses not to participate in genetic research because they are afraid that further identification of genes that cause a particular disease would be subsequently used for discrimination. We obviously do not want to see that. We want to see as much research as possible that will encourage information, as well as well-being.

Introducing the legislation, this prohibition on genetic discrimination, takes a positive step in terms of removing that disincentive. Now there is no longer the disincentive for people to be involved in research.

The other part of this perverse incentives issue is right now the current reality is one in which people have a disincentive to get genetic information about themselves. If they have this genetic information, there is a real risk that insurers will ask for it and use that information against them. That creates an issue, then, for people who want to know what their genetic situation is and if they are more at risk for something, but then choose not to because of their fear of discrimination.

I want to just make this concrete in the remaining time I have. We know of BRCA1 and BRCA2, which are genetic markers for breast and ovarian cancer. Ashkenazi Jewish women are 10 times more likely to carry these cancer-causing variants than the general population.

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We know then that there is this greater risk with this community. If a person knows that they are at a greater risk for contracting a certain kind of cancer, they might consider it worthwhile to get information about whether they have those genetic markers. Then it will perhaps affect the frequency of the tests they receive and the way in which they monitor certain potential markers for that disease. Yet someone might choose not to get this test, which would put them at greater risk, simply because of the fear of discrimination.

• (1825)

Genetic discrimination is a form of discrimination. Up to this point Canada has been an outlier in this respect. We need to confront these issues of perverse incentives. We need to encourage research. We need to encourage people to get tested and get information about themselves.

For these reasons, I will be supporting this excellent legislation and I hope my colleagues will as well.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Resuming debate, the hon. member for Nanaimo—Ladysmith. I want to point out that this session will end about 6:31 p.m., so we will truncate it and then continue when the debate continues.

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): I will follow your lead, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member opposite and the senator for initiating this important legislation.

The New Democrats believe that the government must work to end genetic discrimination and encourage genetic testing to improve health care planning and care provided to Canadians. New Democrat MPs Bill Siksay and Libby Davies were leaders on this front. They brought bills to the House in 2010 and 2012 to end such discrimination, and so I support this bill also.

Although B.C.'s Minister of Health has said genetic discrimination is “one of the most critical patient privacy issues of the modern era”, to our shame, we have no provincial or federal legislation protecting privacy for genetic test results.

Therefore, what is at stake with the status quo? Norm from Nanaimo summed it up in a letter to me:

“Under current law, companies can obtain private genetic information by request and then discriminate against people based on their genes. Not only is this practice unfair to Canadians, it is also putting many people at risk. Genetic testing saves lives, but all too many who could benefit are opting to refrain from testing, fearing future discrimination. This fact alone infuriates me, saddens me, and has moved me to write to you today.”

I agree. No Canadian should forgo critical testing because of the fear of discrimination by their employers or insurers.

As the New Democrat spokesperson for status of women, I have a particular understanding of this legislation's need, particularly how critical it is for Canadian women.

September is Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month. A week ago, Nanaimo's Ovarian Cancer Walk of Hope raised over \$5,000. This is a cause that really needs that kind of community help.

As I said in the previous session at the Standing Committee on the Status of Women, for ovarian cancer, the fatality rate is terrible. It is

the most fatal women's cancer in Canada. More than half of the women who are diagnosed will die of the disease within five years. There is no vaccine. There is no screening. There have been no major treatment breakthroughs since the early nineties and no improvement in outcomes.

There is hope in genetic testing. Fifteen to twenty per cent of all ovarian cancer cases are related to a gene mutation which is hereditary. If this is known, actions can be taken. The problem is women at risk for the gene mutation for ovarian cancer may decline to have genetic testing because they fear discrimination from their employers or insurers. We are hearing directly from Ovarian Cancer Canada that we have real cases of this right now.

If this Parliament prohibits genetic discrimination, Canadians will have greater freedom to seek the best health care possible without fear of discrimination. The New Democrats are proud to stand with nurses, doctors, health care providers, and the vast majority of Canadians in opposition to discrimination on the basis of genetic characteristics.

I will carry this on when we next have the pleasure of debating this constructive legislation.

• (1830)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): When the debate resumes, the hon. member will have six minutes and thirty seconds from there.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

[*English*]

TAXATION

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today in this late sitting to continue the debate I had in question period with the Minister of Small Business and Tourism. While I am not going to read her answer, I basically asked a question about Canadian-controlled private corporations, which are the preferred tax structure and business structure of dentists, doctors, engineers, and architects to conduct their business. I am specifically interested in their impact in my community on clinics, especially medical clinics.

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Dr. Melanie, who emailed me a while ago, says that I met her father, as well as the many other members of the local community. These include doctors who are providing front-line clinical services to their patients. She basically says that like many of her colleagues, she provides medical care for patients as an incorporated, self-employed professional. She is involved in a primary care network through which she connects with many other family physicians. Through her work with the primary care network, it is clear to her how important CCPCs are in the operation of many medical practices.

What the Liberal government is proposing to do is very unclear and so the crux of my question to the minister was, what are you going to do to CCPCs?

In the case of my riding, it will lead to less clinical hours and to clinics closing. That is a big deal in a riding as large as mine. For a very long time in Alberta we have had a difficult time attracting new doctors and bringing new graduates into the GP field, the general practice field, to practise in their community and provide a front-line type of service.

The simple question I had for the minister was, would the government stop these tax hikes, because that is the only possible solution for this?

I understand that the Liberals are desperately trying to find new tax monies everywhere to try to balance their budget maybe someday in a decade or two. However, the crux of my question was, what are they trying to do with CCPCs? That is what many professionals in my riding have been asking, whether they be accountants, or architects, or dentists.

The specific example I have affects doctors in my riding. Their experience is troublesome, because, for many of them, according to MNP and a *Globe and Mail* article that I am going to cite, as of November 27, 2015, the estimates are that their taxes could go up by as much as \$5,700 for every \$50,000 of taxable income, or \$40,000 on taxable dividends. Seventeen thousand dollars on \$40,000 is a substantial amount of money. These are not rich professionals, but are providing front-line services to people in my community, especially medical care. It is not as though we can just switch and go to the hospital, which would have far higher costs for emergency room physicals than a GP would.

My question for the government is, as always, what is it planning to do with CCPCs? Why was it not clear in the budget document? Has it even consulted with anybody on this?

• (1835)

Ms. Gudie Hutchings (Parliamentary Secretary for Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to be back in the fall sitting of this beautiful House. I am sure I can speak for all my colleagues. We have enjoyed travelling about our ridings meeting with constituents from, in my case, coast to coast to coast.

I would also like to say an official welcome to the pages. This is an exciting time, a chapter in their life, and I hope they leave here with the passion that we have for this place.

I am pleased to have the opportunity to respond to the comments of the hon. member for Calgary Shepard regarding taxation. Our

government understands the importance of small businesses to the Canadian economy, and that is why we are working hard to support our small businesses.

In January, the small business tax rate actually went down from 11% to 10.5%. The small business deduction has always included rules intended to prevent access to the same deductions among partners of the same corporation or partnership. The clarification of these rules will ensure that the application of the guidelines reflects the initial intent of the small business rate and will continue with a taxation framework that is supportive of SMEs.

Small and medium-size enterprises are crucial to the continued growth of our economy as well as to the creation of wealth and jobs for Canada. To put things in context, SMEs account for 99% of all businesses in Canada, represent 90% of the private sector workforce, and contribute about 40% to the GDP.

Recognizing the important role of SMEs and the hard-working middle-class Canadians who own and work for them, this government is committed to creating a strong business environment that ensures opportunities for growth within Canada and within our global market.

Prior to budget 2016, this government held many consultations across the country to ensure that all Canadians' voices would be heard. Therefore, the government is confident that the current tax environment supports growth and job creation for all small businesses, including health care professionals and small manufacturers.

As the Government of Canada continues to support small businesses in becoming more competitive in the global economy, I would like to highlight some of the initiatives that clearly enable SMEs to grow and thrive.

Our budget 2016 made available \$800 million to support innovation networks and clusters to help businesses work more strategically and accelerate growth.

To assist firms in realizing their full potential, the government has launched the accelerated growth service to better coordinate support for high-potential firms to help them grow and increase their global competitiveness. Business advice and guidance are the keys to success for all SMEs.

The budget provided additional funding of \$50 million to the highly successful IRAP, the industrial research assistance program. This support will increase the number of companies served by the program's highly qualified industrial technology advisors nationwide.

Throughout the development of the innovation agenda, we are encouraging creative entrepreneurs to innovate and to grow.

Consultations for the innovation agenda were launched in June, and innovation round tables have taken place across the country from coast to coast throughout the summer. In the coming months, the ideas will inform the government's work to position Canada as a global leader of innovation in all fields.

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For Canada to be globally competitive, we must continue to take a proactive approach to ensure we are best supporting our small and medium-size enterprises.

Our ongoing efforts and additional measures will catalyze further growth, innovation, and success for these critical companies in all areas of our country.

Mr. Tom Kmiec: Mr. Speaker, I listened attentively to the parliamentary secretary. She spoke a lot about international trade and these innovation centres, but we are talking specifically about the impact on clinicians, medical doctors serving at the GP level in my community. The impact on them of the changing tax structure of the CCPC is that many of them will simply give up serving directly in the community because it simply will not be worth their time. While they care for their community and they care for their patients, they also have to look at their personal bottom line and make sure it is the right thing for them to do as well.

The parliamentary secretary mentioned the Liberals had reduced the small business tax to 10.5%, which is great because that was a Conservative promise, but they did not take it down all the way to 9%, and they also got rid of the small business job credit, which is effectively hiking a payroll tax.

The Liberals are not there for small businesses, and I will leave it at that.

• (1840)

Ms. Gudie Hutchings: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to respond to the comments made by my hon. colleague across the floor.

As I mentioned earlier, we are committed to ensuring that our measures support all small and medium-sized businesses and we reflect strong opportunities for success in addition to establishing the taxation framework that remains supportive of SMEs. As I said, we did reduce the tax from 11% to 10.5%.

We want to emphasize the fact that other measures support small businesses all throughout our country and that Canadian businesses have access to the resources they need. For example, in the tourism industry, we invested \$50 million in Destination Canada and their connecting America program, which saw an increase in tourism in the first six months. From the end of June, there was an additional 11%. That is money in the pockets of small and medium-sized businesses all across the country.

I know our hon. colleague was referring to the medical system. We have consulted with Canadians from coast to coast to coast and we did hear from many doctors who are confident in the budget that we put forward and that we are going to help them along the way.

I look forward to many conversations with my colleague on how we can advance this further.

HEALTH

Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome the pages to the House. I think they started this week and they play a critical role in Canada's democratic chamber here. I would like to welcome them and wish them a wonderful year.

The Minister of Health previously stated:

A strong public health-care system, grounded in the principles of the Canada Health Act, is key to a fair and just society....

New Democrats agree. However, surely the minister knows that when it comes to health care in Canada, we cannot call the shots if we do not pay the bills.

The Liberal Party's 2015 election platform pledged to negotiate a new health accord with the provinces and territories, including a long-term agreement on funding. However, in statements over the summer the health minister has backtracked on this promise. She stated:

I'm not convinced that putting more money in through the transfer is the most effective way for us to transform the health-care system....

Gaétan Barrette, Quebec's health minister, has confirmed that, rather than negotiating in good faith, the Liberal government is holding fast to Stephen Harper's cuts to the health transfer escalator. Minister Barrette stated:

We're not even discussing—we are being told—that the escalator will go from six [per cent] to three....

It hasn't been said (quite this) way, but it was close to: "Don't expect too much and don't call us".

The federal government cannot have it both ways. If it refuses to pay its fair share of Canada's overall health care costs, it will effectively neuter the Canada Health Act and destroy medicare as a national institution. As Justin Trudeau was fond of saying on the campaign trail, you can't have Tommy Douglas health care on a Stephen Harper budget.

According to an analysis by Canadian academics, including former parliamentary budget officer Kevin Page, that is exactly what the Liberals are proposing to do. Mr. Page stated:

Federal spending in this sector is projected to fall steadily over the long term given the current program structure and weaker growth rate formula.

In this regard, it is difficult to imagine the preservation of the principles of the Canada Health Act without more federal skin in the game.

Indeed, when medicare was first introduced, the federal government agreed to pay 50% of the cost. That was the deal. However, a PBO analysis of the Harper-era funding framework shows that by slashing the health transfer escalator from 6% to 3%, the federal share of health care spending will fall precipitously and continuously in the coming decades. It is currently about 20%.

With the Liberals planning to limit annual increases to 3% under the Harper formula, Ottawa will be transferring about \$1.1 billion less in health care funding to the provinces next year alone, and by 2020 this will mean approximately \$5 billion less devoted to health care every year. In total, the provinces estimate they will receive about \$36 billion less in health transfers over the coming decade.

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Aside from the new health accord, the Liberal Party also made an immediate commitment during the election to invest \$3 billion over four years to deliver more home care. However, the Liberal's first budget did not earmark a single dime in new funding for home care. Even if the government follows through on this commitment a year behind schedule, this funding will be more than cancelled out by maintaining Harper's cuts. The government is giving a little with one hand and taking a lot with the other. This means longer wait times, poorer patient care, more pressure for privatization, and that is no way to build Tommy Douglas health care.

Therefore, my question is this. Will the government commit to negotiate a new health accord backed by federal dollars to improve patient care in Canada or not?

• (1845)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Before we go to the parliamentary secretary, I want to remind the hon. member that when referring to members in the House, he refer to them by their titles and not their names. I am sure it was a mistake, but I thought I would point that out.

The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health.

Ms. Kamal Khera (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me assure the House that our government is firmly committed to actively defending our publicly funded health care system. Like all Canadians, we share the strong belief that all individuals deserve access to timely, quality health care, regardless of their backgrounds, physical needs, where they live, or how much they make. This is part of what defines us as a nation.

Our government has shown time and again that we stand behind the core Canadian values of equity and solidarity. These are the very values that underpin the Canada Health Act. This is why we will continue to work collaboratively with our provincial and territorial colleagues to ensure that citizens across the country can readily access and depend on our cherished health care system.

Publicly funded health care in Canada is based on five principles, contained in the Canada Health Act. These principles include comprehensiveness of insured health services; universality of population covered; reasonable access to insured services without the impediments of user charges; portability of health benefits; and public, non-profit administration of health insurance plans.

Canadians believe in the equality of citizens, and our health care system reflects that fundamental belief. For this reason, Canadians are proud of our publicly funded health care system. In fact, a Statistics Canada report on Canadian identity, published in October 2015, found that almost 80% of Canadians have pride in the Canadian health care system.

The federal government wants to ensure that Canadians continue to have this strong sense of pride, and accordingly, we are committed to working closely and collaboratively with our provincial and territorial counterparts to realize the aims of the Canada Health Act.

The Canada Health Act is clear. Under the act, provincial and territorial health insurance plans are required to cover medically necessary hospital and physician services. Any charges to patients for these publicly insured services are considered extra billing or

user charges and are prohibited under the act. Ultimately, these fees create barriers to accessing health care, and our government would like to see such fees eliminated.

When Canadians elected our government, they chose a government that promised to focus on a new and more collaborative relationship with the provinces and territories. Therefore, our government's approach to the administration of the Canada Health Act will emphasize transparency, consultation, and dialogue with provincial and territorial health care ministries to resolve potential issues.

The Minister of Health has made it very clear that she upholds the principles of the Canada Health Act. That is why the federal Minister of Health recently wrote to the Quebec health minister underscoring her commitment to a publicly funded health care system, without charges to patients for insured services. She asked that his financial statement of extra billing and user charges for 2014-15, due to Health Canada this December, reflect information on these charges, as documented in the Quebec Auditor General's report this May.

It is important to remember that the ultimate goal of enforcement is not to levy penalties but to ensure compliance with the principles of the Canada Health Act so that Canadians have access to the health care they need when they need it. I am pleased that the Quebec minister of health recently announced concrete action toward removing barriers to access by eliminating fees charged to patients for insured services at the point of delivery.

Let me conclude by confirming that our government believes that any trend toward privatization resulting in a move toward a two-tiered system undermines the fundamental principles of the Canada Health Act and would be deemed a threat to our publicly funded health care system. As such, our government will continue to defend the principles of the Canada Health Act.

Mr. Don Davies: Mr. Speaker, according to Linda Silas, president of the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions,

As in the 1990s, as the percentage of federal funding declines towards historical lows, it may mean bed closures and drastic layoffs, all of which will dramatically affect the sustainability of Canada's health care system.

We must not allow history to repeat itself. If the Harper era cuts are maintained, each province will be left to fend for itself as costs outstrip their ability to pay. We will not have national pharmacare, we will not have national home care, wait times will increase, and patient care will suffer.

Tommy Douglas once said, "unless those of us who believe in Medicare raise our voices in no uncertain terms, unless we arouse our neighbours and our friends and our communities, we are sounding the death knell of Medicare in this country".

Canada's New Democrats will never sit idly by and see that happen. Will the Liberals?

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● (1850)

Ms. Kamal Khera: Mr. Speaker, our government is firmly committed to actively defending our publicly funded health care system. We will ensure that Canadian citizens continue to have quality health care in accordance with the principles enshrined in the Canada Health Act. This includes striving to eliminate extra billing and user fees, which create a barrier to Canadians accessing the health care system.

Our government will work collaboratively with its provincial and territorial counterparts to realize the Canada Health Act's goal of ensuring that access to necessary health care in Canada is based on medical need and not one's ability or willingness to pay. As a government, we take that goal seriously and our administration of the Canada Health Act will reflect that.

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am always proud to rise in the House, but I am certainly not proud to have to talk tonight about the fact that since January 2015, the Government of Canada has been found to be guilty of systemic racist discrimination against indigenous children. It is a black mark on everything this nation stands for, that the current government has continued to deny its obligation to respond. We have now had two compliance orders issued by the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal that the current government is ignoring.

What does this denial of services, this discrimination, mean?

I think of the seven youth from Thunder Bay who were found dead in the rivers of Thunder Bay when they had to leave home at age 13 to go to school because they did not have schools in their communities. The government sent a bureaucrat to say under oath that the government did not think there were any shortfalls in education for indigenous youth.

I think of the youth who are being denied audiology treatments because the bureaucrats will save money. I think of the children who died in Treaty 9 from basic childhood illnesses because the government would not bother to provide medical care for them.

I think of the mother who said to me that she wanted to know where her babies were at night. They say that a nation cannot be defeated until the hearts of its women are on the ground, and yet in indigenous communities across this country, there are more children being taken away from their parents and their mothers right now than at the height of the residential schools.

We will hear from the government that, yes, they are putting money in, that they are putting a record amount of money into child welfare. The government is \$130 million short this year. The Liberals decided they could shortchange the children.

They said they would close that funding gap in education. Not a dime has flowed. Guess what? The school year has started. The Liberals promised \$50 million this year for post-secondary education for indigenous children. They broke that promise.

The Liberals say they are going to give a record amount of money based on Jordan's Principle, but they do not tell us that this will not include most children in this country. Here I would mention, for example, the young Cree girl who was denied emergency

orthodontic surgery. We asked the government to look into that case, and we found out what the denial rate was. There was a 99% denial rate for indigenous children needing emergency orthodontic surgery. Can someone on that side stand up and tell me that is not systemic racist discrimination?

What I find most shocking is that we have a Prime Minister who has named himself the minister of youth and said that this is the most important relationship in this nation to repair, but he decided that he can shortchange indigenous children this year, next year, and the year after. The Liberals were not going to shortchange the upper middle class when they gave them the tax breaks. That money flowed right away.

We have a government that is continuing to play games with the Canadian Human Rights Commission. It is continuing to play games with Cindy Blackstock.

We have children who are continuing to die. In my region, there were 700-plus suicide attempts in about four communities since 2009. It is because those children are regularly denied access to mental health services. They are regularly denied the ability to get out to get treatment. They are left on their own. What kind of nation thinks it can squander its children?

What is it going to take to have the government admit that it needs to comply with the decisions of the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal and end this?

The cheapest and simplest of all the promises the Prime Minister makes would be to meet the needs of these children. The Liberals need to do it, and I am asking them to commit to doing that tonight.

● (1855)

Ms. Kamal Khera (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for raising this extremely important issue. The events taking place in some regions have shown us some real challenges facing first nations across the country. Over the summer, the Minister of Health travelled to many first nations communities in Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario, and Quebec to see these challenges first hand. She met with both first nations and Inuit leaders.

To address the urgent need for additional mental health supports in Attawapiskat, Health Canada has provided resources to add two mental health counsellors as part of the Nishnawbe Aski Nation crisis response unit. We are also working with the community, the Weeneebayko Area Health Authority, the province, and other partners to coordinate our response and enhance services for youth at risk.

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To truly improve the wellness of indigenous peoples, we must focus our efforts on improving the social economic conditions that they face. We need to find a way to restore hope for these communities and to support healthy child development. This is why our government laid out a comprehensive plan of investment in budget 2016, which includes \$8.4 billion for better schools and housing, cleaner water, and improvements for health infrastructure, including nursing stations.

Our government is already taking action to enhance care in all remote first nations communities. We are improving access to mental health supports, improving infrastructure and working to ensure needed equipment is available. To address critically needed health infrastructure for first nations communities, budget 2016 also provides an investment of \$270 million over the next five years. This funding is supporting the construction, renovation, and repair of nursing stations and residences for health care workers.

Health Canada also continues to fund culturally appropriate mental wellness programs and services for first nations and Inuit individuals and communities. This includes activities aimed at mental health promotion, suicide prevention, addiction treatment and after-care services, counselling, and other crisis response services. We invested over \$300 million in 2015-16 for these programs and services. This includes \$13.5 million annually for the national aboriginal youth suicide prevention strategy, which supports 138 community-based suicide prevention projects in first nations and Inuit communities.

Strategies to prevent suicide and improve mental health for first nations and Inuit need to be developed, planned, and managed with first nations and Inuit. This is why Health Canada worked with the Assembly of First Nations and mental wellness leaders to develop a first nations mental wellness continuum framework, and is working with the ITK to develop an Inuit specific framework.

In response to ongoing mental health and suicide crisis in some indigenous communities, the Government of Canada announced a further investment of \$69 million over the next three years for immediate interim measures to support first nations and Inuit communities. This funding will increase the number of mental wellness teams in communities from 11 to 43, as well as support an additional four mental health crisis intervention teams. It also provides \$9 million in funding for Inuit specific approaches to mental wellness to address the unique needs of the population and to establish a culturally safe 24-hour crisis support line.

Our government is committed to a renewed nation-to-nation relationship with indigenous peoples to make progress on the issues that are most important, and health is one of them. It is vital to our nation's future that the federal government work in genuine partnership with indigenous communities and provinces to ensure better health, social, and economic outcomes for indigenous people.

●(1900)

Mr. Charlie Angus: Mr. Speaker, I guess I have to say what it looks like on the ground. We hear all these slogans and numbers, but the reality is that the government is taking the approach of fighting families that are being denied their medical rights. It was the minister who decided she would rather fight a family in court that needed emergency orthodontic treatment. The minister decided it was worth spending three to four times the amount on lawyers than providing the children their medical needs.

This is not a new relationship. This is a very old one. This is the old relationship that has damaged Canada since before Confederation. The fact that the government is not in compliance with the Human Rights Tribunal, that it can say that it will throw money into this program and that program, that is the colonial attitude of Indian affairs and Health Canada. They figure as long as they create some program that will have a sunset in a year or two, they do not have to face the fact that the needs of children are still being denied, on child welfare, on education, and on health. The Human Rights Tribunal says that it is racist, system discrimination. It has to stop.

Ms. Kamal Khera: Mr. Speaker, our government is taking action to enhance care in all remote first nations communities. We are improving access to mental health supports, infrastructure, and working to ensure needed equipment is available. As I mentioned before, in budget 2016 our government invested \$8.4 billion for better schools and housing, cleaner water, cultural and recreation facilities, and improvements for nursing stations. We also announced a further investment of \$69 million over the next three years for immediate interim measures to support mental wellness in first nations and Inuit communities.

Our government acknowledges the release of the ITK's national Inuit suicide prevention strategy. This will be an important step to guide actions needed to address the high suicide rates in the Inuit population. Health Canada announced \$9 million for Inuit-specific approaches to improving mental wellness.

I would like to emphasize our government's commitment to a renewed nation-to-nation relationship with indigenous people. As part of this commitment, we will continue to prioritize issues that are important to us.

[*Translation*]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted.

[*English*]

Accordingly the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 7:02 p.m.)

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