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OFFICIAL REPORT  
(HANSARD)

**Monday, March 20, 2017**

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**Speaker: The Honourable Geoff Regan**

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# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, March 20, 2017

The House met at 11 a.m.

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*Prayer*

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## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

• (1105)

[*Translation*]

### RAILWAY SAFETY ACT

**Ms. Hélène Lavergère (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, NDP)** moved that Bill C-322, an act to amend the Railway Safety Act (road crossings), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

She said: Mr. Speaker, my bill is very straightforward. At present, the Minister of Transport has the power to order the closure or modification of a railway crossing, level or otherwise. However, the minister does not have the power to order the construction of a new crossing around rail lines.

The people of Laurier—Sainte-Marie are leaders in active transportation. A lot of people use public transit, bike, or walk in order to get around. This is true throughout the island of Montreal. We do have one problem, however: a rail line runs right through the centre of the island and cuts off connecting corridors.

Although not used extensively, this rail line is nevertheless extremely important. However, all the infrastructure around it was built to accommodate cars. As I just said, active transportation is very common in my area, which is densely populated and very walkable. In fact, the city grew around the rail line, and this is creating some serious problems.

I will give an example. I know that I am focusing a lot of my attention on Montreal, but I will talk about other places later. In Montreal there is a place near the offices of corporations such as Ubisoft where people have to take a detour of 800 metres, nearly a kilometre, to get to the metro station on the other side of the tracks. People tend to cross the track where there is no crossing, which is extremely dangerous. In Canada, there are twice as many fatal accidents at illegal crossings compared to safe crossings.

The other day near that location, I saw a mother pushing a stroller across the tracks illegally. This is not uncommon. That is why businesses, municipalities, and citizen groups have long been calling for the construction of crossings at suitable or strategic locations to be given due consideration.

I mention Laurier—Sainte-Marie a lot, but in Montreal this problem also affects the people of Outremont, Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, and Papineau. I hope the people of Papineau will share their concerns about this with the Prime Minister. For 20 years, citizens, municipalities, private companies, and elected officials have been calling for action on this, but to no avail.

When I looked at this issue because of what was happening in Montreal, I discovered a few things. I realized that this was a problem not just in Montreal, but also in Toronto and Saskatoon. This problem exists all across the country, and not just in urban areas.

My colleague will probably talk later about a very good example of this problem in British Columbia, where a railway runs along the shore of Kicking Horse River. People, including employees of rafting companies, used to cross the railway to access the river. CP closed people's access, blocking the way to the river, which is one of our natural resources, to the detriment of rafting companies. They are now required to use helicopters, which increases the cost of their operations.

In short, this is a very common problem. The systems in place do not work. Since I was talking about British Columbia, I will quote the Minister of Jobs, Tourism, and Skills Training, and Minister Responsible for Labour for the province of British Columbia:

From the moment the Province heard about the challenges facing the rafting season, staff have worked to find a way rafters can continue to safely cross the CP tracks in Golden. Staff have been on the ground and at the table in Golden with suggestions and solutions. CP has made it abundantly clear that it is unwilling to be a reasonable partner, despite its earlier commitment to work...to find a solution.

What can the minister do in the face of such obstinacy? Nothing. He is completely powerless, as I said earlier. He has the power to order a closure or modification, but he has no power to order the construction of a new crossing. This bill simply gives the minister that power. The bill does not dictate that a crossing should be built in any particular location. It simply gives the minister the same power to create a crossing as the power to close one. It seems very reasonable to me. The minister and the appropriate bureaucrats could examine each request and each file and then make a decision based on the safety of our citizens. There are places where, some mornings, up to 500 people cross railroad tracks unsafely. The last thing we should do is wait for an accident to happen before taking action.

*Private Members' Business*

That is why the bill is so important for enhancing safety, including for cyclists and pedestrians. As I was saying, most of the network was built with cars in mind. The bill has received and continues to receive much support. It has the support of Canada Bikes, Citizen for Safe Cycling, in Ontario, Walk Toronto, Cycle Toronto, Ontario By Bike, Glacier Raft Company, Golden, B.C., Greater Victoria Cycling Coalition, BC Healthy Living Alliance, Saskatoon Cycles, Jane's Walk, in Ontario, Vélo Québec, Piétons Québec, Collectif pour les passages à niveau, and the Association of Pedestrians and Cyclists of Outremont, and other municipalities, cities, and businesses. If any of my colleagues are interested, I have a letter from Ubisoft in Montreal calling for the same thing. Again, many people and the City of Montreal have been calling for this for over 20 years.

Given all this support, I hope we will also have the minister's support. It would be surprising, to say the least, if the minister said he did not want to provide the tools to ensure public safety. We are providing him with a tool. We are giving him a gift on a silver platter. I hope he will graciously accept this gift and use his new powers wisely. This is essentially a matter of ensuring public safety.

In closing, I would like to read a joint statement issued by Piétons Québec, Vélo Québec, and Collectif pour les passages à niveau, which sums up the situation very well:

Rail lines...create urban boundaries that seriously inhibit active movement in inhabited areas...Measures taken in the past ten years or so to control and restrict access are ineffective because of the high number of users without satisfactory alternatives.

...The problem of illegal crossings can be solved by developing infrastructure suitable for the urban environment [such as level crossings]...To that end, the regulations governing railway crossings must be updated to meet the specific needs of urban areas and allow people to use rail crossings safely.

• (1110)

I would like to add that in the greater Montreal area, on the south shore among other places and in Toronto as well, there are crossings for pedestrians and cyclists that work very well. They do not have a problem.

The last quote I read to the House mentions urban areas. However, as I mentioned earlier in my speech, there are also problems in rural areas. A Conservative member told me about the problems in Alberta.

As I was saying, the only thing my bill will do is restore the balance between the minister's ability to close, change, and open grade crossings and provide him with a new tool that he will be able to use, as he sees fit, to improve the safety of Canadians.

• (1115)

[English]

**Mrs. Karen McCrimmon:** Madam Speaker, I would like to start by thanking the hon. member for her initiative and her speech this morning. I am very pleased to have the opportunity to speak about Bill C-322, which would amend the Railway Safety Act to provide the Minister of Transport—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I just want to indicate that there are five minutes for questions and comments, so this should be a question or a comment to the member who just spoke.

Questions and comments. The hon. member for Mégantic—L'Érable.

[Translation]

**Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC):** First of all, Madam Speaker, I would like to acknowledge the excellent work that my colleague has done on Bill C-322. Indeed, she has asked the right questions and raised a major issue for the people of her riding.

As the MP of a riding where there was a railway tragedy, I am very sensitive to the issue of railway safety. Could my colleague elaborate on the potential risks of adding new crossings to the rail system?

I believe this is one of the issues of the bill. We had the opportunity to discuss it together. I will raise this issue again this morning because every new crossing added to Canada's rail system presents risks as well. Therefore, the solution put forward may be creating new risks.

I would like to know whether my colleague has thought about this and what she is proposing in that regard, because the current bill does not seem to take such concerns into consideration.

**Ms. Hélène Laverdière:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question; perhaps I could have talked about it more in my speech.

I actually believe the bill will serve to reduce potential risks rather than increasing them. The numbers are very clear about fatal accidents as a result of trespassing, and that is what we are seeing. Every morning, there are several hundred trespassers in one single place in Montreal, and this is not counting all the other places in the country. Fatal accidents as a result of trespassing are twice as high as those at crossings. However, a lot of crossings have been set up across the country in the past 10 to 15 years in Canada, according to the data from the Department of Transport.

It will be up to the minister to do his studies and analyses. If trespassing occurs frequently in some places and it becomes clear that it is not sustainable, the solution to reduce the risks will be to provide safe crossings, which is easy to do.

**Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet (Hochelaga, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I must admit that I am surprised to see that the minister does not have the right to set up new crossings, but he is able to remove or modify them.

I also understand why private companies might be interested in this sort of bill. The member mentioned Ubisoft and gave us a concrete example. Does she have other concrete examples of private companies affected by this kind of issue so that we truly understand the importance of such legislation?

**Ms. Hélène Laverdière:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague from Hochelaga for her question. Indeed, there are examples from all over the country.

I will again use Montreal as an example, since that is the one I am most familiar with. Many companies like Ubisoft have expressed concerns about the safety of their employees and are asking for crossings. Several companies in the area have joined forces and are working with civil society and local elected officials to come up with a solution to this problem.

*Private Members' Business*

Some companies have even adopted temporary solutions. For instance, if I remember correctly, Ubisoft rented a minibus to shuttle its employees between the subway station and the office. Personally, I think that is ridiculous. Small businesses cannot afford such things and are worried.

Another example is the whitewater rafting companies I mentioned. In British Columbia, five rafting companies are threatening to shut down because their access to the river has been blocked.

• (1120)

[English]

**Mrs. Karen McCrimmon (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to speak to Bill C-322, which would amend the Railway Safety Act and provide the Minister of Transport with an authority to order a railway company to construct a road crossing. I will explain the reasons why the government will not support the bill.

The Government of Canada does have a mandate to oversee the safety of federally regulated railway operations in Canada. Dating back to its inception in 1989, the Railway Safety Act, administered by Transport Canada, gives the current Minister of Transport direct jurisdiction over railways that fall within the legislative authority of Parliament, as well as the authority to oversee their safety.

Transport Canada's role is to monitor regulated entities, such as federal railway companies, local railway companies, provincial railways that operate on federally regulated track, and road authorities, which can include municipalities, provinces, and band councils, for compliance with the rules, regulations, and engineering standards under the Railway Safety Act through a robust oversight program.

Transport Canada also monitors for safety and has the authority to act to address threats and immediate threats to safe railway operations through various means, including ordering corrective actions. In fact, the Railway Safety Act provides both the Minister of Transport and Transport Canada railway safety inspectors with several authorities to address railway safety issues when there is a risk, threat, or concern caused by a railway operation to the safety of the public, as well as railway personnel, and the protection of property and the environment.

In addition, the Grade Crossings Regulations, which came into force in November 2014, contain a number of provisions that set out roles and responsibilities at federally regulated grade crossings, fostering collaboration between railway companies and road authorities toward improving safety.

Allow me to describe the existing authorities and mechanisms that are currently in place.

The Railway Safety Act provides inspectors with direct authority to conduct inspections and audits and to address safety threats. The act provides authority for an inspector to issue a notice to inform a company that a threat to safety has been identified. The notice is provided to the company identifying the threat and the company must provide a response as to how it will address it. Where a threat is deemed immediate by an inspector, the Railway Safety Act also provides authority to include an order in the notice restricting the

company's use of railway equipment, infrastructure, or railway operation creating the immediate threat, or allowing that operations can continue but under terms and conditions specified by the inspector until the company mitigates the immediate threat on a more permanent basis.

In June 2015, the Safe and Accountable Rail Act was passed, which amended the Railway Safety Act and provided a series of broader authorities for both the Minister of Transport and railway safety inspectors to better address rail safety threats, risks, and concerns. These new authorities allow inspectors to issue notices, in the event of a threat to safety, to any person or entity that has responsibility in relation to that threat, including railways, road authorities, and municipalities. Furthermore, in the event of an immediate safety threat, an inspector may issue a notice and order to any person or entity, again including railway companies, road authorities, and municipalities, and order them to take specific corrective actions to remove the immediate threat.

These broadened inspector authorities complement a similar authority for the Minister of Transport. If the minister considers it necessary in the interests of safe railway operations, the minister may order the company, road authority, or municipality to stop any activity that might constitute a threat to safe railway operations, or to follow procedures, or to take corrective measures specified in the order, including constructing, altering, operating or maintaining railway work, which includes crossings. Another key consideration, in addition to these existing authorities under the Railway Safety Act, is that a process for opening new road crossings already exists.

• (1125)

Whereas Transport Canada is responsible for the safety oversight of railway operations, the Canadian Transportation Agency, an independent quasi-judicial tribunal, sets the ground rules that establish the rights and responsibilities of transportation services providers and users, and resolves disputes.

Rest assured that these responsibilities are complementary to addressing both safety and economic concerns with respect to rail crossings in Canada. Both organizations promote a collaborative approach for road authorities and railway companies to work together to determine whether to open a road crossing. Should discussions be unsuccessful, proponents can access services, such as mediation and adjudication, through the Canadian Transportation Agency.

It is important to note that agency decisions made through adjudication are legally binding and can include where crossings should be located, conditions the crossing must meet, and apportionment of the costs. In the exceptional circumstances that the minister orders the construction, alteration, operation, or maintenance of a railway work, the proponent may, if there is another beneficiary of the work, refer the allocation of liability and costs to the Canadian Transportation Agency for a determination.

*Private Members' Business*

In either instance, once a road crossing is to be opened, the road authority and railway company are responsible for the safety of the crossing and Transport Canada is responsible for monitoring compliance to the standards and regulations.

Moreover, Transport Canada takes appropriate enforcement action when safety concerns or instances of non-compliance to the regulations and standards are identified. In addition to the tools already mentioned, inspectors can use administrative tools, such as letters of concern sent to railways and road authorities, in order to mitigate safety concerns. In the event of non-compliance, Transport Canada's actions may range from a letter of warning to a fine through an administrative monetary penalty to prosecution and finally to the suspension or cancellation of the company's railway operating certificate, essentially shutting down its operations.

To be clear, when all other avenues have been exhausted and when there are exceptional threats to safety, the Minister of Transport already has the authority, under section 32.01 of the Railway Safety Act, to order a company, road authority or municipality to, among other things, take corrective measures to address a threat to safe railway operations, including constructing a road crossing.

We understand that certain communities living in close proximity to railway operations are struggling to combat willful trespassing on railway property. I believe the intention of the bill is sincere and is a way to address these trespassing issues. While the government fully understands the importance of this issue, the bill looks to amend the Railway Safety Act. However, doing so would duplicate existing authorities already in place.

As I have mentioned, under the Railway Safety Act, the Minister of Transport has the appropriate tools and authorities to respond to safety concerns or threats to safe railway operations. I know the Minister of Transport and Transport Canada will not hesitate to exercise these delegated powers when necessary.

It is for these reasons that the Government of Canada does not support Bill C-322.

• (1130)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I would first like to thank the sponsor of the bill, the hon. member for Laurier—Sainte-Marie, for her work on this file.

I am very sympathetic to the intentions of my NDP colleague. I know that she has worked very hard and has sought the support of several stakeholders. I am convinced that she is acting for the well-being and safety of residents in the greater Montreal area.

As I mentioned earlier, as the representative of the municipality of Lac-Mégantic, the location of a great tragedy familiar to everyone, I pay close attention to the issue of rail safety. I am sure that many members of the House share the concerns of the hon. member for Laurier—Sainte-Marie regarding the safety of people who have to cross railway tracks to travel between their places of work and their homes, for instance, or other users of the public roadways.

In short, the bill before us proposes to amend the Railway Safety Act to give the Minister of Transport the power to order a company to construct a road crossing and to authorize the payment of subsidies in this regard. This bill, as I mentioned, is designed to address a particular problem in Montreal, but there are some weaknesses that I would like to discuss.

The bill does not entirely eliminate the risk of accidents. It seeks to reduce the risk and the hon. member for Laurier—Sainte-Marie acknowledged that. It does however give absolute and total power to the minister and imposes no framework on the minister's powers. I have some problems with that. For example, the bill does not propose using overhead rail crossings, which are a much safer solution for those who have to cross the tracks.

I wonder whether Bill C-322, in its current form, was necessary. Is this the solution to the illegal crossings that my colleague was talking about earlier? The Canada Transportation Act includes some provisions on rail crossings. Section 100 of the act defines crossings as follows:

*road crossing* means the part of a road that passes across, over or under a railway line, and includes a structure supporting or protecting that part of the road or facilitating the crossing.

The member for Laurier—Sainte-Marie says that she wants to increase the safety of those affected, and I believe her approach is sincere in that respect. I do not doubt her commitment either. However, I have some questions about the method she has chosen with this bill in its current form. In my view, when we want to correct at-risk situations, we try not to create new ones.

Clearly, Bill C-322 first and foremost seeks to solve a serious problem in the Montreal area, but if it is passed, it will be pan-Canadian in scope. If we turn to the current Canada Transportation Act, section 101 of Part III provides instructions to that effect and certain prerogatives to the Canadian Transportation Agency. The act also provides for situations where, like in Montreal, there is no agreement between the parties.

In the event of an agreement, the act states:

101(1) An agreement, or an amendment to an agreement, relating to the construction, maintenance or apportionment of the costs of a road crossing or a utility crossing may be filed with the Agency.

We do not talk about what happens when there is an agreement, but what happens when there is no agreement? Subsection 101(3) states the following:

101(3) If a person is unsuccessful in negotiating an agreement or amendment mentioned in subsection (1), the Agency may, on application, authorize the construction of a suitable road crossing, utility crossing or related work, or specifying who shall maintain the crossing.

The act also stipulates that section 16 of the Railway Safety Act applies if the parties do not reach an agreement. Subsection 16(4) states the following:

16(4) Where a matter is referred to the Agency under subsection (1), the Agency shall, having regard to any grant made under section 12 or 13 in respect of that matter, the relative benefits that each person who has, or who might have, referred the matter stands to gain from the work, and to any other factor that it considers relevant, determine the proportion of the liability for construction, alteration, operational and maintenance costs to be borne by each person, and that liability shall be apportioned accordingly.

*Private Members' Business*

In short, the current legislative framework stipulates that, if a municipality or local entity and a railway company cannot agree, the Canadian Transportation Agency may take over and assume responsibility. It can authorize the construction, and determine how the costs will be shared between the parties, both for construction and maintenance.

• (1135)

My understanding is that the minister can already help the parties to find common ground through the various existing programs that would mitigate the financial consequences for the stakeholders. As we know, money is often the sticking point in those kinds of negotiations.

The member told us about her work with the various stakeholders who support her proposed legislative amendment. I would like to share a contrary opinion that must also be considered, namely the opinion of the Montreal Port Authority.

The Montreal Port Authority is against the bill. The rail line affected by the member's initiative serves the port. Setting up new crossings would probably disrupt port operations. Given that a train cannot stop at a grade crossing, the port authority says that the company would have to uncouple and re-couple the trains in order to carry out those daily operations. Those operations could significantly increase the risks for company employees and the general public, not to mention the higher levels of air pollution that those handling operations could generate.

The situation in my colleague's riding is quite specific. Since 2013, the City of Montreal has wanted to add six level crossings on a section of the CP rail line located in the northern part of downtown Montreal. Montreal filed an application with the Canadian Transportation Agency, which is authorized to deal with such matters, as I mentioned earlier. The City of Montreal and CP were unable to reach an agreement, and the negotiations broke off a long time ago.

The Minister of Transport might try to call the mayor of Montreal to potentially resolve the situation by trying to find a solution or becoming involved in the matter and thus avoid having to make legislative amendments. This solution is available to the minister. In her speech, the parliamentary secretary mentioned the authorities that allow the minister to intervene at present. Does the minister intend to do so? In my opinion, he already has the authority and the minister could intervene and take action.

To go back to Bill C-322, we have to look at the basic issue, the safety of Canadians and their families. At the moment, there are certain shortcomings in the bill. Clearly, we encourage people to comply with existing laws and regulations. Pedestrians must not cross railway tracks where they are not allowed to do so, because it is dangerous and puts not only their own lives but those of others at risk. Unfortunately, statistics show that level crossings are not risk free.

I really must provide my colleague with some recommendations. Statistics show that railway and road crossings are equally dangerous for Canadians. At the end of October 2016, data from the Transportation Safety Board of Canada indicated a total of 89 accidents at road crossings, including 16 fatalities and 20 severe

injuries. Our colleague talked about the high number of accidents outside road crossings. In other words: Canada's entire railway system. These are not specific locations we are talking about, but about a very large area. It is impossible to put road crossings everywhere and anywhere in Canada where there are railway lines.

We do not see how Bill C-322 in its current form could help to improve and solve the problem once and for all. In our view, a broader approach to road crossings is needed. I agree that specific measures must be taken to improve the situation in Montreal, and thus the safety of the people crossing railway lines illegally in Canada. We should come up with a framework within which the minister could use this new power to authorize new road crossings.

I offer my colleague my co-operation in the coming weeks; let us keep discussing the bill and see whether it is possible to make any improvements that would result in our being able to support it. Unfortunately, at the moment, we cannot support Bill C-322 in its current form.

• (1140)

[English]

**Mr. Wayne Stetski (Kootenay—Columbia, NDP):** Madam Speaker, this is an important issue. Canada's railways play an important part in our nation, not only for their value of moving goods and people, but as part of our cultural identity.

We all know the story of the last spike and how the government worked with the Canadian Pacific Railway to build our first transcontinental railroad in 1885. That silver spike was driven into the railbed in Craigellachie, just a few kilometres west of my riding of Kootenay—Columbia. At that time, rail was the most efficient way to transport goods and people from one end of the country to the other. That is why the government played an important role in funding and building the railway.

Sir John A. Macdonald's government was brought down due to his accepting bribes from CPR for helping with the railway, and he was re-elected in part due to his promise to complete the railway. After it was completed, it became popular to take the train across the country to see its sights, staying at many of the fantastic hotels that the rail company built to house wealthy guests, including Glacier Hotel in my riding.

At that time, safety may not have been as important as it is today. It is said that Agnes Macdonald, wife of then Prime Minister Sir John A. Macdonald, was so thrilled with the sight of the mountains that she roared the train's cowcatcher all the way through. That must have been a "mooving" experience, for sure.

*Private Members' Business*

Today we have a very different situation. The railroads are privately owned, but responsibility for their safety lies with the Government of Canada and the federal Department of Transport. However, that responsibility is currently one way. The government can order a railway to close or alter a crossing, but it cannot order the railway to create one, and that is what this legislation is about.

Bill C-322 would grant the Minister of Transport the powers to require the construction of crossings on a rail line. Why is this important? It is important because the situation right now is untenable. Canadians, including individuals and businesses, have demonstrated that they sometimes have legitimate requirements to cross railways at locations other than currently regulated road crossings. However, the rail companies refuse to allow the crossings and they refuse to make them safe.

This is especially true where rail lines run along rivers and lakes. In order to reach the waterway, people are sometimes given the choice between taking an extremely long detour or crossing the tracks illegally and unsafely. In my own riding of Kootenay—Columbia, we have a situation like this. The Kicking Horse River is an offshoot of the mighty Columbia River. It gets its colourful name from an incident in 1858, when Dr. James Hector, a member of the Palliser expedition that was exploring the area, was kicked and knocked out by a horse while trying to lead it across the fast-moving water.

Whitewater rafting in the Kicking Horse River outside of Golden, B.C., is some of the best in the world. Every summer, as many as 40,000 people, assisted by a number of successful companies, load onto rafts to challenge the rapids. The sport brings valuable ecotourism dollars into Golden and provides dozens of jobs, particularly for our youth. To get to the water, rafting companies carefully lead groups across the railway tracks to the lower canyon. They have been doing so for over 40 years without a single accident. Last year, CPR told them that their activity was illegal and stopped rafters from crossing the tracks, citing safety.

I will read to the House a statement from CP issued in early June 2016: “CP cannot support rafters accessing the Kicking Horse River at this location...as it poses a significant risk to their own safety as well as the safety of CP crews and the freight they are transporting.” Subsequently CP put up a metal gate barricading the crossing, and threatened to charge anyone who “trespassed”, their word, to get to the river.

Let me repeat: rafters have been crossing the tracks there for 40 years without a single accident, and now millions of dollars are potentially being lost to this rural seasonal economy because the company has decided not to create a safe crossing.

Last summer, two companies began helicoptering people across this newly closed access, adding hundreds of dollars to the cost of family rafting vacations. There was nothing that the federal government or provincial government could do about that, until now. Bill C-322 would allow the minister to order CP and other railways to create safe crossings in special situations like this. If rail companies are concerned about safety, the solution is not to ban crossings but rather to make them safe.

● (1145)

Now, one may wonder why CP would not create a safe crossing to allow access to the Kicking Horse River. Initially it said it would—but only if the federal or provincial government paid for it. That is right. This company, which earned over \$6 billion in 2014 and made a profit of almost \$540 million in the first quarter of 2016, said the taxpayers should be on the hook for it to build a crossing over its own tracks. This is unacceptable, and it is worrisome.

Level crossings must be built in strategic locations so that pedestrians, cyclists, and even whitewater rafters can move around safely. The improvement of active transportation and the mobility of people are important priorities across Canada. It should be a no-brainer for every member of the House to support this legislation.

Unfortunately, the government is hiding behind obsolete regulations that prevent the minister from ordering the construction of new crossings, while he already has the power to order them closed. The government seems to be unwilling to take on the responsibility to give Canadians freedom of movement, to save Canadian lives, to force some companies to act in a way that favours small communities, to provide safe access to Canada's rivers and lakes across railroad tracks, which surely should be a fundamental right for every Canadian.

I do not want to encourage anyone to illegally cross railway tracks. That is what government inaction would have people do. We want to make sure such crossings are legal and safe where they are needed.

Across Canada, unregulated crossings cause twice as many accidents and fatalities as regulated crossings, and in some places hundreds of people cross railway tracks every morning. Of course, decades ago, kids in Saskatchewan would walk the railroad tracks to get to school. That may happen to some degree today as well.

By one count, on May 15, 2012, between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m., 289 pedestrians and 81 cyclists crossed the railway right-of-way in Mile End between Saint-Dominique and Henri-Julien streets in Montreal. Every one of these Canadians could have been fined a minimum of \$287 under the Railway Safety Act. Under current laws, these were trespassers, and what they were doing is dangerous.

The lack of safe crossings jeopardizes public safety and causes mobility issues in our communities. New Democrats have introduced this bill because we want to improve security for all Canadians, whether they are walking, cycling, driving, whitewater rafting, or just trying to access rivers and lakes near their homes.



*Private Members' Business*

Who else is supporting this legislation? There have been a number of groups, of course. They include whitewater rafters in British Columbia, the Greater Victoria Cycling Coalition, BC Healthy Living Alliance, Saskatoon Cycles, Canada Bikes, Citizens for Safe Cycling, Walk Toronto, Cycle Toronto, Ontario By Bike, Jane's Walk, Vélo Québec, Piétons Québec, the Outremont Pedestrians and Cyclists Association, and a variety of municipalities, cities, and businesses.

I invite members to join me in supporting this legislation, which simply gives the transport minister powers to create safe crossings where they do not already exist. It is in the interest of communities, in the interest of Canadians, and in the interest of safety.

**Mr. Marc Serré (Nickel Belt, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to be here today to speak to issues surrounding Bill C-322, an act to amend the Railway Safety Act in relation to road crossings.

While the government recognizes the complexity of railways and municipalities having to coexist, I would like to explain why the government cannot support the bill.

Essentially, the bill would introduce inconsistencies into the Railway Safety Act, which is the subject of a comprehensive statutory review that has been moved up to start in 2017 rather than 2018. This was announced on November 3, 2016, by the Minister of Transport. It will provide an opportunity for our government and parliamentarians to consider rail safety in a more comprehensive way than through private members' bills designed to address one-off situations.

This is very significant. I have the experience in my riding of Nickel Belt. It is very important that these issues related to rail safety be addressed in partnership with communities and all levels of government. Together we have the responsibility to improve rail safety across Canada, and this private member's bill seeks to address only one specific situation.

As members of Parliament, we all need to provide leadership in our communities to gather all levels of government to improve rail safety. Round table discussions with various communities—federal, provincial, municipal, and indigenous communities, the private sector, and Transport Canada—are crucial.

The statutory review of the Railway Safety Act that has been moved up by a year to 2017 is a move in the right direction.

• (1150)

[*Translation*]

First, in addition to a rigorous and robust rail safety regulatory framework, there are well-established, existing measures and processes in place, which ultimately makes the proposed bill redundant.

I will illustrate this redundancy by detailing the existing process for the central issue of the private member's bill: opening or constructing new grade crossings.

To begin, the Grade Crossings Regulations clearly define the responsibilities of the railway company and the road authority with respect to grade crossings.

[*English*]

Understandably, with approximately 14,000 public grade crossings along more than 48,000 kilometres of federally regulated railway tracks across Canada, the regulations recognize and entrench the shared responsibility for rail crossings. Railway companies, road authorities, municipalities and band councils in provinces, and private crossing owners are each responsible for managing safety at grade crossings. This is why Transport Canada encourages rail companies and communities to consult with each other to seek solutions through collaborative approaches.

[*Translation*]

Likewise, the existing process under the Canada Transportation Act encourages road authorities and railway companies to work together to agree whether or not to open a road crossing, where to open a crossing, and how to apportion the costs.

When the railway company and the municipality agree, the agreement may be filed with the Canadian Transportation Agency, which is an independent, quasi-judicial tribunal that makes decisions on a wide range of matters involving federally-regulated modes of transportation, including rail.

[*English*]

These agreements usually include rates to be charged for work performed and specify which parties are responsible for paying for the work, as well as maintenance and liability. The filed agreement becomes an order of the agency authorizing the parties to construct or maintain the crossings, or to apportion the costs, as provided for in the agreement.

If a rail company and a road authority agree on a grade crossing but disagree on who should pay for the work, either party can ask the Canadian Transportation Agency to apportion the costs of that project. When an agreement cannot be reached, the parties have access to mediation services through the Canadian Transportation Agency.

In most cases, the agency first tries to resolve first complaints through facilitation or mediation. Mediators assist the parties in negotiating a mutually satisfactory settlement among themselves.

When mediation is unsuccessful, the next step is for one of the parties to approach the agency in question. Adjudication can take up to 120 days, depending upon the complexity of the case. The agency's ruling under adjudication is legally binding and can include where crossings should be located, how many are required, conditions that the crossing must meet, and apportionment of the costs.

Whether through mediation or adjudication, when crossings are required, Transport Canada provides safety-related advice to agencies before making its decision. All new crossings authorized by the agency must comply with the safety requirements of the Railway Safety Act and associated regulations, such as the Grade Crossings Regulations.

*Private Members' Business*

Under the act, the proponent for a new grade crossing must give 60 days' notice to other parties involved. When all other avenues have been exhausted and where there are exceptional threats to safety, the Minister of Transport already has the authority under section 32.01 of the Railway Safety Act to order a company, road authority, or municipality to, among other things, take corrective measures to address a threat to safe railway operations, including construction of a road crossing.

As members can understand, the process in place is a rigorous one even before construction of a grade crossing begins. It goes without saying that the next steps in this process are just as rigorous.

The grade crossings standards referenced in the Grade Crossings Regulations set out the safety criteria for the construction, alteration, maintenance, inspection, and testing of grade crossings. These standards uphold safety at federally regulated crossings by promoting consistency and bring all federally regulated crossings in Canada under one common standard.

Transport Canada's role includes monitoring railway companies through audits and inspections to verify that they meet safety standards under the Grade Crossings Regulations. To do so, the department conducts regular monitoring of rail works and operations, informs railways and road authorities of any safety deficiencies, and, if required, takes appropriate action.

In addition, as previously noted, the Railway Safety Act was amended in June 2015 to provide broader ministerial authorities to address safety risks, threats, or concerns. If the minister considers them necessary in the interests of safe railway operations, specific measures may be ordered, such as constructing, altering, operating, or maintaining a railway work, and a crossing would be included.

While the impetus for Bill C-322 to make it safer for pedestrians and cyclists to cross railway tracks is certainly worthwhile, road crossing issues are complex and multi-jurisdictional, requiring the involvement and co-operation of multiple players: the federal government, rail companies, road authorities, municipalities, and members of the general public. The relationship between Transport Canada and the Canadian Transportation Agency strikes the required fine balance between road safety and the needs of the communities. Ultimately, the government is confident that the regulations and processes in place have the necessary rigour and flexibility to address the interests of this proposed bill.

• (1155)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Before we continue, I just want to remind the member that I will have to cut off the debate on the private member's business because the time will have expired, but she will have time to finish that at a later date.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek.

**Mrs. Kelly Block (Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to join with my friend and colleague, the deputy critic for transport, to discuss Bill C-322, an act to amend the Railway Safety Act with regard to road crossings. If passed, this legislation would give the Minister of Transport the power to order the owner of a rail line to build a grade-level crossing across the track and to authorize the payment of a grant for that purpose.

My understanding is that this legislation is principally designed to address a challenging circumstance in the sponsor's riding, where, according to the sponsor, there are not enough rail crossings, and therefore pedestrians are crossing the rail track at multiple uncontrolled locations.

As the issue at hand is a lack of pedestrian crossings along the Canadian Pacific Railway Outremont spur, and as it is common practice by the current Liberal government, one wonders why the Minister of Transport has not called his former caucus colleague, who happens to be the mayor of Montreal, to come up with a suitable plan to build grade-separated overpasses and underpasses for pedestrians to cross the track. However, as per another common practice by the government, it is easier to declare that rail safety for the middle class is a priority for the current minister than to do something about it.

It need not be said that rail safety is a priority for all Canadians, regardless of their personal financial circumstances.

While the intent of Bill C-322 is to address a local issue, it will be national in its scope and should be judged on that basis. Federal legislation already provides municipalities and local authorities with the ability to get a railroad to the table to get a crossing built. Section 101 of the Canada Transportation Act states that if a municipality or the relevant local authority and a railway are unsuccessful in negotiating an agreement to build a crossing, the Canada Transport Agency may, first, authorize the construction of that crossing; second, determine what percentage of the construction costs each party will be responsible for; and finally, determine who will maintain the crossing. This current process puts the onus on each individual local authority to determine whether a new railway crossing is required; where the crossing can and should be built, taking into consideration its development plans; and how much they are willing to contribute financially to see that crossing built.

Municipalities have the primary responsibility for their infrastructure, so it makes sense for them to be the ones determining if and where a railway crossing should be built. It should not be up to the Minister of Transport to determine whether a crossing must be built; it is up to the local government to determine whether it would like to see the rail crossing built.

While Transport Canada does have the ability to close a crossing if it is considered unsafe, this power exists in the interests of safety.

When people cross the track at an uncontrolled location, they are in effect trespassing on private property. The sponsor of this bill in effect is saying that because people are trespassing and putting themselves at risk, the minister needs to build more level-grade crossings.

*Government Orders***GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

• (1205)

*[English]***NATIONAL SECURITY AND INTELLIGENCE  
COMMITTEE OF PARLIAMENTARIANS ACT**

BILL C-22—TIME ALLOCATION MOTION

**Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.)** moved:

That in relation to Bill C-22, An Act to establish the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians and to make consequential amendments to certain Acts, not more than one further sitting day shall be allotted to the consideration of the report stage and one sitting day shall be allotted to the third reading stage of the said bill; and

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

*[Translation]*

**Mrs. Carol Hughes (The Assistant Deputy Speaker, NDP):** Pursuant to Standing Order 67.1, there will now be a 30-minute question period.

It is at this time that I invite hon. members to rise in their place to give an indication of the number of members who would wish to participate in the 30-minute question period.

*[English]*

**Hon. Tony Clement (Parry Sound—Muskoka, CPC):** Madam Speaker, very simply, the hon. House leader knows full well that the hon. Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, as well as other members of her caucus, have been on the record decrying this very parliamentary motion when they were on this side of the aisle, when they were in opposition. Indeed, I am quite concerned that it is being used on a measure that relates to the national security of our country and the parliamentary oversight that is being proposed by the bill. Certainly we have not debated it long enough. There have been a number of meaningful amendments by the government. I would like to know how she can square the Liberals' opposition to these kinds of motions when they were in opposition with what they are doing today in the House.

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** Madam Speaker, the hon. member and I, as well as the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, have been working closely together. We know that it is always better when we can work together.

I believe that our government has been very reasonable in providing the opposition time to debate this bill at second reading, in committee, and at report stage. Let us consider the stats. We have had more than 40 speakers express their views on the bill, and we look forward to hearing more members speak today and at third reading. Moreover, after we include today's debate, we will have debated this bill for more than 17 hours.

To be clear, if pedestrians would use existing crossings instead of trespassing on busy railway spurs, the safety of the tracks would not be compromised in this respect. As cities grow around historic railway-owned rights-of-way, the kind of situation we are seeing in Montreal, where there may not be enough grade-separated crossings, will only become more common. Unfortunately, and on too many occasions, pedestrians are cutting holes in fences and taking shortcuts to wherever they need to go rather than walking to existing crossings.

In 2015, accidents between pedestrians and trains resulted in 31 fatalities. The dangers for pedestrians cutting across the track without knowledge of whether a train is coming are obvious, but they are not heeded enough.

I consider it a heavy burden to place on rail operators to have to contend with trespassers as part of their job, when they are already operating heavy equipment under challenging circumstances. I believe that the mental welfare of train operators should be considered in this debate on how to handle the densification of areas around rail lines in cities.

• (1200)

My issue with the bill is that increasing the number of pedestrian crossings that are not grade separated will only increase the opportunities for trespassing on private lands. This will in turn increase the opportunities for pedestrians to find themselves in fatal accidents or to stumble and fall.

I will be opposing the bill, because it proposes the wrong solution to the problem in Montreal and other densely populated cities that have rail lines crossing through them. There will never be a crossing at every single location that is most convenient for all pedestrians. The issue here is that pedestrians are trespassing on private property, thus exposing themselves to major danger.

Governments and railroads share a combined responsibility to ensure that pedestrians stay off the tracks to the greatest extent possible and to make that an ongoing priority in infrastructure initiatives.

I see that my time is coming to an end, so I will leave it there and resume the debate when the bill is next taken up.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** The hon. member will have three and a half minutes to finish her speech when the issue is before the House again.

The time provided for the consideration of private members' business has now expired and the order is dropped to the bottom of the order of precedence on the Order Paper.

*Government Orders*

The Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security also had the opportunity to study this bill extensively. The committee held eight meetings to study this bill and heard from 41 witnesses. The work the committee did was appreciated and was very much considered.

We have to take our responsibility to Canadians very seriously. It is important that we have meaningful debate and advance legislation. I regret that we have to bring ourselves to this. I think we need to ensure that members have time to speak and that the government can also advance important legislation such as this.

• (1210)

**Mr. Murray Rankin (Victoria, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I join with my colleague from the Conservative Party, the official opposition, in registering serious concern about the government's actions today.

The experts we have talked to on security and intelligence issues are frustrated by the fact that these amendments, done at the last moment at report stage, weaken the oversight that is available. That we would proceed with only government support for such a critical initiative on national security and intelligence is a matter that should disappoint all Canadians. This is the government's sole response to the controversial Bill C-51, which the Liberal government, while in opposition, supported. They agree that these amendments would weaken the job parliamentarians would be asked to do.

Why is the government not willing to allow time for all parties to try to seek consensus on this bill? My colleagues and I are standing ready to work with the hon. House leader and with these experts. Why is the government refusing to work with us?

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** Madam Speaker, I have appreciated the opportunities to work with the member as well. The member has to understand that as a government, we have a responsibility to have meaningful debate as well as to advance legislation.

When it comes to the important work the committee did, the government has more than considered the recommendations. This government actually has advanced legislation that is different from what was introduced at committee, because we took the work of the committee very seriously. The committee had eight meetings and 41 witnesses. Within this place, we have had more than 17 hours of debate.

It is important to note that this was an election promise that we are delivering on. Witnesses at the public safety and national security committee were all pleased to see us moving forward with this committee of parliamentarians and made some suggestions to improve it.

The committee made some of these changes to improve the bill. We have accepted many of them. During clause by clause on Bill C-22, the following amendments were made and included by the government: the Liberal amendment to broaden the committee's mandate in section 8, further sub-amended by the NDP and agreed to by all parties; the removal of the chair's double-vote from clause 19, ensuring that the chair would only cast a deciding vote in the event of a tie; and a whistle-blower clause that would require the committee to inform the appropriate minister of any activity it

discovered that was not conducted in compliance with the law, proposed by the NDP and accepted by the government.

When it comes to a commitment to work together, this government is being very reasonable. I believe we can continue working together, and I encourage the members opposite to really consider these amendments seriously.

**Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC):** Madam Speaker, in the context of this debate, it seems that the Liberals continue to use time allocation to drive through their agenda. Obviously, it is our job as members of Parliament to hold the government to account and to ask questions in regard to this.

This same hon. minister has put forward a discussion paper that would basically pre-program these kinds of time allocation motions so that the government would not have to stand up and say why it needs to push forward its agenda. I would like the member opposite to explain why she feels that limiting debate in this place, particularly in the area of time allocation, is in this House's interest and is in the interest of the Canadian people.

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** Madam Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to rise and respond to the hon. member's questions. He was part of the previous government, which really abused the time allocation tool.

Time allocation is the only tool that exists for a government to advance legislation when there is a stalemate. We have a duty to ensure that all legislation is brought to a vote. This piece of legislation has had a lot of debate and many members have spoken to it in the House. All members of Parliament are elected to represent the voices of their constituents. This government is elected to ensure that the voice of Canadians is advanced, and this was a campaign commitment.

It is important to note, since the member referenced it, the importance of modernizing this place when there are limited tools that do not allow us to work better together in a more modernized way. I look forward to working with the member opposite to modernize this place, and I am sure he can agree that we can work better together. I appreciate his reading the discussion paper, and I look forward to his being part of the conversation.

• (1215)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Matthew Dubé (Beloeil—Chambly, NDP):** Madam Speaker, the Leader of the Government in the House has talked at length about the number of witnesses we heard in committee. Beyond the substance of the bill, one of the points that kept coming back was mentioned in a *Globe and Mail* column by a number of those experts: the importance of having a non-partisan committee along with the process that leads to its formation and the subsequent work.

Several parties must support it so that it has the highest possible legitimacy. Actually, one of the reasons why the government committed to creating such a committee during the campaign is the erosion of public confidence in our national security agencies and the need for mechanisms to be in place to ensure that Canadians can rebuild their trust.

*Government Orders*

How can the Leader of the Government believe that using time allocation and preventing us from debating the fact that the government is discarding a substantial number of amendments carried in committee can help us create a body that will restore public trust in the national security agencies?

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** Madam Speaker, time allocation is the only tool that enables the government to move a bill forward when an impasse is reached. We are duty-bound to ensure the bill is passed. We do not make these decisions lightly, and we remain committed to ensuring all members have a sufficient and reasonable amount of time to debate the bill in the House of Commons.

Furthermore, we also recognize our responsibility to deliver on our promises to Canadians. We need to work together. We have heard from the committee, and we are proposing a bill that we think is good for Canadians. It is a necessary step. We must work together, and we will continue to work with the opposition.

[English]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I appreciate the comments from the government House leader. Could she expand on why it is so important that we act on the legislation, given the fact that it was part of an actual election platform?

This is something that the Prime Minister committed to do for Canadians. The member made reference to the fact that there have already been a significant number of hours of debate. I will highlight the fact that since the Prime Minister made the commitment, there is an obligation on the House to see the legislation ultimately come to that final vote. Could she provide some comment on the importance of that commitment?

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** Madam Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to remind Canadians that we have had over 17 hours of debate and over 40 speakers. The committee held eight meetings and heard from 41 witnesses. These conversations continue, and we are engaging not only with members, but also with Canadians.

When it comes to the national security and intelligence committee of parliamentarians, it will respond to the government's commitment to achieve two objectives simultaneously: to keep Canadians safe while respecting and safeguarding their rights and freedoms. The committee's mandate and powers go further than those of any other Westminster country, in some respects, by including the review of all national security intelligence committees across all departments and agencies, as well as broad access to classified information.

The committee will act with full independence from the government in deciding which matters to review and in reporting its findings and recommendations. Its mandate and powers will be legislated and cannot be altered by the government.

This is important legislation. It is good for Canadians, and it is important that we advance it so that we can have this oversight body. This is unlike anything else that this country has ever done, and it is about time that we get it done.

**Ms. Dianne L. Watts (South Surrey—White Rock, CPC):** Madam Speaker, while I appreciate that the Prime Minister made some campaign promises, he also promised openness and transpar-

ency. He also made a promise about a \$10-billion deficit, but we will put that aside.

I sit on that committee. The minister overruled the committee through a number of amendments that all of us put forward, to remove the tools. A lot of those tools have been removed, so I find it very interesting that we go through a whole process, hear from expert witnesses, put the amendments forward, do the work, and go across the country only to have the bill gutted. Therefore, when I hear that these are campaign promises, and we have time allocation to shut down debate, I am curious whether the House leader can comment on the waste of time of the committee and all the work the committee did going across the country and hearing the experts, if the government is not even going to pay attention to the recommendations.

• (1220)

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** Madam Speaker, I am not surprised to see a Conservative standing up in this place and referring to the important work that a committee does as a waste of time. I entirely disagree with her in this case. I know that the work the committee did was very important. It heard from 41 witnesses, held eight meetings, and did very important work. The legislation that was introduced—

**Ms. Dianne L. Watts:** I sit on that committee, and you ignored it.

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** Madam Speaker, now we see the member chirping rather than listening to a response that I believe is important for Canadians to hear.

When it comes to the legislation that was introduced and given to committee versus the legislation that has come out of committee, even after this government's amendments, we see that the work the committee did was taken very seriously. There were seven exemptions. The committee chose to remove all seven. The government has chosen to remove three.

We can look at the exemptions we have kept. One is cabinet confidences. I am sure Canadians will not be surprised, and they understand cabinet confidence. With respect to information described in the Witness Protection Program Act, why we would need the name of an individual who has already been given witness protection is beyond me. We will have access to the information, just not the details about the individual. What the individual looks like and the name of the individual should not matter when we make a decision. We have suggested that the exemptions about confidential sources and "information relating directly to an ongoing...law enforcement agency that may lead to a prosecution" be kept.

*Government Orders*

We have kept the removal of FINTRAC, the removal of the Investment Canada Act, and the removal of information respecting “ongoing defence intelligence activities supporting military operations”.

This is a step in the right direction, and we will continue working hard—

**Ms. Dianne L. Watts:** It is a committee under the PMO, and the member knows that.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I want to remind the member for South Surrey—White Rock that she was afforded the respect of asking the question without interruptions, and I assume that she would want to do the same so that everybody can hear the answers.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Hochelaga.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet (Hochelaga, NDP):** Madam Speaker, first I hear that there had been no impasse in committee. Then I learn the all of the committee's recommendations were rejected. The report was not accepted as my colleague said.

The Liberals promised during the election campaign that they would lessen the negative effects of Bill C-51. They had also promised more transparency. However, in addition to gutting the bill, they are imposing time allocation. They are trying to sweep everything under the rug and make the issue disappear as quickly as possible. Twice, the people were let down. We call that a double whammy. It is very disappointing to Canadians.

How can Canadians trust a government that breaks so many promises? It is no surprise that people are so cynical about politicians.

[*English*]

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** Madam Speaker, I rise once again in this House to encourage all members to really consider the amendments that have been put forth by the government. It really is a middle ground. We have taken seriously the work that the committee has done, and we have accepted many of the amendments. For example, the whistle-blower amendment that was proposed by the NDP has been accepted by the government. Members will recognize that there is no amendment to remove that provision. It was suggested by the NDP, and it came with great information. We have accepted it, and it remains a part of the current legislation in front of the House.

We can look at the chair. In the original legislation, the chair had two votes. After the committee's hard work, we recognized that the chair should have only the tie-breaking vote, if a tie exists. We have accepted that amendment and we have more than worked with committee members, as well as all members in the House.

This is important legislation for Canadians. It is the first of its kind. It is important that we have a committee of parliamentarians. We are the only country in the Five Eyes that does not. We are starting at a step that is way further ahead than any other country. It is important legislation, and I encourage all members to really consider the amendments rather than assume that everything has been changed when this is not the case.

●(1225)

**Mr. Pat Kelly (Calgary Rocky Ridge, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I have been listening carefully to the debate on the time allocation motion that was moved this morning, and I am a little confused. Well, I am not so much confused as bothered by the characterization of time allocation that the government House leader made in response to the question from my colleague from Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola. In the same sentence, she characterized the invocation of time allocation by a Conservative as abuse of Parliament while at the same time lamenting its being the only tool available when the government needs to advance important legislation. It does not make any sense, other than to say that when a Liberal wants to allocate time, then it is, regrettably, the only tool, but if anybody else does it, it is abuse.

Is simply fulfilling a campaign promise, when you have broken countless other ones, an acceptable excuse for limiting the parliamentary prerogatives of members, when nine out of 10 members have not yet been able to speak on this bill?

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I want to clarify that I certainly have not broken any campaign promises. I would ask the member to address his comments to the Chair.

The hon. government House leader.

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** Madam Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity, once again, to rise in this place and correct the record. Over 40 members have spoken to this piece of legislation and have expressed their views, and more members will have the opportunity to speak at report stage, as well as at third reading. There have been over 17 hours of debate on this legislation. When we look at the number of hours we have to debate important pieces of legislation, 17 hours is more than a reasonable amount of time. This is important legislation, and we will advance it. The committee had eight meetings and heard from 41 witnesses.

The member speaks about time allocation and the fact that he is bothered by it. This government has more than tried to work with members on the opposite side. I am comparing what we have to do with the fact that the previous government moved time allocation over 100 times. Sometimes legislation would be introduced with a motion for time allocation. That is not the approach this government is taking. We will not take that approach, because we believe we can work better together.

When it comes to campaign commitments, we know that we need to have meaningful debate as well as advance legislation. We committed to lowering taxes for middle-class Canadians, and we delivered. We committed to increasing taxes for the wealthiest 1% of Canadians, and we delivered. What did the Conservatives do? They voted against it every time.

**Mr. Matthew Dubé:** Madam Speaker, it is quite interesting to hear the parliamentary secretary to the government House leader talk about how the House is obliged to pass government legislation. I guess the Liberal caucus members did not get the memo the last sitting week when they voted against the government, twice. I guess that is why they have to have two caucus meetings this week, because the caucus does not feel that cabinet is consulting it.

*Government Orders*

It is not just opposition members; it is the Liberal caucus as well that is fed up with the notion that the Liberals promised to do better and are well on their way, I would argue, to doing even worse at this point. While we knew where the Conservatives stood, I suppose the Liberals like to say they are going to do better and then stab us in the back with a knife on these issues, because that is exactly how we feel, having worked hard at committee.

My colleague from Victoria worked hard to try to get some of those amendments passed. While the government House leader will brag about the three or four that are still there, there are some critical pieces that are missing, such as what information the committee gets access to. We can just look at the issue of ongoing investigations. This means that the Air India inquiry and Afghan detainees, issues that are now decades old, would not be looked at by this committee.

It is great to have whistle-blower duty, but what good is that if the committee does not actually get the information it needs? I would add that this is exactly the kind of information the member for Vancouver Quadra wanted a similar committee to get in a piece of legislation she proposed in the last Parliament, supported by the Prime Minister and the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness.

I want to understand. If the member has so many great things to offer about which amendments the Liberals picked, why not have that debate and discussion over a proper period of time?

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** Madam Speaker, I am a little surprised that a member of the NDP would be disturbed that a federal government would encourage its members to vote openly and freely. We committed to doing government differently, and we will. For the member not to understand what democracy looks like is, unfortunately, what has been the culture of this place for far too long. We allow our members to have opinions. We allow and encourage our members to be part of the debate. We do not randomly whip votes, unlike what the members on the other side have to deal with every single day. Our members are free to represent their constituents, advance democracy, and have these tough conversations.

What the member cannot understand is that we had tough conversations and meaningful debate. This piece of legislation is way more robust than what any other country started with. What the member cannot fathom is that he did not get everything he wanted. However, the reality of working together in this place is that there is going to be a middle ground. It is okay to work together; it is okay to have differing opinions. When delivering for Canadians, we need to have many opinions. It is important that we advance in a meaningful way so that we can protect Canadians' rights and freedoms, as well as national security. That is what we will deliver on.

• (1230)

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Madam Speaker, with all due respect to the hon. government House leader, it is not that members over here cannot fathom things, but that we do not agree that we are working together when we are looking at legislation that still needs to be as robust as it can be and respect the role of parliamentarians on the committee.

For instance, parliamentarians on the committee would lose parliamentary privilege and are assumed somehow to be not

trustworthy, yet the government has done nothing to create the same kind of restrictions for the other review agencies, such as SIRC, on which the previous prime minister put a known fraudster in charge. Arthur Porter had access to all state secrets. Under Bill C-22 as now drafted, senators and members of Parliament would have even more restrictive access than a civilian who is the head of SIRC. There are substantive issues of concern here.

I would quickly like to note a historical record. The hon. government House leader is absolutely right that the Conservatives used closure 100 times in the 41st Parliament. However, the problem here is that what they did, which was egregious, seems to have normalized a practice that should not be seen as normal at all. In the early part of the 20th century there was a 40-year period in which closure was used exactly seven times. I do appreciate that the Liberal government is using it less, but it should be using it far less so that we could go back not just to a bar set by what Harper did, but to a bar set by normal parliamentary practice when debates did not face so many time allocations.

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** Madam Speaker, I appreciate the important work the member does in this place but I have to remind her that this will not be a parliamentary committee. It will be a committee of parliamentarians, the first of its kind. It will start with a scope unlike that in any other Westminster country. It will start further ahead.

The legislation that was sent to the standing committee has now been approved because of the important work the committee did. The government has a responsibility to Canadians and this is a first step and it is a substantial first step. There is a review mechanism in place so that we can revisit this legislation and ensure that we either have it right, that we need to go further, or pull back. Members of Parliament will have the opportunity to do that.

To say that I take time allocation lightly is a disservice, because I take it very seriously. It is a tough decision to make.

We have had over 17 hours of debate in this place on this legislation. The standing committee had eight meetings and heard from 41 witnesses. We need to understand that the government has a responsibility not only to have meaningful debate but also to advance legislation.

I look forward to working with the member. She raised this question when I spoke in the House on this legislation, and at that time I offered that I would welcome the opportunity to answer any questions or concerns that she has.

I believe we are taking a meaningful step and we need to keep working harder together.

**Mr. Adam Vaughan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development (Housing and Urban Affairs), Lib.):** Madam Speaker, we all recognize the important work that committees do on behalf of us as parliamentarians as we explore legislation that is tabled in the House. I am wondering if the minister could talk about the amendments that were accepted and the collaboration that did take place in committee with respect to this legislation.

*Government Orders*

I wonder if she could talk about how we work in committees to make sure that we fix legislation, improve legislation, and review legislation in a collaborative way and not simply pursue legislation as it is presented with no questions, no amendments, and no alterations as it moves forward. Perhaps she could also comment on how that differs from the previous government which never listened to committees whatsoever.

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** Madam Speaker, I appreciate that question because it is important to highlight the amendments that were accepted. The committee made substantial changes to improve the bill and I would agree that the committee's work did improve this legislation. During clause-by-clause study on Bill C-22, amendments were made, including some by the government.

The Liberals amended the bill to broaden the committee's mandate in clause 8 and this was further amended by the NDP. It was agreed to by all parties and accepted.

The chair's double vote was removed from clause 19, ensuring the chair would only cast a deciding vote in the event of a tie. The committee advanced that amendment and the government accepted it.

Clause 21 was amended so that if anything is redacted from the committee's report, the revised version must be clearly identified as revised and must indicate the extent of the revision. The amendment was accepted.

A whistle-blower clause that would require the committee to inform the appropriate minister of any activity to discover that may not be conducted in compliance with the law was proposed by the NDP and was accepted.

Clause 14 and clause 16 in the original bill included seven automatic exemptions. The committee removed all of them. The government has reinstated those that are needed to protect individual privacy and rights, so the witness protection program and human intelligence sources for the government directly related to the ongoing investigations carried out by law enforcement agencies. The committee removed and the government has agreed to remove ongoing defence activities, the Investment Canada Act, and FINTRAC.

•(1235)

**Hon. Tony Clement:** Madam Speaker, how can the hon. government House leader justify watering down the government's own bill when promising in an election to have a meaningful parliamentary oversight process?

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** Madam Speaker, once again I am not surprised that a Conservative member would rise in this place and say that agreeing to amendments would actually water down legislation. It is something the previous government was not able to do.

This government believes that we can find a middle ground. This government believes that the work the committee does is important. When the committee hears from witnesses, we have a responsibility to take that testimony seriously. That is why this government has accepted many amendments proposed by committee members. This government is advancing legislation that is in the best interests of

Canadians. We will continue working hard for Canadians because that is what we were elected to do.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** It is my duty to interrupt the proceedings at this time and put forthwith the question on the motion now before the House.

[Translation]

The question is on the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** All those opposed will please say nay.

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** In my opinion the nays have it.

*And five or more members having risen:*

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Call in the members.

•(1315)

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

*(Division No. 213)*

YEAS

Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Alleslev	Amos
Anandasangaree	Arseneault
Arya	Ayoub
Bagnell	Bains
Baylis	Beech
Bennett	Bibeau
Blair	Bossio
Bratina	Breton
Brisson	Caesar-Chavannes
Carr	Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)
Casey (Charlottetown)	Chagger
Champagne	Chan
Chen	Cormier
Cuzner	Dabrusin
Damoff	Dhalival
Dhillon	Di Iorio
Drouin	Dubourg
Duclos	Duguid
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Dzerowicz
Ehsassi	El-Khoury
Ellis	Erskine-Smith
Eyolfson	Fergus
Fillmore	Finnigan
Fisher	Fonseca
Fragiskatos	Fraser (West Nova)
Fraser (Central Nova)	Freeland
Fry	Fuhr
Gameau	Gerretsen
Goodale	Gould
Graham	Grewal
Hardie	Harvey



*Government Orders*

Holland	Housefather
Hussen	Hutchings
Iacono	Joly
Jordan	Jowhari
Kang	Khalid
Khera	Lametti
Lamoureux	Lapointe
Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)	Lebouthillier
Lefebvre	Lemieux
Leslie	Levitt
Lightbound	Lockhart
Long	Longfield
Ludwig	MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Maloney	Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)
May (Cambridge)	McCrimmon
McDonald	McGuinty
McKenna	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McLeod (Northwest Territories)	Mendès
Mendicino	Mihychuk
Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Sœurs)	
Monsef	
Morrissey	Murray
Nassif	Nault
O'Connell	Oliphant
Oliver	O'Regan
Ouellette	Paradis
Peschisolido	Peterson
Petitpas Taylor	Philpott
Picard	Poissant
Qualtrough	Ratansi
Rioux	Robillard
Rodriguez	Romanado
Rota	Rudd
Ruimy	Rusnak
Sahota	Saini
Sajjan	Samson
Sangha	Sarai
Scarpaleggia	Schiefke
Schulte	Serré
Sheehan	Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)
Sidhu (Brampton South)	Sikand
Simms	Sohi
Sorbara	Spengemann
Tabbara	Tan
Tassi	Trudeau
Vandal	Vandenbeld
Vaughan	Virani
Whalen	Wilkinson
Wilson-Raybould	Wrzesnewskyj
Young	Zahid— 162

Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Laverdière
Lebel	Lobb
Lukiwski	MacGregor
MacKenzie	Maguire
Malcolmson	Marcil
Mathysen	May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
McCaughey (Edmonton West)	McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)
Motz	Mulcair
Nantel	Nater
Nicholson	Nuttall
Paul-Hus	Paupé
Plamondon	Rankin
Reid	Rempel
Richards	Ritz
Saganash	Sansoucy
Saroya	Schmale
Shields	Shipley
Sopuck	Sorenson
Stanton	Ste-Marie
Stetski	Strahl
Stubbs	Sweet
Thériault	Tilson
Trudel	Van Kesteren
Van Loan	Vecchio
Viersen	Warawa
Warkentin	Watts
Waugh	Webber
Weir	Wong
Yurdiga	Zimmer— 116

**PAIRED**

Members

Foote

Moore— 2

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I declare the motion carried.

[English]

REPORT STAGE

The House resumed from March 10 consideration of Bill C-22, An Act to establish the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians and to make consequential amendments to certain Acts, as reported (with amendment) from the committee, and of the motions in Group No. 1.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I wish to inform the House that because of the proceedings of the time allocation motion, government orders will be extended by 30 minutes.

Question and comments, the hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader.

● (1320)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the New Democrats have moved forward a number of amendments. Concern has been expressed with regard to the idea behind Bill C-22 and the exemptions provided. Earlier today we heard the government House leader talk about the amendments that were accepted.

**NAYS**

Members

Aboultayf	Albas
Albrecht	Allison
Anderson	Arnold
Aubin	Barlow
Barsalou-Duval	Beaulieu
Benson	Bergen
Berthold	Bezan
Blaikie	Blaney (North Island—Powell River)
Block	Boucher
Boudrias	Boulerice
Boutin-Sweet	Brassard
Brosseau	Brown
Carrie	Choquette
Christopherson	Clarke
Clement	Cooper
Deltell	Diotte
Dreeschen	Dubé
Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)	Dusseault
Duvall	Eglinski
Falk	Fortin
Gallant	Garrison
Généreux	Genuis
Gill	Gladu
Godin	Gourde
Hardcastle	Harder
Hoback	Jeneroux
Johns	Kelly
Kent	Kitchen
Kmiec	Kwan

*Government Orders*

It is important to recognize that when it comes to the whole idea of exemptions, Canada's legislation is very robust. In fact, to compare us with other countries of the Five Eyes, I would bring New Zealand's act to the attention of members. It allows the government to inform the committee that certain documents or information cannot be disclosed, because in the opinion of the chief executive of the relevant intelligence and security agency such documents contain sensitive information. This is the difference between exemption in New Zealand, which has had a system in place for years now, compared to what we are putting in place for the first time.

Would my colleague not agree that the legislation before us today is one of the most robust pieces of legislation to ensure Canada has one of the best parliamentary oversight committees in the world?

**Mr. David de Burgh Graham (Laurentides—Labelle, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, it is always a pleasure to take a question from the member for Winnipeg North. I agree with him completely.

It is very important to have a robust system. Bill C-22 offers a very robust system. There are immense challenges. Our intelligence agencies do very interesting things all over the world and somebody needs to oversee them, see what they are doing, ensure they make sense, are within the rules, and have the power to do that without putting any of the operations into jeopardy. What they are doing is a very good, and I am very much supporting this.

**Ms. Dianne L. Watts (South Surrey—White Rock, CPC):** Madam Speaker, as we look at Bill C-22, does the member believe it is appropriate for the Prime Minister to appoint the chair of a committee a year in advance before the legislation is even tabled?

**Mr. David de Burgh Graham:** Yes, Madam Speaker, I do.

**Ms. Dianne L. Watts (South Surrey—White Rock, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise to speak to Bill C-22, An Act to establish the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians and to make consequential amendments to certain Acts.

As a member of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security, I had the privilege to closely examine the legislation over the course of eight meetings. I also want to note that the committee concurrently undertook a study on Canada's national security framework. Because a significant amount of the expert testimony we heard was so relevant and crossed over to both of those studies, the committee passed a motion to include all that was heard to be included in both studies and ultimately in both final reports.

This is significant. I want to highlight the amount of work and effort that was done to examine the legislation, to hear from numerous expert witnesses, and to ensure the House was best positioned to pass the best possible legislation.

We heard from witnesses who came before the committee in Ottawa and as well from Canadians across our country during our cross country tour. We heard from experts in the morning sessions and we heard from the general public in the evening through public hearings in Vancouver, Calgary, Montreal, Toronto, and Halifax.

We heard from academics, from experts working in the national security and intelligence fields, from Canada's Information and Privacy Commissioner, from Canada's national security agencies, from the existing oversight bodies, and from groups representing

different religious and ethnic communities throughout Canada. The overwhelming testimony was conclusive.

Experts agreed that while Bill C-22 was a good start, it needed several amendments to make the proposed committee truly independent, accountable, and effective. Therefore, when it came time to propose amendments to the bill, most members of the committee listened to experts and attempted to ensure the independent national security and intelligence committee of parliamentarians would have the right tools to do what would be intended and what it would be required to do.

Several amendments were proposed from committee members of all parties: the Liberals, Conservatives, and the NDP. While not all amendments were agreed to, several were.

The committee amended the legislation significantly to ensure the proposed oversight committee had subpoena powers for documents and witnesses, would be able to access all necessary information, would not grant the minister discretionary veto powers, and would be able to clearly identify whether the Prime Minister had requested that a report be revised before submission to Parliament and, if so, why the Prime Minister had requested such revisions. We as the official opposition also attempted to ensure the proposed committee's composition would be non-partisan and that its chair and members would not be appointed by the Prime Minister. However, this amendment was rejected by the Liberals.

All these amendments were aimed at making Bill C-22 more effective, more accountable, and more transparent to Canadians. However, the Liberal government had decided to reject the majority of the amendments that were adopted by the committee, therefore gutting Bill C-22, which took it back to its original form.

The Liberals promised Canadians that national security oversight would be transparent and that it would be accountable. However, Bill C-22 in its current form proposes an oversight committee that has little review powers, that is not transparent, and is not accountable to Parliament. In short, the Liberals are proposing a committee that is an extension of the Prime Minister's Office.

● (1325)

The Prime Minister appointed the chair of the committee, the member for Ottawa South, in January 2016. This was a full six months before Bill C-22 was even tabled before Parliament.

It has now been over a year since his appointment, and we are still debating the legislation. Well, we were debating it until the time allocation today. This is a key example of the Liberal government's unwillingness to be open to any changes or to strengthen the level of transparency and accountability. In spite of what the Liberals may say in this House and to Canadians, the Liberal government has decided to ignore the changes made by the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security, a committee made up of a majority of Liberal MPs I might add, and proceed with a version of the bill that very closely resembles the original one.

*Government Orders*

The Prime Minister will still appoint the chair of the committee; the minister will still be able to decide what information the proposed committee receives and what it does not; and the committee will continue to have no powers to subpoena information or witnesses, even though this is a privilege currently enjoyed by other parliamentary committees. In short, the committee will continue to be controlled by the Prime Minister and the Minister of Public Safety. It will not be transparent, not be accountable, and it will not have the tools necessary to do its job.

Furthermore, the Liberal government does not want to discuss or have debate on this issue. Prior to my speech, the House voted on time allocation as put forward by the Liberals to shut down any and all debate on Bill C-22. This means that not only does the Prime Minister not want to have a national security oversight committee that is accountable to Canadians, that is transparent, and that is effective, but now he also wants to make sure that the House has as little time as possible to debate it. The Liberals are shutting down debate on this legislation because they decided over a year ago, when they appointed the chair, that they wanted this committee to be controlled by the Prime Minister and the Minister of Public Safety. We need to ensure that an appropriate structure and review process of our national security agencies is in place, and we also need to make sure that it is accountable to Canadians.

The public safety committee, including the five Liberal members, made significant changes to Bill C-22. We heard from experts and the general public. We did our job. However, these amendments were not what the Liberal government wanted, because it had already predetermined the outcome of what it wanted in the bill. It is not listening to experts, and it is not listening to the public safety and national security committee. It is insulting the parliamentary process and Canadians by extension.

I urge my colleagues in this House to vote against the changes proposed by the Liberal government, which ignore expert testimony, ignore the committee, and gut the legislation. Independent oversight of Canada's national security agency is critical, and Canadians deserve better from the Liberal government.

• (1330)

**Mr. Marco Mendicino (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague for her comments this morning, as well as for her work on the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security. I had the honour of serving with her on that committee.

In the context of those deliberations on Bill C-22, I am proud of the work that the committee did to ensure there was a broad mandate for this committee of parliamentarians to investigate any matter of national security; to ensure there was robust access to disclosure, the absence of which would trigger the committee's opportunity to use the bully pulpit to hold the government to account; and to be sure there was an appropriate composition of this committee. There will be nine parliamentarians, which is an increase of nine from the number zero. Why do I say that? It is because for 10 years, on the subject of openness and transparency, the last government did nothing to significantly advance that matter. This government has taken concrete steps.

I wonder how the hon. member can reconcile this government's action with the absence of action from the last government.

**Ms. Dianne L. Watts:** Madam Speaker, I appreciate the work that my colleague did on the committee.

There is oversight on some of the national security agencies. It has been in place for 20 years. It is not in the form as is proposed in Bill C-22. As we have heard, and as I said in my speech, this is a starting point, and that is all it is.

If the committee does not have the tools to do its job, it will not succeed, it will fail.

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Madam Speaker, my colleague pointed out quite well that the bill leaves all of the cards in the Prime Minister's hands. Not only does he appoint the chair, but he appoints all the members of the committee. There is nothing in the legislation to require that someone be appointed, for example, from the official opposition. It says that up to a certain number of members can be appointed from the government. This is a smokescreen. This is the government maintaining all of the cards in its own hands while pretending to expand oversight. We see across the board great claims of transparency, but the devil is always in the details.

I wonder if the member could comment on just how deceptive this legislation is and the total failure of the government to respond to our legitimate concerns about it.

**Ms. Dianne L. Watts:** Madam Speaker, when we heard from so many witnesses about the independence of this committee, about the tools that the committee should have, the committee did do its work. We incorporated those into the amendments. Unfortunately, one of the Liberal members of Parliament was removed from the committee. However, to have the government now gut the legislation when we were in agreement with so many of the amendments takes it back to square one. It does not reflect what the expert witnesses and the Privacy Commissioner put forward in testimony.

• (1335)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Michel Picard (Montarville, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I now have the pleasure of being a member of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security with my colleague, and her current position surprises me.

The existing committee is proposing a solution based on consultations and several years of experience, primarily in Great Britain. The formula currently before the House is therefore an improved version in terms of powers as well as the committee, and the committee's needs are clear. I would like to understand how the bill in its current form is a weaker version of the solutions already in place.

*Government Orders**[English]*

**Ms. Dianne L. Watts:** Madam Speaker, I enjoyed my colleague's input at the committee. We looked at different models that have been up and running and that have been changed over the years as well. The most important piece was around independence. When we have the Prime Minister appointing the chair—as I said, it has been a year now—when the minister has veto powers and can determine what the committee will hear and will not hear, this is not openness, this is not transparency. It is incumbent upon all of us, and if we want to do the job right, we need to make sure the tools are in place and the framework is in place.

**Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to have this opportunity once again today to address the House on Bill C-22, legislation that will at long last establish a parliamentary body to scrutinize the work of all our national security and intelligence agencies. This is something that has been called for by parliamentarians, academics, other experts, commissions of inquiry, by the Auditor General, and many others, going back for more than a decade.

*[Translation]*

The committee that will be created by this bill is key to our efforts in ensuring that our national security framework keeps us safe while protecting our rights and freedoms.

*[English]*

When the initial version of this legislation was introduced last June, experts such as Professor Craig Forcese from the University of Ottawa noted that it would put in place “a stronger body than the UK and Australian equivalents”, and that it would be “a dramatic change for Canadian national security accountability.” Since then, the public safety standing committee of this House has studied the bill extensively and proposed a number of amendments. I thank the committee for its work and support many of its amendments to help ensure that the mandate, authorities, and access of the new national security and intelligence committee of parliamentarians will be extensive, effective, and appropriate.

Let me pause here to note that the title of this new entity is quite a mouthful, so during my remarks today, to save time, I may well use the acronym NSICOP.

With respect to the amendments that have been proposed by members of Parliament, the government has agreed to add a whistleblower clause in clause 31 of the bill, requiring the committee to inform the appropriate minister, as well as the Attorney General, if it uncovers any activity that may not be in compliance with the law. We also agree on a change that would restrict the chair of the committee to voting only in the event of a tie rather than having the chair vote as a matter of course.

We agree on amendments that would deal with the NSICOP's annual reports. MPs on all sides of the House have concluded that the Prime Minister should have the authority to redact certain sections of those annual reports if necessary, to safeguard vital national security interests or solicitor-client privilege. However, it would be mandatory for these reports to indicate the extent of and the reason for any such redactions. This is a reasonable and

responsible approach, and I thank committee members for putting it forward. In essence, it mirrors the practice in the United Kingdom.

We are also agreed on amendments to the section dealing with NSICOP's mandate. Accordingly, the authority of a minister to determine that an examination would be injurious to national security and therefore fall outside the mandate of the committee would apply only to ongoing operations. What is more, the minister would have to explain that determination to the committee, and would be bound to alert the committee as soon as the determination changes or as soon as the operation is no longer ongoing.

We are also supporting several big amendments to clause 14, which is the section that lists the type of information to which the NSICOP would not have access. We have removed from this exclusions list, information about ongoing defence intelligence activities supporting military operations, privileged information under the Investment Canada Act, and information collected by the Financial Transactions and Reports Analysis Centre of Canada. All of these areas would have been excluded from NSICOP under the initial version of the bill. Those three blanket exclusions are now gone.

As we can see, the legislative process on Bill C-22 has been unfolding in a constructive manner. The government put forward a bill, the bill was studied in committee, amendments were proposed, and the government, after careful reflection, has agreed to accept a majority of what the standing committee requested. However, in all fairness and candour, there are also certain points on which we disagree with the committee, which is why the government House leader introduced amendments at report stage on Bill C-22.

● (1340)

For one thing, the government sincerely believes that giving blanket access to information about the personal identity of human intelligence sources and people in witness protection, as well as ongoing police investigations, is wrong. It could put lives at risk.

Certainly I do not expect parliamentarians to be indiscreet with this kind of information, but the risk grows each time we widen the circle of those who know the identity of a protected witness or intelligence source. The NSICOP is certainly able to do its job of scrutinizing the work of security and intelligence agencies without personally identifying individual protected witnesses or sources.

With respect to ongoing police investigations, I have two primary concerns. One is the simple importance of avoiding the perception of political interference in criminal investigations, which could appear from having politicians oversee police work in real time. The other is the potentially harmful impact of requiring law enforcement to divert resources from operations on the ground in order to keep parliamentarians apprised of their work while that work is actually happening.

On this point, the CSIS director gave the standing committee the very good example of last year's police operation in Strathroy, Ontario, in which a possible terrorist attack was effectively thwarted. In that kind of fast-paced, resource-intensive situation, requiring resources to be assigned to send information to the committee of parliamentarians “would have been a distraction from the operation in progress” and could have constituted a public safety risk.

*Government Orders*

We are also proposing to reinsert clause 16, which allows a minister to determine that certain information, narrowly defined, should be withheld from NSICOP on security grounds. I would point out that this is entirely in keeping with the way that these kinds of committees work in other countries, in the U.K., New Zealand, and Australia specifically.

In the U.K., for example, a minister may prevent information from being shared with the committee on the grounds that it is too sensitive and should not be disclosed.

In New Zealand, a witness may decline to provide information on the grounds that it is sensitive and that disclosing it would not be in the national interest, and then it is up to the prime minister to overrule the witness and force disclosure. Incidentally, in New Zealand, it is the prime minister who chairs the committee.

In Australia, ministers can issue certificates preventing witnesses from giving evidence to prevent disclosure of “operationally sensitive information”.

Therefore, as members can see, clause 16, as we have proposed, is very consistent with the best practices of our allies. Their ability to share information with Canada could be jeopardized without clause 16.

However, in other ways the NSICOP to be created by Bill C-22 would go well beyond the scope that exists in other countries. The British committee requires a memorandum of understanding with the prime minister in order to examine anything beyond the work of three specific agencies: MI5, MI6, and GCHQ. In Australia, the committee is limited to conducting statutory reviews of legislation and examining the administration and expenditures of particular agencies. A parliamentary resolution or ministerial referral is required for the Australian committee to even look at any other issues related to those agencies. The Canadian committee, by contrast, would be able to look at any activity carried out by any government department or agency that relates to national security and intelligence, and it would be able to follow the trail throughout the federal government. That is a far broader scope than exists in most other countries.

In other words, the national security and intelligence committee of parliamentarians created by Bill C-22 would have more access and more teeth than its counterparts elsewhere in the world. That was true even before the amendments made by the House standing committee, most of which the government is accepting, and it is certainly more true with those amendments now in place.

Finally, with the passage of Bill C-22 we will fix an anomaly in our security architecture and have a form of parliamentary scrutiny that this country deserves.

• (1345)

**Hon. Tony Clement (Parry Sound—Muskoka, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. minister for his interventions, but I also want to remind him about some of the other testimony we heard at the committee stage from people Liberals like to call experts and like to defer to. I am thinking of Professor Roach, for example, and others in the privacy realm, who said that this bill—and it is only reinforced by the amendments the Liberals are proposing—actually creates a triple lock on the ability of the committee to do its job

properly. It is a lock that is dictated by the Prime Minister's Office and is further dictated by the minister, and it prevents the committee from gaining access to information in a timely manner to do its proper job of oversight.

Would the minister care to comment on that?

**Hon. Ralph Goodale:** Madam Speaker, the expert witnesses who either appeared before the committee or made comments in public made the very strong point that a piece of legislation like Bill C-22 is long overdue in the country and that it does represent a major step forward in improving the oversight, review, and scrutiny architecture within the Canadian national security and intelligence system. They made a number of recommendations for making the provision even better, and a number of those recommendations have been accepted by the government. They are being embodied in Bill C-22.

Bill C-22 was a major step forward before the amendments. The amendments have made it better, and the end result is that we have a more successful piece of legislation now, thanks to the representations of the expert witnesses and thanks to the hard work of the parliamentary committee. I thank both for their contributions.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Matthew Dubé (Beloeil—Chambly, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I have a question for the minister. He mentioned ongoing investigations as an example and the fact that it would be inappropriate for parliamentarians to have access to that information. However, all through the committee testimony, two investigations that this committee would not have the right to oversee kept coming up. They were Air India and the Afghan detainees. Those two files are extremely important; the investigations are technically still open and, in our view, this committee would be required to verify them in order to ensure the necessary oversight of national security agencies.

In the previous Parliament, his colleague, the member for Vancouver Quadra, introduced Bill C-622, which was the same kind of bill, but one that created a committee that would have had much more access to information, even after the amendments that the government is proposing today. The Prime Minister and the minister himself voted for that bill, not to mention all the other Liberal members who were present at the time.

Can the minister tell us why he has changed his mind?

• (1350)

[*English*]

**Hon. Ralph Goodale:** Madam Speaker, as has been universally stated by expert observers, both in the parliamentary process and beyond the parliamentary process in the public media and elsewhere, Bill C-22 is a major step forward. Thanks to the amendments that are being accepted in dealing with some of the issues that were raised by hon. members in the last two questions, the bill is stronger now than when it began, and it will be a major innovation in our national security architecture.

*Government Orders*

I would point out that many of the experts we consulted, both here in Canada and around the world, said it was very important to ensure that the new committee would have the time and opportunity to earn the trust and confidence of the very agencies it would have to oversee and scrutinize, as well as the Canadian public. According to many of these expert advisers, it would therefore be prudent to start in a cautious manner, learn from experience, and then make the appropriate changes when we in Canada have gained that experience.

That is the reason there is a provision in the bill to require the legislation to be reviewed in five years. It is so that we will have the chance to learn from that experience and in five years will have the obligation to make the appropriate upgrades and updates to the legislation to keep it in the forefront of such legislation around the world.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Matthew Dubé (Beloeil—Chambly, NDP):** Madam Speaker, normally I would say that I am pleased to rise in the House to take part in the debate on Bill C-22, a bill that the NDP supported at second reading. However, under the circumstances, with the rejection of most of the changes that were made in committee, contrary to what the minister claims, and only one hour after the adoption of a time allocation motion, I am far from pleased to take part in the debate on this matter.

Bill C-22 is important, especially for the Liberals, considering it is central to the intellectual backflips they have been doing for three years now to justify their support for Bill C-51, passed in the last Parliament under the Stephen Harper government. The Liberal government has been in power for almost a year and a half now and we have barely completed this stage. It is worth mentioning, even if this is an issue for another debate on another day, that there is still no legislative measure on the table to right the wrongs created by Bill C-51 regarding rights and freedoms.

That said, this is still a very important matter. Since Bill C-51 was passed and, I would venture to say, even before, many commissions of inquiry have been formed after various incidents in connection with the work of national security agencies. There is one very clear finding: Canadians have lost a great deal of confidence in our national security agencies. This issue obviously affects our rights and freedoms, as well as our privacy, given the rapid advances in technology. However, this is also a matter of national security because, after all, if the public has no confidence in its agencies, it is difficult for them to do their work effectively and appropriately.

In principle, Bill C-22 is a good first step, and I can say that the minister is right about that. It is something that we should have had for a very long time. That said, very serious problems with the bill were raised in committee. A number of amendments would have gone a long way—even though they would not have made the bill perfect—to at least allowing parliamentarians to do their work better and to start off on the right foot.

We can see that, and we have often heard the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness and the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons come back to one point. They say that this is new for Canada, that other countries have had more time to learn, and that we have to give ourselves some time.

We are already some way ahead compared to other countries, but there is a problem. For example, look at how the chair of the committee is elected. In Great Britain, the committee chair is not only elected, but he is also an opposition member. As justification for not electing the committee chair, we are told that, in Great Britain, the committee has existed for a number of years now and that they decided to make changes only after a certain period of learning and becoming used to it. Here, clearly, as we have just heard, the minister is relying on a legislative review that will take place in five years.

However, why not apply now what we learned from our allies? Why relearn the lessons of the past? I have a theory, without wanting to spread conspiracy theories. When this nice job, which comes with a salary on top of an MP's salary, is announced a year in advance, it is difficult for the Prime Minister to break his promise to the Liberal member who had the good fortune to secure this great position. Therefore, I would say that this is why we were not listening to the opposition amendments or the testimony of the chair of the British committee who offered this extremely important point for the credibility of the committee. All the technical issues on the form could be addressed, but credibility is also very important, to get back to the point I made at the outset, which is the public trust in our national security agencies.

It is not just me saying this. I want to come back to the column in *The Globe and Mail*, co-written by professors Wesley Wark, Kent Roach and Craig Forcese, professors the minister likes to quote to talk about the importance of this first step that has been completed. In speaking of the amendments passed in committee, they said:

● (1355)

[*English*]

Should the government choose to force a return to the restrictive original bill, it risks potentially undermining a new and historic Parliamentary ability that it has enthusiastically championed. Failure to reach agreement with Parliament

—not the Liberal caucus, but Parliament—

on this issue also imperils non-partisan support for future national-security reforms and changes to other elements of the review system for national security.

When we hear that and with the majority of the amendments having been thrown out and a time allocation motion having been thrown in to boot, it is difficult to see a path forward that would allow the committee to have that credibility and non-partisan environment it so desperately needs. The committee needs that not only to do its work, but also—as I said, and it is worth repeating—in order to gain the public's trust so the public can begin trusting the work that is being done by the national security agencies. This is a key element, and the government is clearly failing on that front.

[*Translation*]

I want to come back to the two examples I mentioned in the questions I have asked the government since the debate began this morning, specifically regarding the time allocation motion and the bill itself. The issue of ongoing investigations has often been raised. That is one of the restrictions we tried to lift through our amendments.

*Statements by Members*

Indeed, the two most striking examples of investigations into human rights violations that are worthy of examination by a body such as the one this bill proposes are the Air India inquiry and the Afghan detainees investigation.

These are still open investigations, so technically, they are still ongoing. Under this bill, however, the committee of parliamentarians will not have the authority or the power to gather intelligence or conduct investigations. Thus, various pieces of information revealed in the media recently and many questions raised in the House for many years now could never have been raised. That is problematic, because it undermines the committee's mandate.

Once again, this brings us to the public's confidence in the committee and its work, and by extension, in the work of our national security agencies. That is the theme of my speech, as members will soon see.

[*English*]

When the government talks about some of the other issues that we raised in committee, it is important to note that for us, one point that has been clear is the restriction on access to information and the obvious solution is to limit it to cabinet confidence. With respect to everything else, we have to trust these parliamentarians, and the minister alluded to that issue. These parliamentarians will be sworn to secrecy and could potentially face jail time if any of this information is leaked.

The government's approach seems to be one of not trusting the parliamentarians who will sit on this committee and who will literally never be able to talk about any national security issues in the public space. When the government House leader or the Minister of Public Safety stand and tell us not to worry because the committee can use the bully pulpit if ever it feels it is unable to do its work behind closed doors, that is just not true. It is critical for Canadians to understand that.

Moreover, we talk about compromise and the importance of this being a non-partisan process. We hear the government say, "Well, the NDP proposed 13 amendments. The Liberals proposed 16. The Bloc proposed nine. The Green Party proposed two. We adopted two of those amendments so we are in the clear and everything is all right." It is critical that the government look at the broader picture and the public trust.

• (1400)

[*Translation*]

I move, seconded by the member for Jonquière:

That Motion No. 3 be amended by deleting paragraph (a).

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## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*Translation*]

### MARTINE OUELLET

**Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, on Saturday, the Bloc Québécois elected its first female leader. She is here on the Hill as we speak.

Martine Ouellet became the leader of the Bloc Québécois by acclamation.

I can say that she was acclaimed to thunderous applause. Allow me to quote our new leader:

I truly believe this is the dawn of something great, legitimate, and important. [We are both building on the work of those who came before us, and creating something new, something different.] We are breaking the mould in order to better reinvent ourselves...with all the environmental, social, economic, and political challenges around the world, Quebec needs to be independent.

Our adversaries describe us as closed-minded, but it is quite the opposite. [We are open and we have so much to bring to the world stage.]

With Martine Ouellet, the Bloc Québécois is making a strong comeback. That is bad news for federalists, believe me. Welcome to the Bloc, Martine.

\* \* \*

[*English*]

### OPERATION UNIFIER

**Mr. Borys Wrzesnewskij (Etobicoke Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, a decade ago, Russian ambassador to Washington Sergey Kislyak visited Ottawa as Russian deputy foreign minister. Back then, I confronted Kislyak about Russia's cyber-attacks on Estonia and its use of gas supply cut-offs to intimidate Ukraine. Ten years of diplomatic resets and the result is Russia is exponentially more belligerent. Then, Russia's cyber-attacks shut down Estonia. Today, they undermine the integrity of the U.S. presidential elections. Then, Russia punished Ukraine for its pro-western policies with gas shut-offs. Today, in Russia's war against Ukraine, 10,000 have been killed and two million have been displaced.

Diplomatic engagement must include the strength of military conviction. Renewed Operation Unifier is a clear geopolitical deterrent to Russia's revanchist imperial intent.

We are proud of our 200 Canadian soldiers serving in Ukraine.

\* \* \*

### RAISING HOPE

**Mr. David Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, last year, students from Eastend School committed to a We project. Because area families had relied on Ronald McDonald House in the past, they decided to fundraise so others could stay there as well. Their goal was to raise \$30,000.

A core group of students, headed up by Janise Michel, organized the Raising Hope Gala for their small town. They sold tickets and tables. They rounded up 180 auction items. Area restaurants and caterers volunteered their cuisine. Local entertainers and an auctioneer donated their talents.

The auction alone raised \$30,000, with more than \$35,000 coming from sponsors, tickets sales, and donations. The goal was \$30,000, but the total was nearly \$66,000.

*Statements by Members*

Last week, the group went to Ronald McDonald House not just to deliver the cheque, but to serve once more. They served supper to clients of the house.

There are places and people in this world who give more than they take. I am so proud that southwest Saskatchewan is still one of those places.

Check it all out at Raising Hope RMH.

\* \* \*

**NOWRUZ**

**Ms. Joyce Murray (Vancouver Quadra, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, today marks the Persian new year festival of Nowruz, which is celebrated by Persian, central Asian, Kurdish, and Ismaili Canadians. Nowruz has been celebrated since ancient times and serves as a testament to the longevity of the millennia-old Persian culture.

This is a wonderfully colourful occasion when community members come together to mark the first day of spring, an annual victory of the spirit of the sun over cold and darkness and a time when nature renews its vows with life.

The ancient Persians saw this as a symbolic moment that in the constant struggle between good and evil in all dimensions—physical, emotional, moral, and spiritual—good will always prevail.

I hope the community in Vancouver Quadra and Canadians across the country enjoy their gatherings with family and friends around the haft seen and I wish them the greatest of blessings in the new year.

[*Member spoke in Persian as follows:*]

*Noruzetan Pyruz.*

\* \* \*

● (1405)

[*Translation*]

**INTERNATIONAL DAY OF LA FRANCOPHONIE**

**Mr. Robert Aubin (Trois-Rivières, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday in Trois-Rivières we kicked off the fifth International Day of La Francophonie in Mauricie.

This evening, at the Ordre de la Pléiade ceremony, Ottawa will recognize the importance of promoting French and the dialogue of cultures. Today, March 20, the francophonie is celebrated around the world. Having 274 million French speakers is good, but having 274 million French speakers who organize themselves and set up institutions to support their development is better.

The Organisation internationale de la Francophonie, the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie, the Agence universitaire de la Francophonie, and TV5, are just a few of the institutions that come to mind.

The francophonie provides opportunities for cultural exchanges and, increasingly, for economic growth and sharing scientific knowledge, which allow us to envisage an even brighter future.

**INTERNATIONAL DAY OF LA FRANCOPHONIE**

**Mr. Darrell Samson (Sackville—Preston—Chezzetcook, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, today we are celebrating the International Day of La Francophonie.

As my colleague mentioned, more than 276 million people speak French and are celebrating their culture and their language today.

In Canada, French and English are on an equal footing, and I have spent much of my career in education defending linguistic rights.

The strength of our francophone and Acadian minority communities truly resides in education and early childhood programs.

I would also like to point out that the Conseil jeunesse provincial de la Nouvelle-Écosse has created a very interesting initiative entitled “J'aime RIGHT ton accent” to inspire linguistic pride. It plays such an important role in educating the next generation.

I can say that the next generation of French speakers in Nova Scotia and right across the country is exceptional.

\* \* \*

[*English*]

**WORLD'S GREATEST HORSEMAN**

**Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am proud to represent the riding of Foothills, the heart of cattle country where pioneers settled the west relying on work ethic, ingenuity, family, and horsemanship. I am proud to say that this character remains true in Alberta today.

Today I rise in the House to pay tribute to an incredible Albertan who epitomizes that character. A Foothills resident with determination and amazing skill has accomplished what no other Canadian has done before. Earlier this year, Millarville's John Swales made history when he was named the world's greatest horseman.

Swales and his mount, Heza Diamond Spark, bested the top competitors on earth to earn the title of best in the world at the National Reined Cow Horse Association's Celebration of Champions in Fort Worth, Texas.

Albertans know what it takes to be a champion: heart, tenacity, and talent. John Swales is no exception. It is with great pride that I congratulate Alberta's renowned Swales family and, of course, John, on being the first Canadian ever to be named the greatest horseman in the world.

\* \* \*

**NOWRUZ**

**Mr. Majid Jowhari (Richmond Hill, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to welcome Nowruz, the Persian new year and arrival of spring.



*Statements by Members*

Recognized by the Parliament of Canada, Nowruz is a 3,000-year-old tradition celebrated by Iranian, Afghani, Azeri, Turkish, and other cultures rooted in central and western Asia. This festival embodies a wealth of ancient traditions and is a time when families and friends join together at the haft seen table to celebrate new beginnings, exchange gifts, enjoy traditional delicacies, and signify hope for the year ahead. It is an opportunity to renew our collective commitment to harmony, acceptance, and understanding.

This year, Nowruz takes on special meaning as we also celebrate Canada's 150th birthday.

Mr. Speaker, through you, I say to all Canadians celebrating Nowruz:

*[Member spoke in Farsi as follows:]*

*Har Ruz etan Nowrouz, Nowruz etan Pyrouz.*

\* \* \*

• (1410)

*[Translation]*

#### FRENCH LANGUAGE

**Mr. Yves Robillard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the 22nd Dictée Lavalloise was held on Saturday.

I rise today to congratulate those who participated in this family activity. As a former teacher, I am delighted with the success of this dictation, administered simultaneously in Quebec and in France.

I also rise to mark the International Day of La Francophonie and to highlight the language that binds us together around the world and here at home from coast to coast to coast.

I am proud that Canada is committed to promoting the French language and the values of La Francophonie. I am proud to be part of a government that recognizes the importance of the French fact to this day. I am proud to be a francophone.

Have a great and happy International Day of La Francophonie, everyone.

\* \* \*

*[English]*

#### GLOBALMEDIC

**Mr. Dean Allison (Niagara West, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring the attention of the House and Canadians watching at home to the work of the GlobalMedic organization. GlobalMedic's mandate is to save lives by providing short-term, rapid response in the wake of disasters and crises, both here at home and abroad.

I actually participated in an event last December put on by GlobalMedic where we packed "welcome to Canada" kits for newly arrived Syrian refugee families. I want to note that the executive director of GlobalMedic, Rahul Singh, also spent some time in Niagara working with our amazing EMS personnel.

GlobalMedic is now one of the top 10 finalists for Google.org's Impact Challenge contest. It is competing for a \$750,000 Google grant. If successful, the GlobalMedic team would use the money to

expand its innovative RescUAV program in disaster zones to help coordinate humanitarian responders and save lives.

I want to wish the GlobalMedic organization the best of luck in this challenge and great success in all of its future endeavours.

\* \* \*

#### HOLI

**Mr. Ramesh Sangha (Brampton Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to speak about the Holi festival. My colleagues and I recognize the importance of Holi every year on the Hill.

Holi is a festival of colour and love. During the Holi festival, people are drenched in colours while playing Holi with each other. We will often hear the phrase, "Don't mind, because it is Holi." Holi shows thanksgiving and the victory of good over evil. While some choose to worship for spiritual reasons, others have fun, loudly, through music, song, and dance. On that day, they forget their worries and pursue forgiveness. The end goal is sharing love and happiness with friends, family, and the community.

I wish my colleagues, family, and the community a colourful Holi.

\* \* \*

#### HEPATITIS C

**Mr. Michael McLeod (Northwest Territories, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, hepatitis C is a contagious viral infection that ranges in severity from mild illness lasting a few weeks to serious lifelong liver disease. NWT has the highest rate of hepatitis C in Canada. About 250,000 people are infected with the virus in Canada, but most are unaware that they are infected. Many patients do not experience any symptoms until their liver becomes so damaged that they develop cirrhosis, liver cancer, or liver failure.

I encourage the development of a national hepatitis C strategy that includes voluntary testing for everyone born between 1945 and 1965, who make up the majority of cases in Canada, as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Like many diseases, if caught early, there are much better outcomes for patients. If we work together, we can limit the impact of this virus and protect the health of all Canadians.

\* \* \*

#### NOWRUZ

**Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to wish Canadians of Kurdish, Persian, Ismaili, and Central Asian heritage a very happy Nowruz, as this week marks the start of a new year. Coinciding with the launch of spring, Nowruz symbolizes hope for peace, for an end to violence, and for reuniting with friends and family and marks a new beginning for people around the world.

*Statements by Members*

Nowruz is celebrated through a variety of traditions, including by the Kurds, who gather in the countryside to light bonfires, which represent passing from the darkness of the previous year into the light of the next; the Persians, who set the haft-seen table and exchange gifts; and the Central Asians, who plant trees and attend festivities marking the occasion.

I wish a joyful celebration and sweet, sweet success in 2017 to all Canadians observing Nowruz.

[Member spoke in Persian as follows:]

*Noruzetan Pyruz.*

\* \* \*

• (1415)

**COME FROM AWAY**

**Ms. Gudie Hutchings (Long Range Mountains, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, last week we braved a nor'easter to celebrate the people of Gander on Broadway with the musical *Come From Away*. The show moved our Prime Minister and the entire delegation to laughter and tears with the incredible and true story of how people from my province welcomed thousands, with open arms, as a town of not 9,000 people nearly doubled when 38 aircraft landed in just hours on 9/11.

[Translation]

We all know that Canada and the United States have a strong cultural and trade connection. Last Wednesday evening, people from around the world and politicians from the two countries reaffirmed this connection. This magnificent Broadway production reminded us of the importance of acceptance, of kindness, and of welcoming people in need.

[English]

A Canada Council grant gave the writers support in creating this magical production of the world coming to a small town, and it was workshopped at Sheridan College.

I congratulate the cast and crew on their success. I encourage everyone in the House to see it, and most of all, to visit Gander and Newfoundland and Labrador, of course, for a taste of our hospitality.

\* \* \*

**VETERANS AFFAIRS**

**Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, Canada's veterans are not getting the support they deserve. I heard this loud and clear at the Nanaimo Legion 10 town hall earlier this month. Vets said that both past Conservative and Liberal governments are poisoning patriotism and the desire to serve our country. They said that dealing with Veterans Affairs with PTSD is like being given a jigsaw puzzle and turning out the lights.

These young vets want a navigator to help them manage the tangled bureaucracy of PTSD treatment and to make sure that no vet is discharged without medical benefits and a pension in place. They want the lifetime pension for wounded vets restored, as the Liberals promised. The Canadian Forces ombudsman reinforced this in withering testimony to the Senate on March 8, when he said that Canada is not living up to its bargain.

This week's Liberal budget must make this right. Our veterans deserve so much better.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**INTERNATIONAL DAY OF LA FRANCOPHONIE**

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher (Beauport—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île d'Orléans—Charlevoix, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, today is the International Day of La Francophonie. During the week of March 6 to 12, I took part in a leadership workshop and meetings of the Association parlementaire de la Francophonie with other French-speaking women parliamentarians from around the world at the Quebec National Assembly. This was also an opportunity to note just how much the French language acts as a common link across the five continents.

Many French Canadians, including Céline Dion and Xavier Dolan, have proven that it is possible to be successful internationally in French, just as Alain Bouchard, the founder of the Couche-Tard convenience store chain, has done in the business world.

It is the duty of all parliamentarians to ensure that the French language is respected, maintained, and continually protected. We all need to rise above party politics on this matter.

To the francophones of Quebec, of Canada, and the entire world, and to everyone who chooses to speak French, I say happy International Day of La Francophonie.

\* \* \*

**INTERNATIONAL DAY OF LA FRANCOPHONIE**

**Hon. Denis Paradis (Brome—Missisquoi, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as the chair of the Standing Committee on Official Languages, I wish everyone a wonderful International Day of La Francophonie.

I would like to point out the importance of the Francophonie in Canada and the world. Canada is the second-largest French-speaking member of the international Francophonie with almost 10 million Canadians who speak our beautiful and rich language in every province.

Yves Duteil said it so well in his song *La langue de chez nous*:

It is a beautiful language with splendid words  
whose history can be traced in its variations

...

It built bridges across the Atlantic  
It left its home for another land  
And like a swallow transported by the spring  
It returns to sing of its sorrows and hopes

It tells us that in that far off country of snow  
It faced the winds blowing from all directions  
To impose its words even in the schools  
And that our own language is still spoken there

It is a beautiful language to those who know how to defend it  
It offers treasures of untold richness  
The words we lacked to be able to understand one another  
And the strength required to live in harmony

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## ORAL QUESTIONS

• (1420)

[*Translation*]

### THE BUDGET

**Hon. Denis Lebel (Lac-Saint-Jean, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, when we spend more money than we are taking in that is called a deficit in both of Canada's official languages.

This government has lost control of spending and now it needs to create new revenues or cut credits for families. I can hardly wait for Wednesday's budget to see what cuts Canadian families will have to endure after losing their tax credits for sports and culture.

What new cuts will we see? What will these families be in for when they wake up Thursday morning after the budget is brought down?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, we will present a budget that will create growth for the middle class, which has been our focus from the beginning. Last year, we lowered taxes for the middle class and we increased them for the wealthiest 1%. My colleague's party voted against that tax cut for the middle class.

[*English*]

**Hon. Denis Lebel (Lac-Saint-Jean, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we have voted against a deficit. That is what we have done.

We see that the new American administration will lower taxes on small businesses. On this side of the border, it will create new challenges for our Canadian small businesses. Can they stay competitive under the new circumstances?

Will the Prime Minister lower taxes on Canadian small businesses, exactly like he promised, in order to keep them competitive in the American economy and with our American neighbours and to help them create jobs?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, a common challenge we face in North America is to create growth for the middle class. That is what we have been focused on for a year and a half. That is how we put more money in the pockets

### Oral Questions

of the middle class—by lowering taxes on the middle class and raising taxes on the wealthiest 1%.

I would remind you, Mr. Speaker, and all others in the House, that the Conservative Party voted against lowering taxes on the middle class and raising them on the wealthiest 1%. It is a shame.

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Denis Lebel (Lac-Saint-Jean, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, just for that alone, the cost was \$2 billion more than what they had planned. This goes to show to what extent they failed to anticipate how much it would cost, and it is just one example.

To avoid losing face, they have reached the point of wanting to sell airports. It is as if a family were to sell their fridge and stove to pay off their credit card. That makes no sense.

Will we see this in Thursday's budget? Will we be selling off Canadian airports at a discount so that the Prime Minister can save face?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, the hon. member, like all Canadians, will see that, with this budget, we will be promoting the growth of the middle class and investing in the future of our country. That is what Canadians expect.

We made the choice to invest in our communities, to invest in infrastructure and to invest in the growth of the middle class. We rose to the occasion by implementing the Canada child benefit, which gives more money to nine out of ten families, while eliminating benefits for the wealthiest families. The Conservative Party voted against the Canada child benefit.

\* \* \*

[*English*]

### STANDING ORDERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

**Hon. Candice Bergen (Portage—Lisgar, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we are seeing a troubling pattern established with these Liberals. They are shutting down debate, they are ramming through legislation, and we have a Prime Minister who does not want to answer questions directly on his ethical lapses. Now we find out that he only actually wants to be here one day a week to answer questions. That is not accountability.

Does the Prime Minister commit that no changes will be made to the Standing Orders unless he has agreement from all parties in this House?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians elected a government with an ambitious plan for change, for investing in the middle class and for investing in the future of this country, and that is exactly what we are busy delivering.

We are putting forward legislation that lowered taxes on the middle class and raised them on the wealthiest 1% and put forward a Canada child benefit that gives more money to nine out of 10 Canadian families.

*Oral Questions*

We have an awful lot we need to get done for Canadians to grow the middle class after 10 years of neglect by the previous government, that wanted to give tax benefits to the richest Canadians. That is why Conservatives voted against the Canada child benefit and lowering taxes on the middle class. Unfortunately, that is more of what we are going to see—

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

• (1425)

**The Speaker:** I would remind hon. colleagues that one person at a time has the floor. Now the hon. opposition House leader has it.

**Hon. Candice Bergen (Portage—Lisgar, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I was asking the Prime Minister about the Standing Orders changes. If he wants to be accountable, he needs to answer some of these questions directly.

We now find out that the Liberals want to shut down this House and only have it open four days a week. Canadians have to work five days a week. The Liberals should as well.

Again, does the Prime Minister commit that if any changes are to be made to the Standing Orders, he will have agreement from all parties in this House? Yes or no.

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians elected a government with a big idea of how we were going to help Canadians. That is exactly what we are going to do. We are always looking for ways to make the workings of the House more efficient, better able to serve Canadians, both in their ridings and in Ottawa. We are happy to open a discussion about whether we should make Fridays a full day of work, instead of the half day that the Conservatives seem to want.

We are happy to do more work for Canadians. Let us just figure out the best way to do it.

\* \* \*

**INFRASTRUCTURE**

**Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberals' plan for infrastructure includes a massive privatization bank that could double the cost of infrastructure to Canadian taxpayers. Their plan also seems to include the privatization of Canadian airports. I am wondering if the Prime Minister could show Canadians exactly where in the Liberal election platform this was ever mentioned.

Since he has no mandate to do so, will the Prime Minister guarantee that he will not privatize Canadian airports?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the infrastructure bank was a campaign commitment that we campaigned on to demonstrate the fact that we understood there was room for global investment of private capital in Canadian infrastructure. It is a way of leveraging more money to build things like public transit, like power grids, the kinds of things that Canadians need more of. These are investments we are willing to make.

As for more details, we are looking forward to sharing those with all Canadians on Wednesday when we present our plan to continue to grow the middle class in the country.

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has not answered the question because he cannot do so. He does not know where to find this answer in his election promises.

Where in their platform did the Liberals promise to privatize airports? Nowhere. They never talked about it. Airport privatization is no small detail. It will increase fees for airline passengers across Canada.

Either the Prime Minister is making it up as he goes or he always intended to privatize airports. Which one is it?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member will know, as all Canadians will, how we are going to create growth for the middle class by investing in our future and in training.

The hon. member will see just how willing we are to invest in the future of this country by giving more money to the middle class, which the hon. member voted against when he refused to vote for our bill to increase taxes for the wealthy and lower them for the middle class.

\* \* \*

**INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS**

**Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, that is not true and he knows it. We voted for that.

[*English*]

The Prime Minister also committed to a nation-to-nation relationship with indigenous peoples and to right historic wrongs. The term “nation-to-nation” is not a political slogan. It must mean dealing as equals and an awareness of past betrayals. However, the Liberals argue that they are not even bound by the decisions of the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal.

How can the Prime Minister claim to believe in a nation-to-nation relationship when he refuses to end discrimination against first nations children and when he continues to fight them in court?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, no relationship is more important to this government than the one with indigenous peoples. That is why we put forward historic amounts of money, \$8.4 billion in last year's budget, to start the long work of reconciliation.

We agree that there is much more to be done, but we know that whether it is eliminating long-term drinking water advisories, boil water advisories, or making sure that thousands of indigenous Canadians started school last September in new schools, we are making concrete differences in the lives of indigenous Canadians, young and old.

• (1430)

### FINANCE

**Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP):** The truth is that he is fighting first nations children in court, Mr. Speaker. That is what he is doing.

[Translation]

The Liberals also promised that they would put an end to the tax loophole involving stock options for CEOs, which benefits only the rich.

Two weeks ago, the Liberals voted for an NDP motion that specifically called for that loophole to be ended. If the Liberals are refusing to do so now, they will have misled the public and the House.

Can the Prime Minister therefore guarantee that, in this budget, he will put an end to this tax loophole that benefits only the wealthiest in our society?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our first act in government was to lower taxes for the middle class and to raise them for the wealthiest 1%.

The hon. member and his party voted against that measure that was designed to reduce taxes for the middle class. The fact is that, on Wednesday, everyone will see a budget focused on the growth of the middle class and on the assistance that Canadians so sorely need after 10 years of Conservative government.

\* \* \*

### TAXATION

**Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, 10 years of Conservative government resulted in a budget surplus of \$2.9 billion. I would like to thank the Prime Minister for giving me the opportunity to remind the House about this truth that is so dear to Canadians.

Speaking of numbers, the government will table its budget 50 hours from now. People are worried because they do not trust the government, especially the Prime Minister. We have questioned the Prime Minister non-stop about whether he would be increasing taxes on health and dental insurance plans. He finally said no, and six days later, he voted contrary to his own words.

Can the Prime Minister assure Canadians that they will not have to pay—

**The Speaker:** Order, please.

The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for his question.

Our government is committed to investing in the middle class, in people, and in the economy. It was this government that lowered taxes for the middle class. That is the first thing we did when we took power. We also increased taxes for the wealthy.

### Oral Questions

We also created the Canada child benefit, which has helped nine out of ten families to raise their children. We have a plan, and we will continue to move forward. We are pleased.

**Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, many will recall the sad day barely two years ago when the current Prime Minister said that, as far as he was concerned, small businesses were a way to avoid paying taxes. Perhaps that is true for him. However, for those who are creating jobs and wealth, our entrepreneurs, small businesses are everything but that.

The reality that comes with the new American administration is that American business owners are going to pay lower taxes.

Will the Prime Minister commit, through the upcoming budget, to ensuring that our entrepreneurs can compete with their American competitors on a level playing field?

**Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, once again, I thank my colleague for his question. Canada is well positioned on the global stage. We have a very competitive tax environment compared to the United States and other OECD countries.

People looking to invest in Canada also benefit from a very skilled and well-educated population. We will continue with our plan to invest in skills, innovation, and productivity in order to ensure that we can preserve and develop these advantages here in Canada.

\* \* \*

[English]

### FINANCE

**Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, in the first year alone, Liberal “deliverology” has failed to deliver good-paying jobs, and it was not for lack of funds. The Liberals have shot past their \$10 billion modest deficits and they have no credible plan to get us back to black. Worse yet, the term “balanced budget” has now become a dirty word for the Minister of Finance, who refuses to ever use it. Why is that? Why has the Liberal government abandoned its promise to return to a balanced budget in 2019?

**Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to rise in the House today to speak about the wonderful things our government has done. Since we formed government, in the past six months we have created over 220,000 full-time jobs. When we look at the unemployment rate, it has gone down from 7% to 6.6%.

Our plan is working and we are going to continue to move forward.

*Oral Questions*

●(1435)

**SMALL BUSINESS**

**Hon. Alice Wong (Richmond Centre, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has said that small businesses are just there to help rich people avoid taxes. Clearly, he has never met the hard-working entrepreneurs who actually own small businesses across our nation. It seems he will continue the attack on these middle-class families in the upcoming budget.

When will the Prime Minister end his attack on small businesses?

**Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this government recognizes the important work that small business owners do and the contributions they make to our economy. Our endeavour will always be to help them be more productive, more innovative, and export oriented.

This government will continue to take a whole-of-government approach to ensure that we open up markets for 99% of businesses, which are small businesses. We will continue to work very hard for them.

\* \* \*

**ETHICS**

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has lived his first year in office like the son of a Monaco billionaire. He has travelled. He has partied with celebrities and thrown money at everyone and everything. It all has gone on the national credit card.

Now, to pay the bill, he is nickel and diming small businesses and working people, with higher taxes on work, hiring, kids sports and fuel, name it.

In this week's budget will the Prime Minister finally stop the binge before he runs out of other people's money?

**Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government will continue to build on the commitment to help middle-class Canadians and those working hard to join it.

The first thing this government did when we came to office was lower taxes for middle-class Canadians and we increased them for the wealthy 1%.

The other action this government took was putting in place a very generous Canada child benefit program to help hundreds and thousands of children get out of poverty.

We have also taken some steps to help our seniors by increasing the guaranteed income supplement for low income seniors by 10%.

Our focus is on middle-class Canadians, and we will continue to work for them.

\* \* \*

**SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, will the Liberals admit that they do not know what the middle class is? However, this week the Minister of Families, Children and Social

Development produced a diagram full of laser beams to clarify. In it, growth beams inclusive to the middle class, which returns an engine back to growth that is transformed into expectation/mobility that is sent over to trust, which reciprocates with investment/human and physical capital. Finally, trust feeds the middle class that beams support over to trust.

Do the Liberals need Fridays off so they can continue to “deliverologize” more synergistic laser beams like these ones?

**Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I think all members of the House are proud to notice the interest of our colleague in real facts: facts around the decrease in middle-class income taxes, while increasing taxes for the top 1% of Canadians; facts around 900,000 seniors getting up to \$1,000 more in guaranteed income supplements because we care about vulnerable seniors; and facts around the major impact that the Canada child benefit is having across the families of six million children in Canada.

\* \* \*

**FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS**

**Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, hard-working Canadians are struggling to eke out a living, worried about growing household debt, but now we know our own banks are working against us by pressuring Canadians into even more debt and services they do not need.

How did the Financial Consumer Agency of Canada fail to notice this behaviour by the big banks? Why have we heard nothing from the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions? Will the minister direct a joint investigation into the marketing and sales practices of Canada's banks, yes or no?

**Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians deserve strong financial consumer protections that meet their needs. Our government expects that all financial institutions adhere to the highest standards when it comes to their consumer protection obligations.

The Financial Consumer Agency of Canada is launching an industry review of the matter of all sales of banks' practices. I have full confidence that the review will be thorough and that the agency will use all tools at its disposal to investigate and to address any non-compliance with the law.

[Translation]

**Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the evidence and the stories keep piling up; something is indeed rotten in the state of Canada's banks.

High-pressure sales, toxic financial products, lack of consent, no disclosure, and even lies: that is how our banks are treating us, as household debt rises to a peak. Shareholders rule and to hell with the customers!

*Oral Questions*

Is the Liberal government going to respond? Is the Liberal government going to support the NDP motion asking for a parliamentary inquiry on the questionable practices of Canadian banks?

● (1440)

**Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my thanks to my colleague for his question.

Canadians deserve the strongest consumer protection legislation and fiscal plans. Our government expects all financial institutions to conform to the highest standards. The Financial Consumer Agency of Canada is launching an investigation into the banks' sales practices. I have complete confidence that the agency will use its tools to deal with the situation.

\* \* \*

[English]

**STANDING ORDERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS**

**Mr. Mark Strahl (Chilliwack—Hope, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberals are scheming to dramatically change the rules of the House to serve their own partisan interests. They want to shut the place down on Fridays, taking a day off at the same time as thousands of Canadian workers have been laid off. The Prime Minister only wants to have to show up here once a week for question period. These changes will diminish Parliament and greatly reduce government accountability.

Will the Liberals respect parliamentary precedent and only proceed with those changes that all parties will agree to, or will they ram through these changes to rig the system in their favour?

**Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this government recognizes the important work that the members of Parliament do in the House and in their constituencies. As the member of Parliament for the riding of Waterloo, I can assure all members that when I return to the riding, I continue working hard for my constituents. I cannot speak for the member opposite, but I am sure that most members would be doing the same thing, and I would encourage that to be the case.

We have released a discussion paper, a discussion, a conversation, to ask the committee to actually broaden the scope of the study to consider modernizing this place, as we committed to Canadians.

[Translation]

**Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is shameful to cast doubt upon my colleague's work.

The Leader of the Government in the House of Commons has, on the sly, released a document containing proposals for modernizing the work of the House. Shortly thereafter, a notice of motion along the same lines was introduced at the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs.

Can the chair of the committee, the hon. member for Yukon, inform us when that study will take place? Can he assure us that the committee meetings will not be held in camera? Will he abide by the Prime Minister's notions of transparency and sunny ways?

[English]

**Hon. Larry Bagnell (Yukon, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as the member knows, the committee is the master of its own destiny. It has a subcommittee that decides the procedure and the timing. The member knows what is in the motion on the timing for improving the operation of the House, and it will be up to the committee to decide how it arranges the meetings to do that.

**Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is a long-standing practice that no major changes to the Standing Orders be adopted without the consent of all parties. To pick one example among many, the Chrétien government established a special committee on House of Commons procedures. That committee produced six unanimous reports over its two-year lifetime. Therefore, can the chair of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs tell the House, will his committee accept the principle of unanimity with respect to changes to the Standing Orders?

**Hon. Larry Bagnell (Yukon, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the committee, as I said before, is in charge of its own procedures, in charge of its own precedents, in charge of its own way of dealing with different motions. The committee will decide that and proceed in that manner.

**Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, less than two hours after the proposals and Standing Orders were made public, a Liberal MP put forward a motion to, one, force the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs to treat the proposals as a single omnibus measure, and two, impose draconian deadlines in reporting back to the House—in other words, to impose closure.

It appears the Liberals are trying to ram through this motion at a secret in camera meeting planned for 11 a.m. tomorrow. My question is for the chair of the committee. Will the closure motion be scheduled for discussion at tomorrow's meeting, and will that meeting be held in camera or in public?

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**The Speaker:** Order. If members want to hear the answer, they ought to listen, or perhaps we will go on to the next question.

Let us hear the answer then. The hon. member for Yukon.

● (1445)

**Hon. Larry Bagnell (Yukon, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the member is very experienced in committee operations and knows that the committee itself makes those decisions.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS**

**Mr. Romeo Saganash (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the national inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women and girls was launched last year. However, I believe that actions speak louder than words. To date, the commissioners have not even met with the families of the missing and murdered women. Today we learned that the commission has the names of only 90 participants. Why?

*Oral Questions*

Why has the process not been announced yet? Why do the victims' families have to find the information themselves? The minister must ensure that all victims' families will be heard.

**Hon. Carolyn Bennett (Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government is absolutely determined to address this national tragedy. We have provided the commission with many resources, including a database that contains hundreds of names.

We are also actively working with the commission to ensure that it has the necessary tools to contact these people and organizations.

Our government will continue to provide information and advice to the commission with respect to its current commitments—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Nanaimo—Ladysmith.

[*English*]

**Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the families of murdered and missing indigenous women and girls want justice, but they also want to be heard. Shockingly, the inquiry commission only lists 90 victims, and the government is refusing to provide additional names. The Native Women's Association of Canada has identified 4,000 victims, and we know that might be only the tip of the iceberg. With hearings scheduled in just eight weeks, is the government blocking information to the inquiry? Why is it not doing everything in its power so that all families can be heard?

**Hon. Carolyn Bennett (Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in fact, we are absolutely not blocking anything. We will be doing everything in our power to get it the information. The Native Women's Association, the AFN, ITK, and all of the organizations are working in close collaboration with the commission, and the families will be heard.

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

**INFRASTRUCTURE**

**Mr. Rémi Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, since the start of 2017 our government has announced many drinking water and waste water treatment projects.

As a result of the bilateral agreement signed with Quebec last summer, I have announced 12 different projects in 10 municipalities in the Lower St. Lawrence worth more than \$20 million.

Can the Minister of Infrastructure provide us with details of the program?

[*English*]

**Hon. Amarjeet Sohi (Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank all of my hon. colleagues from the province of Quebec for their hard work in advocating for infrastructure projects for their communities. Over the last month, we have announced 89 clean water and waste water projects worth over \$390 million in combined investment funding in four regions across Quebec. These projects will ensure that Quebec residents have access to a clean and reliable water source. We look forward to sharing similar good news with other regions of Quebec very soon.

**IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP**

**Hon. Michelle Rempel (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we now know just how disastrous the Liberals' decision to cave to pressure from their corporate friends and lift the Mexican visa requirement actually was. Last month saw a 2500% increase in refugee claims from Mexico. The cost to taxpayers of false refugee claims from Mexico was the reason our Conservative government implemented the visa requirement in the first place. With so many people out of work, when will the Liberals reinstate the visa requirement?

**Hon. Ahmed Hussen (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is very rich for that member, that government, and that previous party to bring up the Mexico visa lift. They considerably damaged our relationship with Mexico, which we are responsibly rebuilding and strengthening. The Mexican visa lift will lead to lasting economic benefits for Canada, with more tourists and more legitimate travellers. We have already seen that impact, with triple the number of legitimate travellers into Canada. This will continue to create economic benefits for our country. We will work closely with Mexican officials to address any risks to this issue, and we will ensure its success.

● (1450)

**Hon. Michelle Rempel (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, our government responsibly prevented taxpayers from paying a quarter of a billion dollars in false refugee claims. Therefore, with taxpayers on the hook for this giant increase in refugee claims and a flood of illegal migrants at the American border, the public safety minister's response last week was, "Maybe we should line up the RCMP at the border, they should all link arms and shoo people away, or maybe [use] fire hoses or whatever..." I am serious. When are the Liberals going to stop treating this like a joke?

**Hon. Ahmed Hussen (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, if the member opposite and the party opposite are against a threefold increase in legitimate Mexican travellers to Canada, then they are welcome to express that sentiment.

We are working very hard to strengthen and continue to expand on the strong bilateral relationship with Mexico, which was damaged considerably by the party opposite when it was in government. We have mechanisms in place and we are working very closely with Mexican officials to address any risks related to the visa lift. We have already witnessed lasting economic benefits from the visa lift.



*Oral Questions***GOVERNMENT APPOINTMENTS**

**Hon. Peter Kent (Thornhill, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians are still waiting for answers on the logic and manner of Stéphane Dion's extraordinarily clumsy diplomatic appointments. Canada's professional diplomats, past and present, at headquarters and abroad, are dismayed and discouraged. Mr. Dion's status in Brussels will diminish the rank and the authority of the ambassador in place. Mr. Dion's status with Germany, as a still uninvited special adviser, is a diplomatic faux pas. For a ministerial housecleaning so long in the works, why this diplomatic train wreck?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, let me remind my hon. colleague of what the leader of his party said when Stéphane left the House. She described him as a Canadian who understood the issues in minute detail and was prepared to vigorously defend his positions.

As for the orders in council, it was a procedural step, and each appointee will receive two orders in council.

The Prime Minister and I heard in Europe a couple of weeks ago of the highest respect for Mr. Dion. We are honoured to have him represent us.

**Hon. Peter Kent (Thornhill, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the bungling of Mr. Dion's diplomatic consolation prizes reflects badly not only on the Liberal government, not only with the offended EU and German host countries, but the broader international community.

What else have the Liberals forgotten to do? Are there loose ends as well with regard to Mr. Dion's dual citizenship?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, speaking on behalf of our diplomats and our fine ambassadors, to be an ambassador serving Canada around the world is no consolation prize. It is one of the highest honours that we can confer on a Canadian.

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**SOFTWOOD LUMBER**

**Ms. Tracey Ramsey (Essex, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, while the Liberals claimed that Canada would not be the target of Trump's trade policies, it is now clear that the U.S. wants to get tough on softwood lumber. Last week, the U.S. trade representative nominee said that softwood lumber is at the top of his list and that the U.S. industry wants quotas on Canadian imports. Any new deal must allow small producers to export and provide flexibility for the provinces. Without a deal, Canada's softwood lumber sector is braced for punishing duties of 25% or more.

Will the Liberals support the sector with loan guarantees and assistance for workers and communities?

**Hon. Jim Carr (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we realize how important the forestry sector is to Canada, to all regions of the country. We have begun to have very good conversations with our counterparts in the provinces that might be affected by American action. We are certain that we will offer a coordinated way of protecting the jobs that are of interest not only to us but to the entire country.

• (1455)

[Translation]

**CANADIAN HERITAGE**

**Mr. Pierre Nantel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, last week the closure of the HMV stores led to the bankruptcy of the distributor DEP, which has put an abrupt stop to the marketing of Quebec artists.

From Vincent Vallières to the Montreal Symphony Orchestra and Florence K, DEP's bankruptcy seems to be the latest sign of the collapse of Quebec's recording industry and a new source of worry about Canadian content.

Canada must move swiftly to regulate all the new online providers, whether they are based in Montreal, Los Angeles, or some other tax haven.

Can the minister tell us what she has done to ensure that these new players contribute to our ecosystem and to the same tax system as everyone else?

**Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his important question and his interest in this file.

Of course, we launched public consultations last year to consider all the repercussions that digital services have on the entire Canadian cultural ecosystem.

In 2017, I will have the opportunity to introduce some major changes in order to address some of the issues that were raised by my colleague.

\* \* \*

[English]

**GOVERNMENT SPENDING**

**Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has already spent five times what the previous government spent on polling, and this latest announcement of increased spending on weekly polling is just another example of the Liberal government's wasteful spending in its lust to get re-elected. Cash for access, blurring the lines between government and party business, and now weekly calls to see how Canadians are reacting to the latest broken promise, ethics scandal, and bad government policy.

When will the Liberals quit spending taxpayers' money on polling to see if Canadians are buying their nonsense?

**Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this government made a commitment to work hard for middle-class Canadians and those working hard to join them. That is exactly why we lowered taxes on middle-class Canadians and increased taxes on the wealthiest 1% of Canadians.

This government has had unprecedented levels of public consultation to ensure that Canadians can interact and communicate with it. We will continue to listen to them and to respond to the very real challenges they are facing.

*Oral Questions*

[Translation]

**Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, another outrageous expense by the Liberals has come to light. Recently, the media are reporting that the Liberal government spent \$2.5 million in the last year in order to find out what to do.

Can this Prime Minister tell us why, in just 16 months, he spent more on polling Canadians than the Conservative government did in the previous decade?

**Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government uses a number of methods to better understand Canadians' views and to identify their needs and expectations.

The research is shared with all departments and allows us to be constantly listening to Canadians on various subjects and priorities that affect their daily lives.

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[English]

**PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE**

**Mr. Glen Motz (Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner by-election took place on October 24, 2016. We know that the Prime Minister used government aircraft and government staff while he was campaigning in that by-election. Last week it was revealed that the Prime Minister also used the non-partisan Privy Council Office and its staff to support those same campaign events.

Will the Prime Minister confirm that he is using Privy Council Office resources to again help campaign in the upcoming five by-elections?

**Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is important for members to know, and I am sure they will support, that the Prime Minister must always be in a position to carry out official government duties. The Prime Minister is always in contact with his office and is routinely provided with briefing materials during all travel, domestically and internationally, whether on personal or government business.

The Prime Minister is prepared in advance of all events and is afforded the same support as previous prime ministers.

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[Translation]

**INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

**Ms. Anju Dhillon (Dorval—Lachine—LaSalle, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan and Yemen are faced with a terrible crisis affecting food and nutrition. The UN recently even declared it to be the worst humanitarian crisis since 1945. Last Friday, Canada announced funds to assist the poorest and most vulnerable of those affected by the crisis.

Can the Minister of International Development and La Francophonie inform the House of the details of this major announcement?

● (1500)

**Hon. Marie-Claude Bibeau (Minister of International Development and La Francophonie, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from Dorval—Lachine—LaSalle for her interest in the matter.

Our government is indeed very concerned by the famine in Yemen, South Sudan, Nigeria and Somalia. We recently announced a contribution of \$120 million to provide food, drinking water and health care for the 20 million people suffering from acute malnutrition. We are also insisting that the warring parties ensure full, unhindered access for humanitarian workers.

\* \* \*

[English]

**FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

**Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, violent intentions in Ukraine are on the rise with an increase in violations of the Minsk peace agreements. Unfortunately, the Liberal support for Ukraine is on the decline.

Extending our Conservative military mission in Ukraine is welcome, but there is more that Canada can offer. The Liberals have already cancelled supplies of radar satellite images, they refuse to sign the defence co-operation agreement, and they have backed down from their campaign promise to implement Magnitsky-style sanctions on corrupt foreign officials.

Will the Liberals stop disappointing our Ukrainian allies and respect the request for providing lethal defensive weapons?

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government stands shoulder to shoulder with Ukraine. With our military planners and whole-of-government approach, we consult with our allies, the U.K. and the U.S., in making sure that we have the right support.

Operation Unifier is just one portion of that. We also take a look at the wider support that we have provided, such as our support with Operation Reassurance; sending troops into Latvia, which sends a strong message to Russia; our air policing that we will be doing; and the frigate that we have there. In totality, this sends an extremely strong message to Russia.

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**FISHERIES AND OCEANS**

**Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, last Thursday the Liberals released the supposed recovery plan for the southern resident killer whales, but it is one that includes no action. Only 78 southern residents still remain, and even the National Energy Board report on Kinder Morgan found that extinction is the likely outcome from a major oil spill.

*Oral Questions*

Why have the Liberals failed to reinstate funding for Straitwatch, the on-the-water orca monitoring program? Why have they failed to fund or even consider proposals from stakeholders to protect this endangered species, or, on the current Prime Minister's watch, will Canadians see the extinction of B.C.'s southern resident orcas?

**Mr. Terry Beech (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government is fully committed to the protection and recovery of our iconic resident killer whale population, and we will continue to work to better understand the threats to this population.

The proposed action plan for the northern and southern resident killer whale in Canada was released last summer for public consultation, and we now have the finalized report. I am happy to share that many of the recovery actions that are identified in the killer whale recovery strategy and action plan are already under way.

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**AIR TRANSPORTATION**

**Mr. Gagan Sikand (Mississauga—Streetsville, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, aviation safety is something all Canadians care about. With Pearson airport close to my riding, recent incidents involving drones entering restricted air space and flying close to airplanes are concerning my constituents of Mississauga—Streetsville.

Can the minister please update Canadians on the actions the government is taking in order to improve aviation safety?

**Hon. Marc Garneau (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, last week we announced government measures to make recreational drone flying safer, both in the skies as well as on the ground.

We put in place some measures that took effect immediately last Thursday. These are interim measures, until such time as we come out later this year with permanent measures to make our skies and the ground safer.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT**

**Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, with every passing day more people are criticizing the Liberals for deciding to purchase 18 outdated Super Hornets.

Now, Jean Boyle, a former general and the former vice president of international business at Boeing when the Super Hornet was being developed, is saying that NORAD will use its best planes, either the F-35 or the F-22, and not fourth generation jets like the Super Hornet, to protect the North.

Why, then, are the Liberals bent on buying outdated planes at \$300 million apiece if they will not be used?

**Mr. Steven MacKinnon (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, for the first time in 10 years, our soldiers can expect to put out to sea on new vessels and to fly into the skies in new planes. We are very proud to be supplying the Canadian Armed Forces with new equipment.

We have begun discussions with our partners in the United States and we will rise to the challenge for our Canadian Armed Forces.

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● (1505)

**JUSTICE**

**Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, today in the Superior Court of Quebec begins the court challenge of Bill 99, the law that recognizes the right of the people of Quebec to independence.

Forcing Quebec to defend a basic principle of democracy is where Ottawa's federalism has taken us. The federal government, under Stephen Harper, decided to involve itself in the case.

Will the government withdraw from these proceedings and finally recognize Quebec's right to self-determination?

[English]

**Hon. Jody Wilson-Raybould (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to upholding our constitutional values and to upholding co-operative federalism.

Under the previous government, Canada was added by Mr. Henderson as a third party to proceedings. As such, we are obligated to appear and participate in proceedings. Our government believes that Bill 99 is constitutional insofar as it is interpreted in a way that is consistent with the Canadian Constitution and within the jurisdiction of the legislature of Quebec.

It would be inappropriate for me to comment further, as this matter is before the courts.

[Translation]

**Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, as far as I know, the current government is not bound by the commitments of the former government.

Quebeckers from all walks of life, not just separatists, have denounced Ottawa's involvement in this case. The National Assembly even passed a unanimous motion, but it seems the Liberals do not give a damn about that, just as Stephen Harper did not give a damn. They are supporting those who question Quebec's right to independence, but they still expect us to believe that Ottawa is not trying to imprison Quebec in Canada.

Will the federal government withdraw from the legal challenge of Bill 99, yes or no?

[English]

**Hon. Jody Wilson-Raybould (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, again I am happy to stand up and say our government is committed to upholding constitutional values and to ensuring and upholding co-operative federalism.

As this matter is before the court, it would be inappropriate for me to comment further.

*Routine Proceedings*

[Translation]

**HEALTH**

**Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, after shutting Quebec out by negotiating with the small provinces one at a time—the night of the long scalpels—and after resorting to predatory federalism, the Minister of Health and her colleagues are patting each other on the back and saying, “Way to go, man, we got Quebec.”

Instead of arrogantly giving high-fives, will the minister apologize to the patients of Quebec, who will be the first victims of the cuts to federal contributions?

**Hon. Jane Philpott (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, over the past few months, I have had very good discussions with all my provincial counterparts, including the Quebec health minister. We were very pleased to have reached new agreements last week.

For Quebec, this means \$2.5 billion in new investments in mental health and home care, which are things that Quebec wants to invest in. That is good news, and that is why we gave each other a high-five.

\* \* \*

[English]

**PRESENCE IN GALLERY**

**The Speaker:** I would like to draw to the attention of hon. members the presence in the gallery of His Excellency Lubomír Zaorálek, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear!

\* \* \*

**POINTS OF ORDER**

ORAL QUESTIONS

**Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, during question period, the member for Outremont said that his party voted in favour of Bill C-2. I know that no member of the House would want to mislead Canadians, which is why I am tabling, in both official languages, excerpts from *Hansard* of September 20, 2016, which shows the member for Outremont and others from his party voting against the middle-class tax cut at third reading in the House.

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**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

• (1510)

[English]

**FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

**Mr. Omar Alghabra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs (Consular Affairs), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and pursuant to Standing Order 32(2), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the treaties entitled “Amendments to Appendices I and II of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora”, adopted at Johannesburg from September 24 to

October 5, 2016; “Amendments to Appendix III of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora”, notified on February 9, 2016, August 23, 2016, and October 5, 2016; “Convention between Canada and the Republic of Madagascar for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income”, done at Antananarivo on November 24, 2016; and “Protocol Amending the Agreement on Air Transport between Canada and the European Community and its Member States, to take Account of the Accession of the European Union of the Republic of Croatia”, done at Brussels on January 27, 2017.

An explanatory memorandum is included with each treaty.

\* \* \*

**GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS**

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's responses to 34 petitions.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE**

JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

**Mr. Anthony Housefather (Mount Royal, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 10th report of the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights in relation to Bill C-305, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (mischief). The committee has studied the bill and has decided to report the bill back to the House with amendments.

[English]

STATUS OF WOMEN

**Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 7th report of the Standing Committee on Status of Women, entitled “Taking Action to End Violence Against Young Women and Girls in Canada”.

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

**Mrs. Karen Vecchio (Elgin—Middlesex—London, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, on behalf of Her Majesty's loyal opposition, I am proud to present a supplementary opinion regarding the status of women study. Important evidence, such as the effects of violence, pornography and the normalization of violence, the models of e-safety in Canada and elsewhere, as well as strong sentencing for perpetrators of sexual assault were things we did not find, which were needed for the recommendations. They were not sought, and we did not have enough information on those, so we have put that in this.

We are also very proud of the private member's bill, Bill C-337, put forward by our leader, which we believe will have a very positive effect on ongoing things with respect to sexual violence.

*Routine Proceedings*

● (1515)

## FISHERIES AND OCEANS

**Mr. Scott Simms (Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is my honour and privilege to present, in both official languages, the 10th report of the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans in relation to a motion adopted by the committee on Thursday, February 25, 2016, by my hon. colleague, the member for Avalon. It is “Newfoundland and Labrador’s Northern Cod Fishery: Charting a new sustainable future”.

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

I wish to thank all members of the committee for their hard work and their spirit of collegiality, as it was a unanimous report. I also wish to extend my thanks to the dedicated staff of the committee.

[*Translation*]

## PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

**Hon. Larry Bagnell (Yukon, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 27th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, entitled, “A Second Interim Report in Response to the Chief Electoral Officer’s Recommendations for Legislative Reforms Following the 42nd General Election”.

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

[*English*]

At this time, I would like to thank Anne Lawson, general counsel and senior director at Elections Canada, and all her staff, who supported the committee with hundreds of hours; the clerk; and the researcher from the Library of Parliament.

This report has major changes to the Elections Act. This is the second report we have put in, and it will make future elections run more smoothly. I want to compliment the members from all parties who worked very hard to come up with this unanimous report.

\* \* \*

## EXCISE TAX ACT

**Mr. Mark Warawa (Langley—Aldergrove, CPC)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-342, an act to amend the Excise Tax Act (carbon levy).

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am so honoured to present in this Parliament my private member’s bill. We will begin debate next month on it. I would like to thank the hard-working member for North Okanagan—Shuswap. It turned out that we were both very interested in the same important issue. The issue is that Canadians are willing to pay their fair share of taxes, but Canadians are being tricked by the government.

The Prime Minister said that we must all pay a new carbon tax on everything. He said that the provinces and territories may make this revenue-neutral, but he said that his new tax on carbon would not create any new taxes for his federal government. However, that is not the case. It has been revealed that the federal Liberal government will be collecting billions of dollars of new taxes by charging GST

and HST on top of the price on carbon, which is a tax on the tax. That is not fair. It is not what the Prime Minister promised.

I have introduced this bill to prevent the federal government from collecting GST or HST on the carbon tax. It is a good bill. It is not fair to charge a tax on a tax. I call on all members in this House to support this excellent bill.

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

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

## PETITIONS

## BANKING SERVICES

**Ms. Karine Trudel (Jonquière, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present hundreds of signatures from people calling for banking services at postal outlets.

We know that there are more than 8,000 postal outlets across Canada. Many municipalities are in great need of this service, 600 of them requesting banking services directly in their community. I have the honour to table this petition in the House on behalf of the petitioners.

● (1520)

[*English*]

## FISHERIES

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour of standing in the House today to present a petition on behalf of constituents in Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, who recognize the fact that climate change is resulting in lower water flows in the all important Cowichan River, which is posing a threat to fish and fish habitat, both of which fall under federal jurisdiction. The petitioners also recognize that the Cowichan River is a designated heritage river and has extreme cultural and historical significance to the Cowichan people.

Therefore, the petitioners call upon the Government of Canada to honour its promises on infrastructure spending and to immediately provide the federal funds necessary for raising the weir, ensuring that water flow rates in the Cowichan River are there not only for fish and fish habitat but for all residents who depend on this vitally important river in my region.

## DIABETES

**Ms. Sonia Sidhu (Brampton South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, today I rise to table a petition from more than 100 residents of Brampton and Mississauga who are drawing attention to an important issue close to my heart. Diabetes and pre-diabetes affect more than 11 million Canadians. This is almost one in three Canadians in Brampton. One in seven Canadians are affected by pre-diabetes and diabetes. It can result in high financial and personal costs, and it can lead to other complications. It is also a significant burden on the health care system.

*Routine Proceedings*

The petitioners seek to create awareness of diabetes and pre-diabetes and to show support for my motion, Motion No. 118. Motion No. 118 calls for Parliament to officially mark November as Diabetes Awareness Month, to recognize that this is a mounting public health crisis, and to ask the health committee to study this important issue.

I want to thank and commend all who signed the petition. It is my honour, as the diabetes caucus chair, to table this petition today.

IMPAIRED DRIVING

**Mr. Mark Warawa (Langley—Aldergrove, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to present this petition on impaired driving.

Families for Justice is a group of Canadians who have had a loved one killed by a drunk driver. They believe that Canada's impaired driving laws are much too lenient. They want the crime to be called what it is, vehicular homicide. It is the number one cause of criminal death in Canada. More than 1,200 Canadians are killed every year by drunk drivers.

The petition calls for mandatory sentencing for vehicular homicide and for this Parliament to support Bill C-226, impaired driving act, and Bill C-247, Cassandra's law.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent of the House to revert to Motions.

**The Speaker:** Is it agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

\* \* \*

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

INDUSTRY, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

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

That, in relation to its study of Canada-United States Cooperation in Innovation and Jobs Creation, seven members of the Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Technology be authorized to travel to Washington, D.C., United States of America, in the spring of 2017, and that the necessary staff accompany the Committee.

**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)

\* \* \*

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the following questions will be answered today: No. 797, 805, 812, 813, 819, 823 to 826, and 828 to 830.

[Text]

Question No. 797—**Mr. Gérard Deltell:**

With regard to analysis done on the rationale and cost of the Canada Infrastructure Bank: (a) what financing gaps currently exist (e.g. risk aversion of private investors, high municipal borrowing costs); (b) what financial products does the government estimate the Bank will have to provide to fill each of the gaps in (a)

and on what terms (e.g. market or concessional); (c) will the Bank increase the supply of Canadian infrastructure projects that meet the scale requirements of institutional investors (e.g. above \$100 million) and, if so, how; (d) will the Bank expand the number of infrastructure projects that have a revenue stream and, if so, how; (e) would the rationale for the Bank change if (c) or (d) could be achieved independently; (f) does the government have any information about whether the creation of the Bank may crowd out involvement in infrastructure projects by smaller Canadian private investors and contractors; (g) what is the fiscal cost of the Bank on a cash and accrual basis; (h) how does the government estimate that the creation of the Bank will affect the federal balance sheet and net debt; and (i) what measures does the government plan to implement in order to control and prevent high-risk lending, shield taxpayer liabilities, and ensure that investor returns are within reason?

**Hon. Amarjeet Sohi (Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, with regard to (a), governments in Canada cannot address all of the country's infrastructure needs alone. Low interest rates mean that governments have a unique opportunity to significantly enhance their investments in infrastructure. Additionally, there is opportunity to leverage investments in infrastructure by bringing private capital to multiply the level of investment. Large institutional investors, such as Canada's public pension funds, have a large pool of capital that the Canada Infrastructure Bank, the CIB, can help attract and leverage to meet the country's infrastructure requirements. The Canada Infrastructure Bank will work with provinces, territories, and municipalities to further the reach of government funding in infrastructure.

With regard to (b), the CIB will be one tool in the Government of Canada's long-term infrastructure plan to conclude and execute complex infrastructure deals using a wide breadth of financial instruments at its disposal, including loans, loan guarantees, and equity investments. The objective of the Canada Infrastructure Bank's participation will be to structure its financial support in order to attract private sector capital and conclude project deals.

With regard to (c) and (d), the CIB will play a complementary role in developing innovative infrastructure financing specifically for projects that will have a revenue stream. Without the CIB, these projects may otherwise not be possible. As a result, the overall total investment in infrastructure can increase.

With regard to (f), the CIB will make investments in revenue-generating infrastructure projects and plans that contribute to the long-term sustainability of infrastructure across the country. It will be mandated to work with project sponsors to structure, negotiate, and deliver federal support for infrastructure projects with revenue-generating potential. The Government of Canada will leverage its investments in infrastructure by bringing in private capital to the table to multiply the level of investment.

*Routine Proceedings*

With regard to (g) and (h), the CIB will be responsible for investing at least \$35 billion on a cash basis from the federal government into large infrastructure projects that contribute to economic growth through loans, loan guarantees, and equity investments. Part of this amount—\$15 billion—will be sourced from the funding announced in the fall economic statement 2016. An additional \$20 billion in capital will be available to the Canada Infrastructure Bank for investments that will result in the bank holding assets in the form of equity or debt. This \$20 billion will therefore not result in a fiscal impact for the government.

With regard to (e) and (i), additional details pertaining to how the CIB will operationalize its mandate are still under development and are not yet available. A fundamental principle in this structure will be to ensure taxpayers' dollars are protected.

Regarding the corporate structure of the Canada Infrastructure Bank, it will be accountable to and partner with government, but will operate at greater arm's length than a department, working with provincial, territorial, municipal, Indigenous and investment partners to transform the way infrastructure is planned, funded, and delivered in Canada.

**Question No. 805—Mr. Michel Boudrias:**

With regard to the approval to build a new airport on City of Terrebonne and City of Mascouche land announced by the Department of Transport on November 4, 2016: (a) what are the details of the analysis grid used to approve the project, including (i) the complete list of all items to be considered, (ii) the relative weight of each item to be considered, (iii) the indicators to measure the items in (i); (b) what data was compiled by the Department to evaluate the following factors related to building an airport concerning (i) safety issues and hazards associated with its operations, (ii) social and political acceptability, (iii) the environmental impacts on fauna, flora, and humans, including data shared with the Department of the Environment, (iv) economic spin-offs and consequences; (c) what data was taken into account by the Ministry to evaluate the following factors related to building a new airport on City of Terrebonne and City of Mascouche land concerning (i) safety issues and hazards associated with its operations, including those resulting from a nearby landfill, (ii) social and political acceptability, (iii) the environmental impacts on fauna, flora, and humans, including data shared with the Department of the Environment, (iv) economic spin-offs and consequences; (d) does the Department anticipate economic spin-offs from the future airport's operations; (e) if the answer to (d) is affirmative, to what types, what contexts, and what amounts, broken down by year, do its economic spin-off evaluations correspond; (f) if the answer to (d) is affirmative, does the Department evaluate the possibility of public funds being requested or committed to (i) develop and build the airport, (ii) any type of associated future project, (iii) its ongoing operations and, where applicable, what are the amounts, broken down by source, including programs, ministries, special funds, discretionary funds, etc., of each of its evaluations; (g) did the Department incur costs related to (i) analyzing the file, (ii) taking measures, (iii) collecting existing or non-existing data and, where applicable, what is the value of these costs and the type of each expenditure; (h) when an airport development project receives approval from the Department and there are environmental impacts, does the Department anticipate compensation to offset the project's ecological losses; (i) what improvements does the Minister of Transport anticipate making to the evaluation process and what is the anticipated timeline for these changes; (j) what is the anticipated timeline for changes to require public consultations announced for early 2017 to be held; and (k) does the Minister of Transport intend to propose changes to the evaluation process so that the consultations to be held are not overseen by the project's proponent?

**Hon. Marc Garneau (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Government of Canada's top priorities are safety and security. Transport Canada's primary mission is to serve the public interest by promoting a transportation system in Canada that is safe, secure, efficient, and environmentally responsible.

The minister does not approve projects. Rather he will, according to subsection 4.31(1) of the Aeronautics Act, make an order

prohibiting the development or expansion of a given aerodrome or any change to the operation of a given aerodrome, if, in the minister's opinion, the proposed development, expansion, or change is likely to adversely affect aviation safety or is not in the public interest.

Transport Canada is aware of the concerns that can arise in relation to the development of new aerodromes across Canada, including the project that is currently being developed within the municipalities of Mascouche and Terrebonne.

This is what notably motivated the Minister of Transport's decision on March 4, 2016, to issue a ministerial order under the Aeronautics Act to prohibit the development of all new aerodromes in the cities of Mascouche and Terrebonne and to require the Corporation de l'aéroport de Mascouche, the Corporation, to hold a full public consultation on the project. The Corporation complied with the requirements of the order and sent Transport Canada all of the comments and documents—including the ones from the Cities of Mascouche and Terrebonne—that were submitted as part of the formal consultation process.

The department thoroughly examined all of the documentation and arguments submitted with regard to the project, both positive and negative, as well as the mitigation measures proposed by the Corporation, in order to address the population's concerns.

A number of factors were considered in the project's overall evaluation, including compliance with regulatory requirements, aviation safety, the project's economic impact, environmental protection, and public and private interests.

The department conducted on-site verifications, reviewed the preliminary plans and the report on the public consultation held by the proponent, as well as the obstacles, all in accordance with TP312, Aerodrome Standards and Recommended Practices, and TP1247, Land Use in the Vicinity of Aerodromes in effect.

This thorough review of the project allowed Transport Canada to ensure that flight operations will be conducted safely, while having a significant economic impact on the region. To illustrate this last point, the former Mascouche airport's flying schools employed over 50 people and trained some 185 students in 2016. Over the past two years alone, Transport Canada has issued 116 private pilot licences and 63 commercial pilot licences to candidates from these schools.

There are no public funds involved in this project. The department's work related to the matter has not incurred any additional costs beyond those for regular operations.

It should be noted that part III of the Canadian Aviation Regulations, subpart 7(307), on consultations for aerodrome work, came into effect on January 1, 2017. Therefore, under these regulations, aerodrome proponents must now consult the interested parties and the communities before developing a new aerodrome or before making major physical changes to an existing aerodrome. No amendments to these regulations or to the department's evaluation process are currently planned.

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 812—Mr. Pierre Poilievre:**

With regard to the government's response to Q-575: (a) did the Office for the Coordination of Parliamentary Returns (OCPR) at the Privy Council Office (PCO) assign part (b) of Q-575 regarding analysis conducted by Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) to the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour; (b) if the answer to (a) is affirmative, why was a response not provided by the Minister; (c) if the answer to (a) is negative, (i) why was that decision made, (ii) what is the title of the individual who made the decision, (iii) on what date was the decision made; (d) did OCPR assign part (h) of Q-575 regarding analysis conducted by the Department of Finance Canada to the Minister of Finance; (e) if the answer to (d) is affirmative, why was a response not provided by the Minister; (f) if the answer to (d) is negative, (i) why was that decision made, (ii) what is the title of the individual who made the decision, (iii) on what date was the decision made; (g) if the answers to either (a) or (d) are negative, did any official from either ESDC or the Department of Finance Canada contact or email PCO regarding the non-assignment to their department and, if so, what are the details of these communications; (h) did anyone from either the Prime Minister's Office or the Office of the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons provide any advice or instruction to the PCO regarding the decision to have the response to Q-575 only come from Environment and Climate Change Canada and, if so, what are the specific details of these communications including the titles of the individuals who provided the advice or instruction and what specific advice or instructions were given; and (i) did anyone at Environment and Climate Change Canada question the PCO decision to only have Environment and Climate Change Canada provide a response?

**Mr. Peter Schiefke (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister (Youth), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, with regard to the government's response to Q-575, the Office for the Coordination of Parliamentary Returns at the Privy Council Office assigns questions and parts of questions to the department or departments most likely to hold the relevant information that is requested. In the case of Q-575, given that Environment and Climate Change Canada is leading the government's efforts and analysis with regard to climate change and pricing carbon pollution, it was determined that Environment and Climate Change Canada was best positioned to respond to the question.

**Question No. 813—Mr. David Anderson:**

With regard to the report prepared by Delivery Associates Limited, or its principals, and commissioned by the government, which provided letter grades for various Ministers in January 2017: (a) what letter grade did each Minister receive, broken down by individual Minister; and (b) what was the rationale for each letter grade given, broken down by Minister?

**Mr. Peter Schiefke (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister (Youth), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, no report has been produced by Delivery Associates Limited that provides letter grades or otherwise provides an assessment of the performance of ministers.

**Question No. 819—Mr. Bob Saroya:**

With regard to the trip to India, led by the Minister of Infrastructure and Communities in January 2017: (a) who were the members of the delegation, excluding security and media; (b) what were the titles of the delegation members; (c) what was the total cost to taxpayers of the trip; (d) if final costs are not available, what is the estimated cost to taxpayers for the trip; (e) what is the itemized breakdown of each expense related to the trip, broken down by individual expense; and (f) what were the contents of the itineraries of the Minister on the trip?

**Hon. Amarjeet Sohi (Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, with regard to the trip to India led by the Minister of Infrastructure and Communities in January 2017, with regard to (a), the members of the delegation, excluding security and media, included Amarjeet Sohi and Michael Burton.

With regard to (b), the titles of the delegation members are as follows: Amarjeet Sohi, Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, and Michael Burton, Director of Parliamentary Affairs.

With regard to (c), the total cost to taxpayers of the trip is \$11,774.70.

With regard to (d), (d) is not applicable.

With regard to (e), the itemized breakdown of each expense related to the trip, broken down by individual expense, is as follows: air fare, \$7,163.62; commercial accommodation, \$2,911.48; allowance for meals and incidentals, \$851.10; taxi, \$245.33; travel documents, \$24.85; health services, \$94.65; currency exchange, \$7.32; and miscellaneous transportation charges, \$476.35.

With regard to (f), Minister Sohi travelled to India to represent the Government of Canada at the Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit 2017. In addition to attending the summit, where he delivered a keynote speech and participated in roundtables, he also met with a number of leaders and organizations, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Chief Minister Vijay Rupani, Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, and Hon. Venkaiah Naidu, Minister of Urban Development, Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation. He toured the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation and Bombardier Transportation. He met with the Commissioner and Additional Chief Secretary, the Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority, the India Infrastructure Finance Company, the World Bank's country director for India, and the president of the Federal of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

On March 31, the details of each expenditure will be proactively disclosed at the following link: <http://www.infrastructure.gc.ca/pd-dp/dthe-dfva/minister-ministre-eng.html>.

**Question No. 823—Mr. Charlie Angus:**

With respect to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 calls to action: (a) what is the itemized list of each of the 45 calls to action which the government believes fall under federal jurisdiction; (b) what is the itemized list of all actions the government has taken to implement each call to action under federal jurisdiction; (c) what is the itemized list of explanations for delays by the government in implementing each call to action under federal jurisdiction; (d) what is the itemized list of projected timelines for the government to fully implement each call to action; and (e) what concerns does the government have with respect to the full implementation of the calls to action within federal jurisdiction, broken down by call to action?

**Ms. Yvonne Jones (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, with regard to (a) through (e), the Government of Canada is committed to advancing long-term reconciliation with first nations, Métis, and Inuit.

In December 2015, the Prime Minister accepted the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's final report and confirmed our government's commitment to implement the commission's 94 calls to action. The government is creating permanent bilateral mechanisms with indigenous organizations to develop policy on shared priorities and to monitor our progress going forward. The permanent mechanisms are being created with the Assembly of First Nations, the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, and the four Inuit Nunangat regions as of February 9, 2017, and the Métis National Council and its governing members.



*Routine Proceedings*

This builds on progress the government has made since November 2015. Work is under way on the 41 calls to action outlined in the final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission that fall under federal or shared purview.

INAC will be launching a website that will keep all Canadians, including parliamentarians, apprised of the government's progress on the calls to action.

he government is also establishing an interim board of directors to make recommendations on the creation of a national council for reconciliation consistent with call to action no. 53. The interim board will begin an engagement process to develop recommendations on the scope and mandate of the national council. The council will play an important role in advancing progress on the calls to action.

Timing for implementation will be determined through discussions with those impacted by each particular call to action.

More remains to be done, but the government is making real progress towards renewing our relationship with indigenous peoples.

**Question No. 824—Mr. John Brassard:**

With regard to Canada's Innovation Agenda as published by the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development and "innovation leaders" titled "Innovation for a Better Canada: What We Heard": (a) what was the total cost incurred by the government for the production of this document; (b) what are the details of the compensation for each of the ten innovation leaders; and (c) what are the costs of the consultation process with the innovation leaders broken down by (i) travel, (ii) hospitality, (iii) meals and incidentals, (iv) lodging, (v) per diems, (vi) rental space for stake holder consultations?

**Hon. Navdeep Bains (Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Government of Canada believes that Canada needs a bold, coordinated strategy on innovation that delivers results for all Canadians. As such, an engagement process that reflects the commitment to mobilize all Canadians to action and to foster innovation as a Canadian value was launched.

The government invited all Canadians to share their ideas on cultivating a confident nation of innovators, one that is globally competitive in promoting research, accelerating business growth, and propelling entrepreneurs from the commercialization and start-up stages to international success.

The government also brought together 10 innovation leaders from all walks of life. These are experienced and distinguished individuals who are acknowledged as innovators in their own right. They represented the private sector, universities and colleges, the not-for-profit sector, and included social entrepreneurs and businesses owned and operated by indigenous people.

Over the summer, these innovation leaders hosted 28 round tables across Canada with key stakeholders, as well as in Boston, United States, and Cambridge, United Kingdom, on the six action areas. These round tables brought stakeholders from a range of backgrounds, including academia, industry associations, not-for-profits, indigenous groups, youth organizations, and other levels of government.

With regard to Canada's innovation agenda as published by the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development and

innovation leaders entitled, "Innovation for a Better Canada: What We Heard", please see the response below.

With regard to part (a), the document was developed internally by Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada. The total cost of \$1,990.21 incurred by the government was for its translation.

With regard to part (b), the 10 innovation leaders were not compensated for this work. However, they were reimbursed for certain expenses.

With regard to part (c)(i), the travel cost for the 10 innovation leaders for 26 round tables across Canada and the one round table in the United States was \$10,613.99. There was one round table in the United Kingdom, but no cost was incurred. With regard to (c)(ii), the hospitality cost for 28 round tables was \$10,391.64. With regard to (c)(iii), the meals and transportation cost for the 10 innovation leaders for 28 round tables was \$306.22. With regard to (c)(iv), the lodging cost for the 10 innovation leaders for 28 round tables was \$2,933.72. With regard to (c)(v), no additional per diems were provided to the 10 innovation leaders. With regard to (c)(vi), the total cost for rental spaces for 28 round tables was \$6,185.35.

**Question No. 825—Mr. John Brassard:**

With regard to the Prime Minister and his conflict of interest screens: (a) what are the names of the businesses and organizations which are managed or run by friends or relatives of the Prime Minister, as described in Section 4 of the Conflict of Interest Act; (b) what are the names of businesses and organizations for which a screen involving the Prime Minister recusing himself from any related decisions have been established; (c) broken down by business or organization, when was any such screen established; and (d) who in the Prime Minister's Office or the Privy Council Office is responsible for enforcing or implementing any such screens?

**Mr. Peter Schiefke (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister (Youth), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, with regard to the Prime Minister and his conflict of interest screens, the Prime Minister has demonstrated an unprecedented level of disclosure since becoming the leader of the Liberal Party and has filed all necessary disclosures with the Office of the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner and will always follow the commissioner's guidance.

**Question No. 826—Mr. Jim Eglinski:**

With regard to the management fees for blind trusts set up for Public Office Holders, during the 2016 calendar year and broken down by department or agency: (a) what is the total amount of expenditures on such management fees; (b) how many Public Office Holders have set up blind trusts; and (c) how many Public Office Holders had their management fees paid for, or were reimbursed for such payments, by the government?

**Mr. Peter Schiefke (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister (Youth), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in response to part (a) of the question, the Privy Council Office has no information on the total amount of expenditures on management fees for blind trusts set up for public office holders.

*Routine Proceedings*

The Conflict of Interest Act, COIA, provides that the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner may order reimbursement of the following administrative costs incurred by a public office holder in relation to a divestment of assets: (i) reasonable legal, accounting, and transfer costs to establish and terminate a trust determined to be necessary by the commissioner; (ii) annual, actual and reasonable costs to maintain and administer the trust, in accordance with rates set from time to time by the commissioner; (iii) commissions for transferring, converting, or selling assets where determined necessary by the commissioner; (iv) costs of other financial, legal, or accounting services required because of the complexity of the arrangements for the assets, and (v) commissions for transferring, converting, or selling assets if there are no provisions for a tax deduction under the Income Tax Act.

In addition, the commissioner may also order reimbursement of the costs of removing a public office holder's name from federal or provincial registries of corporations, where a public office holder is required to withdraw from corporate activities to comply with the act.

The commissioner has issued a guideline entitled, "Reimbursement of Costs Associated with Divestment of Assets and Withdrawal from Activities", which is available on the commissioner's website. Inter alia, this guideline establishes the maximum amounts that the commissioner will order be reimbursed for particular expenses, as well as procedures for public office holders to submit invoices. Once the commissioner has determined the eligible amounts, she will issue an order for reimbursement to the public office holder's department or organization.

In her annual reports to Parliament, the commissioner provides information on divestment arrangements and other compliance measures entered into by public office holders under the act, as well as on the reimbursement of expenses. These reports are available on the commissioner's website. The commissioner's annual report for fiscal year 2015-16 states:

The costs associated with the reimbursement of fees related to the establishment, administration or dismantlement of blind trusts in 2015-2016 totaled \$513,119 compared to \$427,913 in 2014-2015. Administrative costs reimbursed in one fiscal year may also include amounts for fees incurred in a previous fiscal year.

The report also indicates that 37 public office holders divested by way of sale, and 25 divested through one or more blind trusts. At the end of that fiscal year, 63 public office holders' maintained blind trusts, compared to 61 in the previous fiscal year.

Question No. 828—**Mr. Jim Eglinski:**

With regard to Harmonized Sales Tax (HST) payments to provinces: (a) as of February 1, 2017, which provinces owe money to the federal government as a result of HST overpayments; and (b) what is the amount owed, broken down by province?

**Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in processing parliamentary returns, the government applies the Privacy Act and respects the principles set out in the Access to Information Act. In responding to questions relating to the harmonized sales tax, HST, it also respects its commitments under the comprehensive integrated tax coordination agreements, CITCAs, with HST provinces.

With regard to the harmonized sales tax, it is a value-added sales tax imposed under federal legislation and administered by the Canada Revenue Agency, CRA, and the Canada Border Services Agency, CBSA. The tax has a federal portion that is equivalent to the goods and services tax, GST, with a rate of 5 percent, and a provincial portion, with a rate that varies by province. Currently, the combined federal-provincial rates are 13 percent in Ontario and 15 percent in Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island. The tax base of the HST, i.e., what is subject to the tax, is essentially that of the GST. The operation of the HST is governed by CITCAs between Canada and each HST province. Under the CITCAs, provinces are provided with certain flexibilities. Specifically, provinces are allowed to increase or decrease the rate of the provincial portion of the HST; provide provincial rebates to consumers at the point of sale, subject to an overall limit of 5 percent of the estimated GST base in a province and certain other conditions; set the rates applicable to the provincial component of the HST for rebates provided to public service bodies; and set the rate and thresholds of provincial new housing rebates, based on the general structure of the federal rebate.

Under the HST, businesses deal with only one tax administration and remit HST using the same return that they use for the GST. When filing their returns, businesses are not required to track the HST by the province in which transactions occur or to differentiate the provincial portion from the federal portion of the tax. All GST and HST is remitted as a single amount. In lieu of collecting such detailed information from businesses, the revenues attributable to the provincial portion of the HST are paid to provinces using a revenue-estimation formula known as the revenue allocation framework, RAF. That framework is set out in annex A of the CITCAs.

With regard to the revenue allocation framework, the RAF makes use of economic data from Statistics Canada and administrative data from the CRA and the CBSA to determine taxable consumption in Canada and the share of that consumption attributable to each participant in the RAF, i.e., the HST provinces and the federal government. More specifically, taxable consumption is estimated through five bases: consumer expenditure, approximately 63%; public sector bodies, approximately 12%; housing, approximately 17%; business, approximately 2%; and financial institutions, approximately 6%.

There are two fundamental components in the determination of the amount of sales tax revenue that each HST province will receive: the size of the GST/HST revenue pool and the provincial shares. The GST/HST revenue pool is the sum of all GST/HST assessed by the CRA and the CBSA nationally, net of input tax credits and applicable rebates. The provincial shares are determined by measuring the revenue potential of the total of the five bases in each jurisdiction, relative to the total revenue potential of the GST/HST.

The GST/HST revenue pool is currently on the order of \$71 billion per year.

*Routine Proceedings*

With regard to the revenue estimation process, annual provincial revenue entitlements are the product of the assessed GST/HST, meaning the revenue pool, and each province's share of the common tax base. Payments for a given entitlement year are first estimated in December prior to the start of the entitlement year. They are recalculated each December for five years, i.e., those five years are open. In the June that follows the fifth year, i.e., five and half years after the end of the calendar year in question, provincial payments are finalized and cannot be re-estimated. For example, in December 2016, the first estimate for 2017 was provided; in June of 2023, the final estimate for 2017 will be calculated and the year will close. Because revenue entitlements are estimated and since data comes in over several years, the amount of revenue to which an HST province is entitled for a particular year can change. As a result, a province may receive more revenue or may be required to repay revenue that it has already received, as revenue entitlements for open years are recalculated each December. In the event that a total repayment associated with prior years is greater than 7% of the estimated current entitlement, e.g., the 2017 entitlement year currently, provinces have the option of repaying the entire amount over three years.

**Question No. 829—Mr. Martin Shields:**

With regard to the current bovine tuberculosis (TB) situation: (a) was the original United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) test on the Alberta cow that tested positive for bovine TB in the United States a cultured test; (b) was the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) testing of the Canadian cows a cultured test; (c) will CFIA share the results of the USDA cultured test completed in the United States with the Canadian public and, if so, when and how will the public be able to access the results; and (d) will the CFIA release the results of the cultured tests which the agency has completed with the public and, if so, when and how will the public be able to access the results?

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, with regard to (a), yes, testing on the index of the Canadian cow slaughtered in the United States did include histology, polymerase chain reaction, PCR, and culture of the mycobacteria, *M. bovis*. Full genome sequencing of the bacteria was also performed by the United States Department of Agriculture.

With regard to (b), testing of the samples from the five additional cattle positive for bovine tuberculosis, TB, has been completed, including culture testing and strain identification. All six positive animals were affected by the same strain that is related to a strain of bovine TB identified in Mexico in 1997.

With regard to (c), the CFIA released these results publicly in the fall of 2016 on its website and in public messaging, indicating that the culture test result was positive for bovine tuberculosis, and the information on the strain.

With regard to (d), as mentioned in the response to question (b), culture and subsequent genotyping on the samples from the five additional cattle found to be positive for bovine tuberculosis has been completed. The CFIA has already communicated publicly on its website and through statements that these animals are positive for bovine TB.

With respect to other reactors and animals with lesions, tissue samples are being cultured and genotyped, and the testing will be completed this year. Culture results are released to the owner of the sampled animals as soon as available. Cases of all reportable

diseases, of which TB is one, are posted on the CFIA website on a monthly basis.

**Question No. 830—Mr. Dave MacKenzie:**

With regard to the projected impact of lower taxes in the United States on the Canadian economy: (a) what are the details of any impact analyses which have been conducted by the Department of Finance, or any outside organization on behalf of the Department, on the current or proposed taxation policies of President Trump; and (b) for each analysis in (a) which has been completed, (i) who conducted the analysis, (ii) when was it completed, (iii) what areas of impact were considered, (iv) what were the findings, (v) what taxation scenarios were used for the analysis, (vi) what was the internal tracking number of the final report, (vii) what was the vendor name, (viii) what was the amount of the contract, (ix) what was the date of the contract?

**Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, with regard to part (a), the U.S. is an important economic partner for Canada. The Government of Canada has been monitoring the new U.S. administration's tax policy plans as they emerge and analyzing the potential implications for Canada. Analysts in the tax policy branch at the Department of Finance have examined the tax proposals put forward during the 2016 presidential election campaign and by the House Republicans in a June 2016 tax plan, which relate to both business and personal income taxation.

In processing parliamentary returns, the government applies the Privacy Act and the principles set out in the Access to Information Act. As such, related information has been withheld on the following grounds: (a) possible confidences of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, (b) advice, recommendations, deliberations (c) economic interests, and (d) conduct of international affairs and potential negotiations

With regard to part (b), the department has analyzed proposals relating to both personal and corporate income tax.

The tracking numbers of the final reports are 2016FIN446662 and 2017FIN448338. These reports have been partially released under access to information requests.

Additional analysis is ongoing.

\* \* \*

[English]

**QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURN**

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, if the government's responses to Questions No. 798 to 804, 806 to 811, 814 to 818, and 820 to 822 could be made orders for return, these returns would be tabled immediately.

**The Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

*Routine Proceedings*

[Text]

**Question No. 798—Mr. Gérard Deltell:**

With regard to government infrastructure spending: (a) how much money has the government spent on infrastructure and to what effect, with regard to announced or planned infrastructure investments every fiscal year from 2006-2007 to 2021-2022, broken down by fiscal year and program; (b) with regard to the programs and fiscal years in (a), has there been any reallocation of funds between, in, or out of these programs for the same years; (c) for each of the programs in (a), what is the actual total spent, broken down by program for the fiscal years from 2006-2007 to 2016-2017; (d) with regard to the programs and projects in (a), which of these were announced or planned before November 2015; and (e) how many jobs can be attributed directly or indirectly to each of the programs and projects in (a)?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 799—Mr. Gérard Deltell:**

With regard to analysis that the government has conducted on the economic implications of the recent U.S. elections: (a) what information does the government have about the anticipated impact on Canada's (i) energy costs, taxes, and regulatory competitiveness, (ii) ability to attract foreign investment, (iii) export access and supply chain integration with the U.S., (iv) ability to access U.S. federally-funded infrastructure projects, (v) development of the oil sands; and (b) what information does the government have about higher interest rates and their effect on Canada's housing market and public debt charges for federal and provincial governments?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 800—Ms. Diane Finley:**

With regard to all the fuel consumed by the Canadian Armed Forces and the Department of National Defence for each fiscal year from 2014 to present, and all organizations that are included in the Canadian Armed Forces and the Department of National Defence's mandate: what is the total (i) amount of gasoline consumed, (ii) amount of money spent on gasoline consumption, (iii) amount of diesel fuel consumed, (iv) amount of money spent on diesel fuel consumption, (v) amount of jet fuel consumed, (vi) amount of money spent on jet fuel consumption, (vii) amount of natural gas consumed, (viii) amount of money spent on natural gas consumption, (ix) amount of propane consumed, (x) amount of money spent on propane consumption, (xi) amount of high-heat coal consumed, (xii) amount of money spent on high-heat coal consumption, (xiii) amount of low-heat coal consumed, (xiv) amount of money spent on low-heat coal consumption?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 801—Mr. Daniel Blaikie:**

With regard to the recent pay raise submitted earlier in 2015 by the RCMP commissioner to the Treasury Board: (a) when was that recommendation submitted; (b) what exactly was the amount of the pay raise recommended; (c) has the Treasury Board submission been forwarded to the Minister of Public Safety for support; (d) if the answer to (c) is in the affirmative, has this submission since been resubmitted to Treasury Board; (e) is the process of approval for the pay raise connected in any way to the status of bill C-7 and, if so, how; (f) is the process of approval for the pay raise connected in any way to the status negotiations with any other public sector salary negotiations or impending changes and, if so, how; and (g) is the process of approval for the pay raise pending any other process or decisions outside the normal approval process and, if so, (i) which ones, (ii) in what way?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 802—Mr. Erin Weir:**

With regard to the federal government and the potential sale of up to 49 % of SaskTel by the Government of Saskatchewan: (a) what approval is required from (i) the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, (ii) the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission, (iii) the Competition Bureau; (b) what powers does the federal government have to stop the partial sale of a provincial Crown corporation; and (c) at what percentage of shares sold would SaskTel have to pay federal corporate income tax?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 803—Mr. Alexandre Boulerice:**

With regard to the government's use of Challenger jets, since October 2015, and for each aircraft: (a) what are the names and titles of the passengers listed on the flight manifest; (b) what were all the departure and arrival points; (c) who requested access to the plane; (d) who authorized the flight; (e) how many flights were reimbursed; (f) which flights were reimbursed; (g) who reimbursed the flights; (h) what was the amount reimbursed for each flight; and (i) why were each of these flights reimbursed?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 804—Mr. Alexandre Boulerice:**

With regard to departmental entities since October 2015: (a) how many individuals work for each department; (b) what cities do they live in; (c) what cities do they work in; (d) if they no longer work for the department, when they left, how much severance pay were they entitled to; and (e) how much severance pay did they receive (i) on average, (ii) in total?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 806—Mr. Pat Kelly:**

With regard to the proposals for reforming the Business of Supply put forward in the President of the Treasury Board's discussion paper entitled "Empowering Parliamentarians through Better Information: The Government's Vision for Estimates Reform": (a) what evidence does the President of the Treasury Board rely on in determining that the procedure for the Business of Supply needs modification; (b) if the changes mentioned in the discussion paper are implemented, how much time does the government plan Parliament will have to scrutinize the Estimates; (c) if the changes mentioned in the discussion paper are implemented, what access does the government plan, if any, that parliamentary committees will have to Ministers to question them on record concerning spending for departments and agencies within their portfolios before the same is approved or denied; (d) what steps, if any, does the government plan to take to streamline internal processes for more efficient Treasury Board approval of spending initiatives in order to allow alignment of the Main Estimates and Budget release dates; (e) which steps mentioned in (d) are currently under consideration and what progress in implementation has been made thereon; (f) with the proposal to appropriate funds on a level of core responsibilities of departments is implemented, what steps does the government anticipate will be required to link approval for the same to precise spending items; (g) what steps, if any, are under consideration to increase parliamentary committees' ability to amend spending proposed in the Estimates and what progress in implementation has been made thereon; and (h) what were the findings or results of the evidence mentioned in (a) through (g)?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 807—Mr. Gerry Ritz:**

With regard to the Minister of International Trade authorizing supplementary import permits for all categories of dairy products, including butter and cheese between November 4, 2015, and December 13, 2016: (a) how many supplementary import permits were approved by the Minister, broken down by category; and (b) for each categorized supplementary import permit, what is the breakdown in terms of (i) the amount in tonnes, (ii) who received the allocation, (iii) the name of the exporting country or countries, (iv) the market value in Canadian dollars, (v) the duration, (vi) the date range, (vii) the expiration date, (viii) the date of the application, (ix) the date of authorization, (x) the dates the imported products entered Canada, (xi) the end users of the imported product?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 808—Mr. Arnold Viersen:**

With regard to the Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion Project: (a) what are the details of any consultations or meetings which have been held with stakeholders, including the (i) date, (ii) locations, (iii) attendees; (b) what are the details of any briefing notes or correspondence related to the meetings referred to in (a), including the (i) title, (ii) date, (iii) sender, (iv) recipient, (v) subject matter, (vi) file number; (c) what is the content of any information provided to the Prime Minister by (i) the Department of Natural Resources, (ii) the Department of Environment and Climate Change, (iii) the Department of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, (iv) the Department of Finance, (v) the Department of Indigenous and Northern Affairs, (vi) the Department of Justice, (vii) the Department of Transport, (viii) the Department of Finance; (d) what is the content of any information provided to the Minister of Natural Resources and his parliamentary secretary by the Department of Natural Resources; (e) what is the content of any information provided to the Minister of Justice and her parliamentary secretaries by the Department of Justice; and (f) what is the content of any information regarding the Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion Project provided to the Minister of Environment and her parliamentary secretary by the Department of Environment and Climate Change?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 809—Mr. Arnold Viersen:**

With regard to the Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion Project: what are the details of all the consultations with First Nations, broken down by date, location, name and title of the First Nations, groups, or individuals consulted, conducted by (i) the Prime Minister, (ii) the Minister of Indigenous Affairs and the Department of Indigenous and Northern Affairs, (iii) the Minister of Natural Resources and the Department of Natural Resources, (iv) the Minister of Justice and Department of Justice?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 810—Mr. Pierre Poilievre:**

With regard to the government's Ottawa Hospital Site Review, which concluded with a National Capital Commission recommendation to the Minister of Canadian Heritage on November 24, 2016: (a) when did the Environment Minister decide that she would order this review; (b) when did the Environment Minister ask that the Heritage Minister take over this review; (c) did the government estimate the cost of delaying the construction of the new hospital by at least a year, and if so, what were the costs; (d) what was the total cost of the review as of November 24, 2016, broken down by (i) employees' salaries, (ii) contractors, (iii) consultants, (iv) land use surveys or studies, (v) other expenses incurred; (e) what will be the total cost of this review, broken down by (i) employees' salaries, (ii) contractors, (iii) consultants, (iv) land use surveys or studies, (v) other expenses; (f) what are the precise boundaries of the property to be leased to the Ottawa Hospital, known as the Sir John Carling Site or site #11 by the National Capital Commission; (g) what price does the government plan to charge the Ottawa Hospital as rent for the Sir John Carling Site, known as site #11 by the National Capital Commission; (h) how much payment in lieu of taxes does the federal government pay the City of Ottawa for the Sir John Carling Site, known as site #11 by the National Capital Commission; and (i) what will be the costs of preparing the site for the Ottawa Hospital to be built, and which level of government or organization will pay for them?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 811—Mr. Pierre Poilievre:**

With regard to the government's transfer of land to the Ottawa Hospital for the future site of the Civic Campus, known as the Sir John Carling Site or site #11 by the National Capital Commission: (a) what analysis did the departments of Public Services and Procurement Canada (formerly Public Works and Government Services Canada), Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, the National Capital Commission, and Canadian Heritage, conduct at each of the 12 sites; (b) what did the National Capital Commission estimate the total land preparation costs of each of the 12 sites would be; (c) what concerns did the National Capital Commission raise regarding potential contamination of each of the 12 sites; (d) what are the boundaries of the Sir John Carling Site which will be leased to the Ottawa Hospital; (e) are the metal piles that were used for the foundation of the former Sir John Carling Building still present at the site; (f) if the answer to (e) is affirmative, will they have to be removed in order to accommodate the new Ottawa Hospital; (g) if the answer to (f) is affirmative, what will be the cost of removing the piles; (h) if the answer to (f) is negative, what is the government's plan to accommodate the new Ottawa Hospital around the existing

piles; (i) what is the estimated cost of preparing the site for the Ottawa Hospital to be built, and which level of government or organization will pay for them; (j) what contamination currently exists at the Sir John Carling Site, and how will it be mitigated or removed prior to the hospital's construction; (k) what is the estimated cost of remediating any contamination, and which level of government or organization will pay for this; and (l) does the government foresee any other factors specific to the Sir John Carling Site that would increase costs or delay construction of the new hospital, and if so, what are they?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 814—Mr. David Anderson:**

With regard to the Prime Minister's trip to the Bahamas in December 2016 and January 2017: (a) what was the total cost to taxpayers; (b) what is the itemized breakdown of each expense related to the trip, including costs related to security, transportation, accommodation, meals, per diems, and other expenses; (c) how many government employees, including exempt staff, were on the trip; and (d) excluding pilots and security personnel, what were the titles of government employees on the trip?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 815—Mr. Earl Dreeshen:**

With regard to expenditures made by the government to unions representing federal employees, since November 4, 2015: (a) what is the total amount paid to unions for costs associated with negotiations or bargaining; (b) what is the breakdown of costs referred to in (a), by union; (c) what is the total amount paid for any other additional funding contributed by the government to unions representing federal employees; and (d) what is the breakdown of costs referred to in (c), broken down by union?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 816—Mr. Earl Dreeshen:**

With regard to the trip to China, led by the Minister of Canadian Heritage in January 2017: (a) who were the members of the delegation, excluding security and media; (b) what were the titles of the delegation members; (c) what was the total cost to taxpayers of the trip; (d) if final costs are not available, what is the best estimated cost to taxpayers for the trip; (e) what is the itemized breakdown of each expense related to the trip, broken down by individual expense; and (f) what were the contents of the itineraries of the Minister on the trip?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 817—Mr. Earl Dreeshen:**

— With regard to buildings leased by the government outside of the National Capital Region: what are the details of each leased building including (i) name of vendor or owner or property, (ii) complete address of property, (iii) cost of lease (i.e.: monthly or yearly rental rate), (iv) lease expiry date, (v) square footage of property, (vi) number of government employees/full-time equivalents working at each building as of January 1, 2017?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 818—Mr. Bob Saroya:**

With regard to the consumption of alcohol and food on flights taken on government-owned Airbus and Challenger aircraft since September 19, 2016: (a) on which flights was alcohol consumed; and (b) for each flight where alcohol was consumed (i) what is the value of alcohol consumed, (ii) what was the origin and destination of the flight, (iii) what was the flight date, (iv) what is breakdown of alcohol beverages consumed by specific beverage and quantity, (v) what is the cost of food consumed on each flight?

(Return tabled)

*Government Orders*Question No. 820—**Mrs. Deborah Schulte:**

With regards to funds, grants, loans, and loan guarantees the government has issued through its various departments and agencies in the constituency of King—Vaughn for the period of November 4, 2015, to January 30, 2017, inclusive, and in each case, where applicable: (a) what was the program under which the payment was made; (b) what were the names of the recipients; (c) what was the monetary value of the payment made; (d) what was the percentage of program funding covered by the payment received; and (e) on what date was the funding approved?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 821—**Mrs. Cathay Wagantall:**

With regard to malaria, malaria medication and the Department of National Defence, Veterans Affairs Canada, Health Canada, or the Privy Council Office, since November 4, 2015: (a) what are the details of all meetings involving the Department of National Defence, Veterans Affairs Canada, Health Canada, or the Privy Council Office where malaria, any malaria prevention treatments, Mefloquine, or Lariam was on the agenda, including the (i) date, (ii) attendees, (iii) description of meeting, (iv) contents of agenda or meeting notes, (v) location, (vi) decisions made; (b) what are the details of all briefing notes related to malaria, any malaria treatments, Mefloquine, or Lariam including the (i) date, (ii) title, (iii) summary, (iv) sender, (v) recipients, (vi) file number; (c) what is the current Department of National Defence policy regarding the distribution of Mefloquine and other malaria prevention treatments to members of the Canadian Forces; and (d) when did the policy come into effect?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 822—**Mr. Charlie Angus:**

With regard to the budgets of Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada and Health Canada's First Nations and Inuit Health Branch, broken down by each program and sub-program for the 2016-2017 fiscal year: (a) what amount of money has been reallocated to each program and sub-program area; (b) what amount of money has been reallocated from each program and sub-program area; (c) what are the reasons for each reallocation in (a) and (b); (d) what is the impact, actual or anticipated, of each reallocation in (a) and (b); (e) what are the identified shortfalls within each program and sub-program; (f) what amount was allocated for child welfare, broken down by where it was allocated from (i.e. Main Estimates, Budget 2016, etc.); (g) what amount of money was allocated and spent on Jordan's Principle as of January 26, 2016; (h) what is the government's definition of Jordan's Principle; (i) are there any group cases for Jordan's Principle that exist in Saskatchewan and Manitoba and, if so, which ones; (j) what process has the government used to assess that the need for implementing Jordan's Principle is 127 million dollars per year; (k) what is the amount allocated to the First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum; (l) what amount of money has been identified as needed for the full implementation of the First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum; and (m) how many mental wellness teams have been identified as needed to reach every First Nations community in Canada?

(Return tabled)

*[English]*

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, finally, I ask that all remaining questions be allowed to stand.

**The Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

• (1525)

*[English]***NATIONAL SECURITY AND INTELLIGENCE COMMITTEE OF PARLIAMENTARIANS ACT**

The House resumed consideration of Bill C-22, An Act to establish the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians and to make consequential amendments to certain Acts, as reported (with amendment) from the committee, and of the motions in Group No. 1.

**Mr. Ali Ehsassi (Willowdale, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to once again rise in the House to discuss Bill C-22, an act to establish the national security and intelligence committee of parliamentarians and to make consequential amendments to certain acts.

We on this side of the House pride ourselves in avoiding easy absolutes and rejecting simple binaries and false dichotomies. The question before us today is not, as some would have us believe, whether we need to prioritize our security on the one hand, or our cherished values on the other hand. Rather, the question before us is quite simple: Is our national security regime working effectively and in a manner that is consistent with Canadian law and values?

Simultaneously balancing these twin objectives, keeping Canadians safe while also respecting and safeguarding our rights and freedoms, are among the most fundamental duties that a government can perform. However, currently that duty does not contain an element of committee oversight, a glaring weakness which puts Canada at odds with accepted international best practices. To that end, in this legislation, we are confident that we have developed a model for robust and comprehensive parliamentary reviews, one that will help build the trust of Canadians in our national security and intelligence activities.

The establishment of the national security and intelligence committee represents the realization of a key 2015 campaign promise. However, I want to stress that it is by no means the only action we are taking to strengthen Canada's national security framework.

First and foremost, we recognize that when it comes to an issue that is fundamental to who we are as a country, it is important that the will of Canadians is reflected as much as possible. As a result, our government has engaged in an unprecedented series of consultations with experts, stakeholders, parliamentarians of all parties, and individual Canadians on issues of national security and civil liberties. These consultations remain ongoing, and as such ensure that our approach to national security remains rooted in meaningful conversation and dialogue.

Second, our government remains committed to addressing the more problematic elements of Bill C-51, as introduced by the former government. Specifically, and largely as a result of the aforementioned public consultations, we remain committed to amending Bill C-51 so as to better protect the right to advocate and protest, and to better define rules regarding terrorist propaganda.

*Government Orders*

Third, the ever-evolving nature of security threats, as well as the clear need to remain vigilant in defending civil liberties, require that any national security framework not be set in stone. As such, our government has committed to mandating statutory review of national security legislation.

Fourth, our government remains committed to fighting violent extremism in all forms. The recent rise in domestic hate speech and hate crimes, for example, has served as a poignant reminder of the need for vigilance and community outreach to combat domestic violence. The goal here is to coordinate the efforts being undertaken at multiple levels to further enhance our capacity to prevent radicalization and violence, and ultimately make Canada a global leader in this field.

Bill C-22 fits within this pattern of strengthening and modernizing our national security laws and policies. As members have already heard, this bill would establish the national security and intelligence committee, a body comprised of parliamentarians from across parties, to scrutinize all of the national security and intelligence operations of the Government of Canada. Given that there are more than 20 departments and agencies within the Government of Canada that carry out national security-related functions, it cannot be overstated how important this initiative actually is.

The current system of security oversight, such as it currently exists, remains highly fragmented, with non-partisan review bodies, judicial oversight, and ministerial discretion all playing vital oversight roles. While these existing mechanisms will remain independent, untouched, and in place, the creation of a permanent committee will allow for a more comprehensive and reactive security oversight framework. As such, the committee's mandate will be necessarily wide ranging. It will look at not only the legislative, regulatory, administrative, and financial aspects of national security and intelligence, but also the operations and activities that departments and agencies of the federal government undertake in the name of national security.

• (1530)

To carry out this vital role, committee members would be given broad access to classified information with appropriate safeguards and exceptions, as well as leeway to examine matters they deem worthy of examination. Importantly, Bill C-22 would allow the committee to analyze and study laws, policies, and operations in real time, increasing the discipline, responsiveness, and accountability of our security framework. With the establishment of this committee, we would close what has amounted to an important accountability gap, one that has existed in Canada for far too long. It would also allow Canada to at long last count itself among its Five Eyes partners and other western countries that have long had parliamentary review of national security and intelligence activities. Clearly, this represents an extraordinary responsibility, and as a result would require checks and balances. I believe that the safeguards embedded in Bill C-22 strike this balance.

Furthermore, I believe that an already strong piece of legislation has been generally strengthened by the exemplary work done at the committee stage. It is important to reiterate that the government has accepted the vast majority of amendments put forward by the public safety committee. In particular, members will recall that the second

reading version of the bill said that the new committee could not have access to information about ongoing defence intelligence activities, privileged information under the Investment Canada Act, and certain information collected by the Financial Transactions and Reports Analysis Centre of Canada. The public safety committee, wisely in my opinion, recommended amendments giving the new committee access to this information. The bill is stronger as a result, and I would like to thank the committee members and expert witnesses for all their hard work.

I also believe that this legislation has been strengthened by the additional report stage amendments introduced by the government House leader. In particular, by further amending clause 14 of the bill, the government has reinstalled important safeguards designed to protect vulnerable intelligence sources and reduce the risk of political interference in security operations. Finally, the restoration of clause 16 of Bill C-22 would realign Canada's security framework with similar provisions in place among our Five Eyes allies.

Let me end my remarks by getting back to where I started. It is vital that this esteemed institution has a clearer view into the national security and intelligence functions of the federal government. By establishing the national security and intelligence committee of parliamentarians, we would finally open that window, and we would do it responsibly. This initiative would serve Canadians and our democracy well. I therefore call on all members for their support tonight.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague talked a lot about democracy in his speech.

Sadly, however, the government invoked closure today, this time on Bill C-22, in order to prevent parliamentarians from expressing themselves and prevent each person here from saying what they want to say about this important bill concerning the safety of all Canadians.

What does my colleague think about this decision to muzzle hon. members with regard to Bill C-22, when he had so much to say about democracy in his speech?

[*English*]

**Mr. Ali Ehsassi:** Mr. Speaker, of course this is an incredibly important issue. Because of that, as members know full well, as it was part of our platform, we have consulted with numerous Canadians along the way and we have consulted with experts. This is an ongoing consultation, and the reason for that is simple. It is important not only that we promote our security, but also that civil liberties are not infringed.

• (1535)

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet (Hochelaga, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, if it is an ongoing consultation, then why were so many recommendations set aside? Why was the original bill completely gutted? They talk about the recommendations that were accepted, but there are very few compared to what was proposed.

*Government Orders*

[English]

**Mr. Ali Ehsassi:** Mr. Speaker, there were many consultations that went on. On top of that, we have parliamentary groups that looked into this issue. As I highlighted during my portion of the speech, there were many recommendations that were adopted and are very much reflected in the legislation that stands before the House. Many things were considered and many changes were made to the legislation.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, with the passage of this legislation, we know that Canada would be the fifth country of the Five Eyes that will finally have a parliamentary oversight committee, something that has already been put in place in New Zealand, Australia, England, and the United States. It is something that will help and assist in protecting Canadians' rights and freedoms, which is very important. I am wondering if the member could provide his thoughts in regard to the historic significance of passing this legislation.

**Mr. Ali Ehsassi:** Mr. Speaker, as I noted in my speech, there was a gaping hole, and it was incumbent upon our government to act on its platform and also to scrutinize regimes that were in place among our five allies. In doing so, we have come up with legislation which very wisely enhances our national security, provides a role for Parliament, and ensures that we are not unduly infringing civil liberties.

[Translation]

**Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague very much for his presentation.

I also thank my colleague, the hon. member for Parry Sound—Muskoka, the official opposition critic for public safety, for his outstanding work on this very important issue.

I was prepared to speak to Bill C-22 in a perfectly normal debate in keeping with the standard procedures of the House. Unfortunately, today, we have all once again witnessed, as we have on a number of occasions, the government's willingness to shorten debate so that all those who have things to say on Bill C-22 cannot do so.

This is surprising in the case of a bill sponsored by the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness. The minister has previously had a very different view of the contribution of parliamentarians here in the House, if we go by a short article from 2013 on the website of the minister, who was then a member of Parliament. I will quote two short excerpts in English; it will be easier.

The piece is entitled *Ideas For Making Our Democracy Stronger*, and the paragraph that caught my attention reads as follows:

[English]

Ministers wanting to advance policy initiatives should be required to convince not only cabinet colleagues, but also backbenchers. They should not simply rely on the Whip to enforce support—they should earn it by merit.

[Translation]

However, what we are seeing today is quite the opposite. Not only is the whip being used, but so is the Leader of the Government in the House to move Bill C-22 quickly through all stages in the House.

In the same piece, when the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness was a member of Parliament, he says:

[English]

Restrictions are needed on the use of ancient but recently-abused Parliamentary tools such as Omnibus Bills, Closure Motions to terminate debates, and Prorogation. They have their place, but should be confined to their original purpose and intent.

● (1540)

[Translation]

Once again, what we are seeing today is completely the opposite. Those are the very words of the minister who is sponsoring Bill C-22.

Bill C-22 was introduced in the House of Commons last June 16, in order to establish the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians. Let us recall that the establishment of a parliamentary oversight committee was a promise made by the Liberals. Clearly, it is important to make sure that our national security bodies are properly examined. We must absolutely ensure that this committee has the tools it needs to do its work.

However, we know that the Prime Minister has already appointed a member of his caucus, the member for Ottawa South, as chair of that committee, even though the legislation has not yet passed. A gag was used today. A committee chair was appointed. There is no legislation in place, but we already know the name of the chair of a committee that does not exist.

The government is breaking a well-established tradition of our parliamentary system by imposing a chair the way it did. Committee chairs have always been elected by the committees themselves, not imposed by the Prime Minister's Office. The Liberals promised Canadians during the election campaign that they would form a committee of parliamentarians on national security. They said, promised and repeated that this committee would be non-partisan. Bill C-22 does not create a committee of parliamentarians. It is not neutral nor is it non-partisan. It is controlled by the Prime Minister and the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness.

We have to realize that the Liberal government is much better at making speeches and symbolic gestures than it is at taking real action. However, in finest federal Liberal tradition, they promise one thing in a campaign and do the opposite once ensconced on the government benches. This is called being partisan. It reeks of partisanship.

Bill C-22 imposes many barriers on the committee's ability to access information or call witnesses. This, also, is unlike similar committees that operate effectively in allied countries, such as the United Kingdom. The official opposition presented motions to amend Bill C-22 to the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security in December.

On the issue of a non-partisan committee, we would expect some of the opposition's recommendations to be accepted, but all of the official opposition's proposed amendments were rejected. We only wanted to ensure that the composition of the committee is not partisan and that its chair and its members are not appointed by the Prime Minister.



*Government Orders*

Clearly, as we now know, that recommendation was not accepted. The committee should be established by Parliament and be accountable to Parliament, not just to the Prime Minister and the Minister of Public Safety. However, the Liberal government is not listening.

We also wanted to remove the many blocking mechanisms in Bill C-22 that limit the committee's access to information and power to call witnesses. Once again, the Liberal government has said no. We wanted to ensure the committee's annual reporting process to Parliament will be more transparent. The Liberal government has decided otherwise. This is what sunny ways look like. This government is becoming a master in the art breaking promises.

The Liberals promised a modest deficit. If we were to give them a report card today, they would get a failing grade. The same goes for electoral reform. The Minister of Public Safety even talks about this in the fascinating piece I just read from. I quoted a few passages, but I will refrain from quoting it any further. I will have other opportunities to do so. The issue of electoral reform was a monumental failure, even though the Liberals spent hundreds of thousands of dollars consulting Canadians. They ignored the results of those consultations. They simply went ahead and did what they wanted anyway.

There is no denying that the Prime Minister's sunny ways have also failed when it comes to transparency and accountability. If I were a teacher, I would be forced to write "fail" in big red letters on this government's report card.

On September 30, 2016, which was not so long ago, the Liberal member for Willowdale stated the following in this House:

In keeping with our government's commitment to evidence-based decision-making, Bill C-22 notably aligns Canada's security regime with accepted international best practices. As colleagues before me have highlighted, Canada is currently the only member of the Five Eyes alliance lacking a security oversight committee that grants sitting legislators access to confidential national security information.

Many of my colleagues have demonstrated in the House that the government has failed to do this. It has not kept its promise to align this committee with the best practices of our allies, including Great Britain. Will the member for Willowdale vote against the wishes of the Prime Minister's Office and honour the promise he solemnly made to his own constituents?

On September 28, 2016, the member for Montarville, who is now on the back benches but was then parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, said the following in the House:

The bill before us would establish a committee with nine members. Seven of the committee members would be drawn from the House of Commons, and of these seven, only four can be government members. Two members would be drawn from the other place. This committee will be different from other committees and offices established to review security and intelligence matters.

A little further on in his speech, which was probably prepared by officials from the Department of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness and edited by the Prime Minister's Office, he added:

Robust powers are given to this committee, its members, and its secretariat. The committee will be able to access any information it needs to conduct its reviews, subject to some specific and reasonable limits.

The powers conferred upon the executive, meaning the ministers of the Liberal government, are huge. For instance, subclause 8(2) of the bill states:

If the appropriate Minister determines that a review would be injurious to national security, he or she must inform the Committee of his or her determination and the reasons for it.

In language that everyone can understand, that means that a minister can decide what the committee will study. I am not sure that is what voters voted for on October 19, 2015.

In conclusion, I invite my Liberal colleagues and all members to assert their independence with respect to the Prime Minister's cabinet and his staff. They already did so in the not too distant past when voting on Bill S-201. I believe that the members opposite are capable of doing it again if they can muster the courage.

• (1545)

I invite them to vote against Bill C-22 and not to renege on the promise they made to their respective constituents in the last election campaign.

[*English*]

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

Mr. Speaker, this is one piece of legislation where the Conservative Party has clearly demonstrated that once again it is out of touch with reality or, more important, it is out of touch with Canadians.

I have listened to the debate. We have had ministers, parliamentary secretaries to those ministers, the critics of both the NDP and the official opposition, and the leader of the Green Party engage in this debate. There has been opportunity for well over 100 people to get engaged in this debate to date. In fact, 40-plus members have had speeches of 10 minutes or more on the issue.

The Conservatives have made it very clear. Contrary to what Canadians want, they do not support parliamentary oversight. They are voting against the legislation, which is no surprise. When they brought in Bill C-51, they refused to bring in parliamentary oversight. Now, in opposition, they are asking why the Prime Minister has this kind of control.

I would ask the member this. First, could he explain for Canadians why the Conservatives do not support a parliamentary oversight committee? Second, why do they not recognize that this is one of the most robust pieces of legislation of the Five Eyes countries to ensure a strong independence for a parliamentary oversight committee? For example, when we compare New Zealand, the prime minister is the chair of the committee, and there are many other examples I could give.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Berthold:** Mr. Speaker, the only good thing about time allocation is that the parliamentary secretary's speeches will be shorter.

Honestly, we are not against parliamentary oversight. However, that is not what Bill C-22 provides. In fact, the bill provides for oversight by the Prime Minister's Office, and we find that deplorable. That is not what the Liberals promised during the election campaign.

*Government Orders*

The Liberals promised that a committee accountable to Parliament would provide oversight, and not a committee supervised by the person appointed by the Prime Minister and the PMO.

• (1550)

[*English*]

**Mr. Scott Duvall (Hamilton Mountain, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague has pointed out many of the concerns that we on the NDP side have, and I thank him for that. However clause 8 of the bill states that a cabinet minister can halt an investigation into his or her own department for security reasons. However, it offers no way to test whether this fact is merely covering up a sloppy management or even a scandal. In the member's view, is this adequate to ensure Canadians get all the facts with respect to the government's handling of security?

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Berthold:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question.

That is in fact one of our concerns. If a minister can decide what will or will not be reviewed at a committee responsible for oversight of the minister's actions, then we have a real problem. That was not what Canadians expected when they were promised that a committee made up of parliamentarians would oversee operations.

[*English*]

**Mr. Earl Dreeshen (Red Deer—Mountain View, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I believe it was the Prime Minister's father who said that MPs were nobodies 50 yards from the House of Commons. This is an opportunity for us to perhaps reflect on what we will be in the House of Commons if we only take our instructions from the Prime Minister's Office.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Berthold:** Mr. Speaker, we might draw a parallel with the Liberal Party nomination process during the election. When the Prime Minister goes against his own riding associations, if he does that kind of thing within his own family, imagine what he could do in the House of Commons, which is made up of opposition parties that do not think the way he does.

[*English*]

**Mr. Mark Holland (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise to speak to this bill.

There are few responsibilities more important to government than ensuring the safety of the Canadian population while at the same time ensuring the protection of its rights as enshrined in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. This became a dominant theme in the last campaign, and we said that these two issues are not mutually exclusive. They are not things that are traded off against each other. They are things that must be considered equally and simultaneously, and both must be done with full force and effect.

What we see in Bill C-22 is the beginning of an effort to finally address some major problems we have within our security and intelligence framework, the biggest one being oversight.

I go back to my time on the other side of the aisle as critic for public safety and national security, and harken back to the reports of

Justice Iacobucci and Justice O'Connor and the imperative nature of oversight in ensuring that our security and intelligence agencies are operating effectively and within the proper bounds of Canadian law. Unfortunately, over the last decade, despite many recommendations from parliamentary committees, these recommendations languished and were not acted upon, which meant that these key provisions were not put into effect.

Why is that required? Let us look at the fact that right now the oversight for our security and intelligence, if it exists, exists in silos. For example, the RCMP public complaints commission looks at the RCMP but is not able to follow evidence as it pertains to or deals with other agencies. CSIS has SIRC. To take the other extreme, the Canada Border Services Agency has no form of oversight.

Right now, the parliamentary committee, in an all-party way, is very effectively looking at our national security framework. A piece of the answer that we have seen in other jurisdictions and that has been talked about in many of the recommendations I spoke to earlier is the need to have a parliamentary committee made up of members of the House that would be able to follow information no matter where it goes. There may be a single incident involving intelligence that moves from the RCMP to the Canada Border Services Agency and that is also involved with immigration and many other agencies.

This new committee would have the power to look into all corners of security and intelligence. From the government's perspective, it was incredibly important to bring it in early and set it up. I am very encouraged that the bill is before the House, and I am anxious for this new committee to get to work.

Even before the committee saw this, experts rang in on the efficacy of what was proposed. Of course, we improved it, but it is a good idea to take a look at what some experts were saying about the state of the bill in its improvement, the leap forward that we made even prior to the amendments made at committee stage.

Craig Forcese, a professor of law at the University of Ottawa and a renowned expert in this area, said this will be "a stronger body than the UK and Australian equivalents" and "a dramatic change for Canadian national-security accountability". He went on to call it "a good bill" and gave it "a high pass."

His colleague Wesley Wark said, "I fully support Bill C-22." He noted some improvements, but he basically issued a warning not to let perfect be the enemy of the good.

The Canadian Civil Liberties Association supported the bill, saying, "This new accountability mechanism is crucial".

*Government Orders*

In the media, there were many positive comments. The *Toronto Star* said that this is “an important first step toward accountability” and that it “would provide an essential check” on the security establishment. That was before the committee made its recommendations.

In the Commonwealth, we have gone much further. This is particularly noteworthy given the fact that the testimony the committee heard from the United Kingdom, for example, was to go slowly at the beginning because the committee, as it establishes itself and its work, needs to earn the trust of both the Canadian public and the institutions it is reviewing.

● (1555)

Notwithstanding that, we thought we would start aggressively, start ahead of everyone else in the Commonwealth, because we recognize, particularly with the dearth of action over the last decade, that there is an imperative nature to get these oversight mechanisms that had been ignored in place.

In the course of testimony, the committee did what it should do. It reviewed the material, heard from expert witnesses, and made a number of recommendations. The government was happy to get behind and support a number of those recommendations which are reflected in the bill that is before the House today. I will run through some of those quickly.

There is a whistle-blower clause requiring the committee to alert the appropriate minister and Attorney General if it uncovers something that may be illegal. There is a requirement that the annual report indicate where redactions have been made and why. The chair only votes to break ties; in other words, the chair does not have a double vote. It limits a minister's authority to determine that an examination would be injurious to national security and therefore outside the committee's mandate to ongoing operations, and requires the minister to alert the committee when the operation is no longer ongoing or when examining it would no longer pose a national security problem. Finally, it allows the committee access to information about ongoing defence intelligence activities in support of military operations, privileged information under the Investment Canada Act, and information collected by FINTRAC. That is all in the amendment to clause 14.

It can be seen that a great number of recommendations that were made by the committee were accepted by the government and are reflected in the bill. I think they are important improvements. They certainly go well beyond the standard that we see in any other Commonwealth country. I will come to an examination of those in a minute, but let us take a look quickly at some of the clauses that were rejected.

Reinserting in clause 14 giving information about human intelligence sources and witness protection was rejected, and I think for very sensible grounds. If somebody is in a witness protection program, as an example, we do not want to be sharing that name any more than is absolutely necessary. Even for the agencies that are sharing that information, not everybody in those agencies has access to it. We want to limit how much those names go out. That just makes prudent and good sense.

There is also restriction around information on ongoing law enforcement investigations. This is to avoid perceptions of political interference in an ongoing criminal investigation. This does not mean after the investigation that they cannot look into what has transpired to ensure that everything was as it should be, but when that matter is ongoing and current, certainly there is cause for concern around whether or not that would constitute interference and whether or not police would have to divert resources, to pull it off a case in order to work with the committee, so retrospectively instead of while it is ongoing.

Briefly I want to talk about some of the differences, because they are important, about Canada and some of our Commonwealth comparators. If we look at Britain, for example, in order to look beyond MI6, MI5, or GCHC, a memorandum of understanding is actually required between the committee and the Prime Minister. In Australia there is a limit strictly to statutory reviews of legislation and administration and expenses of particular agencies. It would actually be a parliamentary resolution or a ministerial referral to look at any other issue. It would require that level of depth, but that is not the case here. There are no such restrictions. There is the ability for the committee to look in every corner.

With respect to access to information, every single one of the Commonwealth partners, and I will not list them all but I can say the U.K., New Zealand, Australia and so forth, all put in restrictions around information sharing that deal with operational sensitivity and things that pose a threat to national security.

Much has been made of this, but the fact remains, obviously, that there needs to be the ability for the minister to protect national security when it is appropriate, and if there is a disagreement between the committee and the minister, then there is the ability for the committee to file a report of all the accumulated instances where they feel the government has not provided that information, and that could be aired publicly. Of course, that committee would have a very strong pulpit from which to speak.

The bottom line is that the bill is the beginning, an incredibly important first step on a journey ensuring we have appropriate oversight for our security intelligence framework. I look forward to this bill passing and for the work to come that we committed to in the platform.

● (1600)

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, I congratulate my friend and hon. colleague, who is now the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety. I certainly hope that his experience as parliamentary secretary for public safety will not be as frustrating as it was to be parliamentary secretary for democratic institutions. I highly doubt that the government plans to pull the plug on this legislation in the next 24 hours, so it is bound to be a bit more rewarding.

*Government Orders*

All levity aside, I support this bill. It is an important piece of legislation. It is absolutely the case that when Mr. Justice O'Connor and others testified in hearings on Bill C-51 in the 41st Parliament, the failure of Canadian governments over time to have parliamentary oversight of security operations and security entities was drawn to our attention numerous times. He quoted Craig Forcese, who is one of Canada's leading experts, as is Kent Roach. They would prefer to see additional improvements to this bill, as would I, but I appreciate that important amendments were accepted at committee.

Would the parliamentary secretary be able to give us an update on what is being done to remedy the egregious multiple affronts to security and safety in Canada that came forward in Bill C-51? I opposed Bill C-51, not primarily because it offended Canadian civil liberties, although it does, but because it created silos in the views of people like Mr. Justice O'Connor, where CSIS would have information and have no obligation to share it with the RCMP and no obligation to share it with CSEC. Really, Bill C-51 makes us less safe, and the faster we can get rid of all of its various elements, potentially other than part 2, the better off we will all be.

• (1605)

**Mr. Mark Holland:** Mr. Speaker, I share my hon. colleague's concerns. Before I address the concerns as they relate to Bill C-51, I will speak to the bill that is in front of us, Bill C-22. It is important to note that there would be a five-year mandatory review. While we are ahead of the Commonwealth and while we think, after the committee's recommendations and the listening that we did across the country, that we have a very good bill, there is a mandatory review process to make sure we could look at how effective this committee is being and how we could improve it. We do not hold this out as perfection, but we do feel that this is the right place to start.

On the issue of changes and when we can expect them, the committee at this very moment is considering a report on the security and intelligence framework. We want to hear from that committee. It has done incredibly important work. It has heard from witnesses across the country. That committee report is going to be a very important input into the minister's overall process on responding. We have very clear platform commitments on what we feel needs to be changed and improved to get right that simultaneous work that needs to be done to protect Canadians and also to ensure that their rights are also protected.

The committee report is coming out. I would expect action by the government very shortly thereafter, informed by that process.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Karine Trudel (Jonquière, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I listened closely to my colleague's speech. He spoke several times about the importance of the committee. Canadians want a watchdog with sharp teeth. It is important to have a properly formed committee.

The new committee must also have full access to classified information, have adequate resources, enjoy some autonomy, and be able, within reason, to share with Canadians its actions in an instructive and transparent manner.

I would like to know my colleague's thoughts on this and especially on the importance of restoring Canadians' trust in our security and intelligence community. I want to know what my

colleague thinks, but personally I believe that there needs to be true parliamentary oversight.

[*English*]

**Mr. Mark Holland:** Mr. Speaker, parliamentary oversight is essential. I certainly pushed for it as a critic. We ran on it in the last election. We are delivering it here in Bill C-22. It is a massive step forward.

As I said, we have not held this out as the sole component of the solution. There are other pieces that are coming. I referenced the committee's work and impending legislation that the government will table as well. However, the spirit of what the member asked is dead on: the importance of oversight, the importance of rigorously maintaining that protection of Canadian rights as guaranteed under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. We are also ensuring at the same time that our security and intelligence apparatus has the tools it needs effectively to keep Canadians safe.

**Mr. Raj Grewal (Brampton East, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise today in support of Bill C-22, an act to establish a national security and intelligence committee of parliamentarians.

After second reading consideration and committee scrutiny, we now have the opportunity to review the bill at report stage. The robust parliamentary process has served us well. The bill has been carefully studied by members on all sides of the House. Advice has been heard from expert witnesses and the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security has proposed amendments.

As the legislation stands today, it will move our country toward a more accountable and effective national security system. As many have said today and prior to today, the legislation is long overdue. We have heard stakeholders call it "crucial" and affirm that it will establish a committee in Canada that is stronger than its international counterparts. It will fill a significant gap that has existed in Canada for far too long. It will enable us to achieve our twin objectives of ensuring that our national security agencies are working effectively to keep Canadians safe and that the rights and freedoms of Canadians are protected.

Creating a new national security and intelligence committee of parliamentarians honours a major commitment of the government to Canadians. The committee will be an enormously important addition to our parliamentary landscape. It will have: extraordinary access to classified information in order to closely examine intelligence and security operations; enhanced scrutiny of national security and intelligence activities; a broader mandate than counterparts in other modern democracies; the ability to set its own agenda fully independent of government; the responsibility to report annually to Canadians through Parliament; and the power to examine activities government-wide, including ongoing operations.

*Government Orders*

As the legislation stands now, the committee will meet the dual objectives we set long ago, which is to ensure our national security apparatus is working to keep Canadians safe and secure, while protecting the rights and freedoms of Canadians.

When the bill was first introduced, it proposed a stronger committee than those that existed with many of our international allies. With amendments, the scope, authorities, and access we are proposing for the committee will be broadened even further. The government has indicated that it will accept most of these amendments.

With respect to scope, for example, we agreed with the committee that the committee must be empowered to review national security and intelligence operations. As amended, that will include the operation of crown corporations. Further, as amended, if the minister determines that the examination will be against national security, his or her power to delay it will be limited to the period of time during which the operation is under way. Afterward, the committee can review the operation.

Another important amendment is whistle-blower protection that will require the committee to inform a minister and the Attorney General about any national security or intelligence activity undertaken by a department that may not comply with the law. Like my colleagues, I was pleased that this amendment was widely endorsed. I also agree that the chair of the committee should be given a vote only in the case of a tie. I also agree with many of the changes regarding access to information exemptions for the bill initially proposed.

With the recent amendments, for example, the committee will now be able to receive information about ongoing defence intelligence activities that support military operations. It will also have access to relevant information collected by the Financial Transactions and Reports Analysis Centre of Canada and to privileged information under the Investment Canada Act.

The government has also agreed to amend the legislation so that reasons must be given for any redaction. Indeed, the government has been open to reasonable amendments throughout the parliamentary process.

• (1610)

We have not only conducted a careful examination of this crucial legislation, but we have also benefited from many years of consideration in creating this committee and from long collaboration with our international partners. Every other member of the Five Eyes alliance, including Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States, has a legislative body with access to classified information to oversee security and intelligence matters.

Canada has tried to create a committee for over a decade now. It is time we give Canadians and parliamentarians the mandate to review these activities that we all want and need. Today, we are all taking one step closer to bringing this important new body into existence. We are closer to a system in which parliamentarians are better able to hold the government to account. We are closer to ensuring that concrete actions are taken when deficiencies and problems with our security framework and operations are identified.

Having learned from some of the best practices of our allies, we are closer to a truly developing a Canadian approach to national security accountability. This is a significant step forward for Canada. The legislation before us is as bold and progressive as it is thoughtful and balanced.

I am very proud to be part of the legislature that will, hopefully, at long last, put this critical accountability mechanism in place. I thank all members and parties for their support, advice, scrutiny, and debate in creating a better bill. I encourage all colleagues to support the passage of this important legislation.

• (1615)

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the reality is that this bill has more holes in it than a jar of olives. If we look at the provisions, there are so many things that are distant from the spirit about which the member talked. He talked about this providing genuine oversight, but he should know that all the power remains in the hands of the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister appoints all the members of the committee and the Prime Minister has complete control over the information that goes forward.

The bill is very clear that it is not a parliamentary committee. It is, as it happens, a committee of parliamentarians, but it is not a parliamentary committee in any of the senses in which we understand that.

I wonder if the member could comment on some of those holes and whether he is really satisfied that this satisfies the Liberals' election commitment. I do not think it does at all.

**Mr. Raj Grewal:** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for making the analogy to a jar of olives. As I know, he is an aficionado of olives. On our recent trip to Israel, we learned a lot about them.

However, getting to the member's question, I want to reiterate that our government is making an historic commitment to Canadians to fulfill an election promise. However, it is not just our commitment. Other governments have tried to set up this committee, which we have needed for quite some time now, to ensure there is independent oversight over our security and intelligence. Just like our allies in the Five Eyes, every other country already has this committee. We are setting one up to ensure we protect Canadians. At the same time, we are ensuring that our rights and freedoms, which as Canadians we cherish so much, are protected.

I truly believe in Bill C-22, and I encourage the member opposite to support it.

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, one of the issues we will vote on with Bill C-22 is an amendment I have made. As members know, and the Speaker has accepted it for a vote, it is a deletion to retain the powers of parliamentary privilege for members of Parliament on the committee. It is an attempt, even at this late stage, to have the bill respect parliamentarians and their ability, having taken the oath of confidentiality, to be responsible for the secrecy that is required of them in this very important committee for senators and members of Parliament.

*Government Orders*

I note that the New Zealand legislation does not require its members of parliament to give up their parliamentary privileges in order to serve on their committee for security operations. Would my hon. colleague please consider voting for my amendment to delete that provision?

**Mr. Raj Grewal:** Mr. Speaker, Bill C-22 and the government's commitment to setting up this committee, which is independent of government, is extremely important, especially if we look at the current security landscape in the world we live in today.

Canadians expect their government to ensure they are protected. The first job of any government is to protect its citizens. The committee will be able to do that. It will ensure that Canadians are safe and secure, while at the same time protecting their rights and freedoms.

I look forward to the committee being set up. I look forward to parliamentarians of all political parties serving on it and ensuring they carry out their mandate to protect Canadians.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Karine Trudel (Jonquière, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, let me cut to the chase.

Why are there no ways to settle certain disputes confidentially? For example, a Federal Court judge could be called upon to conduct regular assessments of the warrants for secret information. A minister can actually decide whether to retain the information or not.

[*English*]

**Mr. Raj Grewal:** Mr. Speaker, the bill clearly states that the minister will have the prerogative to ensure that national security is still maintained, which is an important piece of the bill. It also states that after the national security risk has passed, the committee has the opportunity to revisit the minister's decision.

Again, Bill C-22 and this new committee will have the balance that we are trying to achieve, which is ensuring we are keeping Canadians safe while at the same time protecting the rights and freedoms we cherish so much.

• (1620)

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to join this very important debate about the structures we have in place for oversight of our intelligence and law enforcement activities. Unfortunately, we are doing so again under the gun of closure. This is at a time when the government is contemplating changes to our parliamentary rules that it would like to move forward without even working with other parties. It would in effect make closure automatic on bills that it brings forward. This is some of the context in which we see a limiting of discussion here today. At the same time, this is an important discussion that I am very glad to be able to participate in.

In general, when we think about the oversight mechanisms that exist for our intelligence agencies, we can have expert oversight, oversight by externally appointed experts who have specific knowledge in this area, and parliamentary oversight, which is oversight by elected officials. There are pros and cons to both of these options, and certainly they can exist in tandem with one another.

For a long time in Canada, we have had a strong system of expert oversight. What the government is doing with the legislation is bringing in something that Liberals are calling parliamentary oversight. However, in effect, and I will get into the details, this is not meaningful parliamentary oversight. It does not achieve many of the advantages of expert oversight, but it also does not achieve the advantages that might be associated with a more genuine parliamentary oversight model. This is the objection that I have to the legislation.

If we were going to bring in a more genuine parliamentary oversight structure similar to some of the private members' bills that Liberal MPs, such as the member for Malpeque, have at different times proposed, we would find our caucus more sympathetic to those kinds of arguments. However, we are seeing something that does not at all capitalize on those advantages, because it leaves control in the hands of the Prime Minister. At the same time, it does not entail some of the advantages that exist in the structure of an executive oversight system.

Would it not be perverse if in a bill that was supposed to be about strengthening Parliament, we actually saw a bill that created all the tools for strengthening and deepening the grasp of the Prime Minister over the direction of Parliament? That is exactly what we see here. It is legislation that tightens the control and the power of the Prime Minister's Office, nominally about parliamentary oversight, but that actually has many of the opposite effects.

Let us review what was committed to by the party in government. The Liberals' election commitment was, "We will create an all-party committee to monitor and oversee the operations of every government department and agency with national security responsibilities." What we had in this election commitment was the implication of all-party inclusion, meaningful review of past operations, and oversight of present operations. It would be ongoing oversight as well as a review of past operations.

What we have, though, is nothing in the legislation to guarantee that all parties would be represented, because we do not have a committee that takes on the traditional form of a parliamentary committee. The way our committees normally function is that the leaders of parties nominate members of their parties to be members of those committees, and the committee is laid out in proportion to representation in the House. Since we are talking about a joint committee, it is probably in proportion to representation in this and the other place.

In fact what we have is the government creating a committee where the Prime Minister gets to choose all of the members. Yes, it says that only a certain number can be members of the government, but it does not prescribe the distribution of opposition members. It does not say that the distribution should be reflective of the House.

*Government Orders*

It is conceivable that the government could appoint independents who have recently departed from the Liberal caucus to this committee. I do not know how likely that is, but there are no protections in the legislation to ensure there is meaningful representation of all party perspectives. Even when members of opposition parties are appointed, again, those appointments are fundamentally at the pleasure of the Prime Minister, who designates the chair. In fact, long before this legislation has been passed, the Prime Minister had already publicly designated the person he is going to select as chair, which I think shows a great lack of respect for this institution.

• (1625)

In terms of the appointment process, in terms of the distribution process, in terms of the lack of formal consultation requirement for the Senate or any clear definition of what consultation with other parties would look like in the process of those appointments, we see legislation that is about strengthening the power of the Prime Minister over the process of intelligence review. That is not at all in keeping with what many would have thought was the spirit of that Liberal election commitment. It is, in many ways, moving in the opposite direction of what it purports to be doing.

There are not only limitations that ensure the control of the Prime Minister in the process of appointing members of the committee, but there are also significant problems with the way in which the information is handled. Ministers, as per one of the amendments that is going to be reintroduced, as well as the Prime Minister, can choose to exclude certain information on a variety of different bases.

What jumped out at me when I read the legislation initially, and members can look at it, is subclause 21(5), which states:

If, after consulting the Chair of the Committee, the Prime Minister is of the opinion that information in an annual or special report is information the disclosure of which would be injurious to national security, national defence or international relations or is information that is protected by litigation privilege or solicitor-client privilege or, in civil law, by immunity from disclosure or the professional secrecy of advocates and notaries, the Prime Minister may direct the Committee to submit to the Prime Minister a revised version of the annual or special report that does not contain that information.

In principle, I think members would be supportive of the idea that information which would be injurious for national security should be excluded from public release. However, when the section is so general as to include the possible exclusion for information that would be injurious to international relations, I would submit that almost anything that would come out of this committee could potentially be injurious to international relations. However, the adjudication of that process is not independent. It is not subject to the knowledge and expertise of the committee. It is simply up to the Prime Minister. If he says he does not want that section included because it could be injurious to international relations, perhaps this might be more an issue of “injurious to the reputation of the government”, and that would be a motivating basis for excluding that information.

I posed this question to the House leader when we initially debated the bill at second reading. The House leader asserted at the time that the committee report would be provided to the Prime Minister for the sole purpose of ensuring that it does not contain classified information. In reality, though, the subclause is very clear, in black and white, that it allows exclusions on the basis of

international relations as well as a range of other criteria, and that the determination of what would be included and excluded is solely at the discretion of the government.

We had a concern raised today about disclosing certain information to the committee. It was raised by the Minister of Public Safety, who effectively said that there is more risk of this information leaking out if more people have access to this information, and that is why certain information should be excluded from being shown to the committee. At the same time as saying that, there is nothing in this legislation that requires the individuals appointed to the committee, or even the individual who is appointed chair, to have experience handling and dealing with classified information.

This comes back to the central point, which is that we have a choice between expert oversight or parliamentary oversight, or some combination thereof. However, effectively this bill would not provide the advantages of either. It would not require that those appointed to the committee have some experience with the handling of classified information, which would build some expertise and experience into the question of the handling of that classified information. It would not give the committee the level of independence that it should have by leaving aspects of the appointments as well as the management of information to the Prime Minister. Effectively, it would tighten the control of the Prime Minister's Office over what really should be a parliamentary function.

• (1630)

It is for these reasons that I will be disagreeing with the government on amendments coming forward, and likely, unless we see what we want in the amendments, voting against the bill.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have found that the Conservatives are trying to find a reason to justify their vote on this particular piece of legislation. It really does not make much sense when we listen to one member versus another member. At the core, the Conservatives appear to be in opposition of having a parliamentary oversight committee. I think the Canadian public would be best served if the Conservatives would be straightforward as to whether they support a parliamentary oversight committee today, because we know that yesterday they did not.

The second issue that I take some exception with is that the member makes reference to the fact that we could be doing more. He used the example of the Prime Minister making appointments. In New Zealand, which is one of the Five Eyes countries, the prime minister is actually on the committee. If we look at the committee that we are talking about today in this legislation, the number of Liberal MPs that would sit on the committee would be a minority of the overall membership of the committee.

Therefore, I ask the member this. Do the Conservatives support parliamentary oversight today? Also, what other amendments would they like to see that would make it more robust?

*Government Orders*

**Mr. Garnett Genuis:** Mr. Speaker, I am happy to go through the points that the member made. He said that it was about the overall principle of parliamentary oversight. We are at report stage. We are not just talking about the principle of the bill, we have to get into the details. I think it is important for members to analyze, think about, and understand some of the problems with the details. It is not good enough that in principle the government has said that it wants to move in a certain direction, because, as I have argued, the details point in a very different direction.

With respect to parliamentary oversight, as I said clearly during my speech, I see advantages to the expert oversight model and advantages to the parliamentary oversight model. However, the legislation we have in front of us does not create a genuine system of parliamentary oversight because the Prime Minister still holds all the cards. We are not talking about a parliamentary committee, we are talking about a committee of parliamentarians.

On the member's point about Liberal MPs forming a minority, I think that is clear sleight of hand, because the government appoints all the members and it gets to appoint some senators. Therefore, if it appoints quasi-independent senators, who we all know are perhaps not as independent as the claim might be, we are obviously still in a position of the Prime Minister holding the cards. If there were advice sought from the Senate about how to appoint if Senate caucuses had input, if Senate appointments were reflective of the distribution of the Senate, then we would not have that problem. However, this is not a typically structured joint committee of the two Houses. It is a committee of parliamentarians chosen entirely by the Prime Minister and serving at the pleasure of the Prime Minister. I think we need to dig into those details and discuss those details.

In terms of amendments, we have amendments coming forward tonight. I think some of the amendments that we are proposing are very good, and some of the government House leader's amendments are not so good. Therefore, if the member wants to know what we are proposing, I would encourage him to vote with us this evening.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet (Hochelaga, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I was previously a member of an oversight committee for a labour organization, looking over the union finances. We had access to every document, namely cheques, invoices and expense claims. We got whatever we wanted.

The subject here is national security. The oversight committee therefore will have an important role to play. Clearly, we are not talking about the exact same level of security. In this case, oaths must be taken and secrets must be kept for life. We are also talking about the highest level of security clearance. There are differences, I admit.

However, it is still an oversight committee. The committee will need to have all the information in hand so that it can do its work properly. If the committee does not have access to all the information, how can it be assured that Canadians are really safe?

Does my colleague feel that the country's security will be in good hands despite the shortcomings of the bill? Is he absolutely sure?

● (1635)

[*English*]

**Mr. Garnett Genuis:** Mr. Speaker, as I have outlined, we have concerns about the legislative framework that has been set up here. It does not provide the committee with the effective tools to do its job, and that comes in many different forms. I have spoken principally about this issue of the independence of the committee and the control the Prime Minister would have over the flow of information in and out, as well as who sits on the committee. It may well be sensible and there may well be an argument for excluding certain information from the purview of the committee, but for all of the power in terms of the control of that flow of information to be in the hands of the government does not create the kind of independence one would expect to see in oversight.

Again, if there are concerns about information leaking out, we have made the suggestion that we have an expectation that those on the committee would have experience in handling classified information, but that was not a suggestion that was accepted by the government. We have a number of these problems because the government is unwilling to accept the constructive feedback we have provided. It speaks to the underlying reality that the government does not want to hand over control. It just wants to make it look like it is.

**Mr. Peter Fonseca (Mississauga East—Cooksville, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to speak to Bill C-22, which is legislation that would establish a committee of parliamentarians to review our national security and intelligence activities.

This bill engages two areas of extraordinary importance to all Canadians: freedom and security. My constituents in Mississauga East—Cooksville, like all Canadians, are vitally concerned about their liberties and freedoms. They are also very conscious of the need for their security and the security of their fellow Canadians.

The debate in these areas is often set out in terms of a zero-sum game. Supposedly, increasing security means less freedom, or that as security decreases, freedom increases. Simply put, this is not true. While on some few occasions a trade-off or balance may be necessary, in reality, most of the time, freedom and security are entirely complementary ideals. There is no real long-term freedom without security. There is no real stable security without freedom. Freedom without security is a charade. Such freedom in a security vacuum is an empty concept. It is life inside a compound or a gated community living in constant fear. Likewise, security without freedom is life in a real or virtual prison cell. This is one of the reasons that I support this bill. It advances the mutually reinforcing goals of liberty and safety.



*Government Orders*

The need for review in the areas of national security and intelligence is now broadly recognized. Sadly, one can see many examples of failures to provide security and failure to protect liberties both abroad and in Canada. Such reviews involving classified information are particularly challenging. The U.S. 9/11 Commission found, “Secrecy stifles oversight, accountability, and information sharing.” Challenging or not, effective reviews must be done. Literally, it is a matter of life and death.

Accepting the need for such reviews, the real and productive debate is about the appropriate mechanisms for review. When we consider the appropriate mechanisms, we must recognize that this is a marked departure from our parliamentary system of government. National security and intelligence have traditionally been the exclusive preserve of the executive branch. A review system that works within our parliamentary form of government is required.

The first matter in this regard that one must consider is the very real problem of who is best placed to oversee these intelligence and security matters. It is the classic dilemma of who watches the watchers. Should the reviewers be experts? They have the experience and knowledge in such matters. Should the reviewers be independent outsiders, like parliamentarians? There are arguments supporting both positions.

Certainly, experts are used in Canada's other review bodies, being the Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the RCMP, the Communications Security Establishment commissioner, and the Security Intelligence Review Committee. Parliamentarians are obviously independent. They do not necessarily start with the required expertise. However, if one uses experts, particularly in this somewhat closed subject area, one tends to get those who, through long association, might be considered too close to the agencies under review. This closeness can develop in complete good faith and despite genuine efforts to resist it.

I believe it is right to use parliamentarians in this regard. As to their lack of expertise, members of Parliament are expected to act in many areas outside their common knowledge base. They deal with economics in their consideration of budgets and other financial legislation. They deal with health policy in legislation. They deal with moral issues in matters like the assisted dying law. They deal with scientific policy.

Parliamentary oversight of security and intelligence matters is based upon the very foundations of representational democracy. Our whole democratic system assumes a faith in the people's representatives' abilities. However, many parliamentarians will start their duties in this regard without any background knowledge. This makes the support of the secretariat set out in clauses 24 and 25 essential. It is critical that non-expert parliamentarians be supported by staff with the necessary long-term expertise and corporate memory.

● (1640)

I further note with approval that the secretariat could contract for independent legal advice. This is not restricted to the Department of Justice for legal advice. While that advice is admirably professional, the Department of Justice advises virtually all other actors in these areas simultaneously. Independent legal advice can enhance the independence and thus the effectiveness of the secretariat. Effectively, parliamentary review and oversight simply will not

work without secretariat assistance. Therefore, I urge the government to give the secretariat the necessary priority and resources.

I note the review committee's mandate is not limited to simply protecting rights and ensuring legal compliance. The committee would be free to consider all matters, including those of effectiveness of subject organizations and even value for money, i.e., are we getting the security that we need commensurate with the resources we are expending.

I strongly support the composition of the committee as set out in clause 5. It nicely balances the interests of all major parties within this House and within the Senate. The inclusion of senators would provide for the possibility of some beneficial continuity for the committee.

This legislation in clause 8 would restrict the committee from reviewing ongoing matters if the relevant minister determines the review would be injurious to national security. This is an appropriate restriction recognizing the established responsibilities of the executive branch in our parliamentary form of democratic government. It is not hard to imagine the impracticalities and problems associated with such a review in the midst of an ongoing sensitive matter. The interference, distraction, and diversion of limited resources are only some of those potential problems.

Some members might note that the provisions make clear that committee members must honour their commitment to confidentiality. These matters are dealt with in clauses 10 through 12. Sadly, parliamentarians have not been above the breach of these rules. In this regard, I remind the House that one of our colleagues, Fred Rose, a former member for Montreal—Cartier, was convicted in 1946 for conspiracy to pass on official secrets to a foreign power, i.e., the Soviet Union. He was sentenced to six years in prison.

This legislation in clause 9 recognizes that there are other review bodies, albeit non-parliamentary, engaged in potentially related matters. Co-operation and de-conflicting are mandated and only sensible.

This bill would provide the committee the broadest powers. Clause 13 says that the committee is “entitled to send for persons, papers and records, and to have access to any information”. Please note the words “any information”. The only information excluded is cabinet documents being confidences of the Queen's Privy Council. This slight restriction is entirely consistent with our parliamentary system of government.

*Government Orders*

We must recognize that this legislation is a novel approach for Canada. National security and intelligence have traditionally been matters strictly of the purview of the executive, of the cabinet. The proposed review committee would be the legislative branch's first foray into these two sensitive areas. This lack of precedent is not a reason not to proceed, but a reason to recognize the limits of what we can sensibly do, predict, and provide for. This is another reason to tread carefully. Most important, to provide a mechanism to make sure that we have acted appropriately, that mechanism is the five-year review mandated by clause 34.

In conclusion, I am proud to support this bill because it introduces necessary outside review in matters of vital concern to Canadians. These matters heavily implicate both our freedom and our security. I also support it because this review is to be in the hands of the most appropriate persons, those persons being Canadian parliamentarians. The review committee would be appropriately composed and represented with a broad mandate and strong powers. This vital committee would be supported by a secretariat and executive director, whose support, I repeat, is absolutely essential. This would allow us to ensure that we are balancing our liberties and freedoms with our security.

• (1645)

**Ms. Cheryl Hardcastle (Windsor—Tecumseh, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it is loud and clear that my hon. colleague is very confident in how this committee is going to proceed. However, Canadians watching are very disappointed in how the government supported Bill C-51. They were promised during the election campaign that the amendments were going to be addressed. However, the bill that has come forward to address this has such shortcomings.

It was mentioned that some experts validated this committee. I want to point out that the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Canada, the Security and Intelligence Review Committee, and the Canadian Bar Association all testified that the oversight committee must not be restricted in its ability to access necessary information. It is really confounding that this committee will move forward and that has been rejected up until now.

Could the hon. member shed some light on why the government rejects expert evidence that access to information is absolutely necessary for this committee to function the way that is envisioned by the government?

**Mr. Peter Fonseca:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for the opportunity to speak about the good work done in committee, the many witnesses who were heard, and the amendments that came forward, which, in many cases, like adding senators, we will move forward with.

The hon. member also talked about some of the experts from whom the committee heard. Following the introduction of Bill C-22, the expert from the University of Ottawa, Craig Forcese, said, "this will be a stronger body than the UK and Australia equivalents. And a dramatic change for Canadian national security and accountability. This is a good bill. I would give it a high pass". Also, University of Toronto expert Wesley Wark has called Bill C-22 a very good bill.

The committee heard from over 40-some-odd witnesses. There have been over 40 members in the chamber speak to the legislation. It strikes the right balance. We are moving in the right direction.

**Mr. Pat Kelly (Calgary Rocky Ridge, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it was nice to hear the largely motherhood section on the intersection of freedom and security, and the desirability of freedom. However, this is at the same time the government has again invoked closure on a bill to which many parliamentarians wish to speak. When one says that 40 members have spoken on this bill fast enough, it sounds like a lot of people, but that is just barely 10% of the people who were elected to the House and who wish to address issues in the House on behalf of their constituents.

Would the member care to comment on why the government needs to ram this through? Even the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics is in the midst of concluding its study of SCISA, where there were many similar issues. This would be another report that could have perhaps been taken into account when contemplating similar issues in this bill.

• (1650)

**Mr. Peter Fonseca:** Mr. Speaker, I have a lot of respect for the member, but it was his party that forced closure on legislation over 100 times. It was the way the Conservatives operated.

That is not the case with Liberals. We made a commitment to the people of Canada to address poor legislation that the previous Conservative government put forward, Bill C-51. We made a commitment to Canadians to bring a balance of freedom and liberty with security. Bill C-22 addresses that. It is imperative on the government to move forward with that agenda, because Canadians have asked for that.

The member should look at his party's record on closure.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Anthony Housefather (Mount Royal, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to speak in favour of Bill C-22.

[*English*]

The national security and intelligence committee of parliamentarians being created is incredibly important. We just have to look at what is happening right now south of the border, where congressional committees are overseeing and questioning what is happening in the FBI, the CIA and other intelligence services, to recognize that without oversight, we might well have a very unfortunate situation with power concentrated only in the executive branch.

Up until today, the Canadian Parliament has been the only parliament among our Five Eyes partners that does not have a committee comprised of parliamentarians and legislators to oversee our intelligence department and agencies and to ensure that fairness, justice and rule of law values are imposed.

As such, I strongly agree, as I said when I campaigned in the last election, that such a committee is needed and would be much appreciated by Canadians.

*Government Orders*

I also want to congratulate the committee that studied the bill. The public safety and national security committee had extensive debates on the bill, which I had the pleasure of reading over the last couple of days. The debate that went on in committee was very interesting and it shed a lot of light on the amendments brought forward and the improvements that were made to the bill. The committee heard from over 40 witnesses. Members of the committee did not necessarily agree with other members of those parties. I congratulate the committee on a thoughtful review of the bill. It stands as an excellent example of how colleagues in the House can work together to make a bill better.

Let me outline a few of the amendments at committee.

In clause 2 and again in clause 15, the amendments made at committee will clarify that the mandate of the committee of parliamentarians includes crown corporations. This broadens the mandate of the NSICOP, and is in keeping with the intent to give that committee a government-wide review capacity.

In clause 5, a time frame of 60 days following the general election has been recommended for the appointment of NSICOP members, and the Prime Minister will be required to consult with the leaders of caucuses and recognized groups in order to name members to the committee.

Amendments to clause 8 to deal with the NSICOP's authority to investigate ongoing activities were made. The minister has authority to determine that an examination of ongoing activities could be injurious to national security. However, with the amendments before us, the time during which the minister can invoke this authority will be limited to the period during which the ongoing operation is injurious security. Once the review is no longer injurious to national security and once it is no longer an ongoing operation, the minister will be required to inform the committee of parliamentarians. That is an improvement to the original bill.

The amendments to clause 14 involve exemptions to the authority to review in certain instances. The amendments would cancel those exemptions. I agree with the standing committee that the exemptions concerning ongoing defence intelligence activities in support of military operations, privileged information under the Investment Canada Act and information collected by the Financial Transactions and Reports Analysis Centre of Canada should be withdrawn.

There are, however, certain exemptions that I believe should remain in the bill.

On the one hand, there are exemptions to individuals who are protected through the witness protection program and to individuals who are confidential sources. I do not think the committee of parliamentarians needs to know the identities of these individual in order to oversee security and intelligence. There is potentially the risk of harm to them if their identities become more widely known. Also, the committee of parliamentarians risks the perception of political interference in police matters should the exemption for ongoing police investigations be removed.

In addition, the committee recommended that clause 16 be deleted. I do not generally support that recommendation. Clause 16 would authorize a minister to prevent disclosure of special operating

information as defined by the Security of Information Act when it could be injurious to national security.

There will be situations in which a minister will need to avail him or herself of this prerogative in the interests of national security, but the bill also places checks and balances on this authority. The proposed amendment will require the minister to explain in writing their reasons why the authority is being invoked. This will effectively make public the minister's decision and the minister will have to contemplate the public's reaction before making use of this provision.

• (1655)

The equivalent committees in the other Westminster Five Eyes partners face similar and indeed generally more extensive restrictions on their access to information. In fact, the access provided to the NSICOP will broadly exceed the access afforded to the committees of our international partners.

To repeat a point made earlier, under Bill C-22, operational reviews may only be stopped for national security reasons during the period that the operation in question is ongoing, and only if the conduct of the review will be disruptive to that ongoing operation. Once the operation is complete, the committee of parliamentarians may begin or resume its review.

When the committee of parliamentarians tables its annual report to Parliament, it will be able to cite any instances where this authority has been used. In this way, we assure a degree of transparency that will enable Parliament and the Canadian public to hold the minister and the government to account.

One important aspect of the proposed committee of parliamentarians would be that the government would not have a majority of members on the committee. Indeed, as now agreed and amended, the chair would have a vote only in the case of a tie. By limiting the voting powers of the chair, we further ensure that the committee's work and findings will not be controlled by the government.

The amendments to clause 21 provide a further example of how the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security has ensured greater accountability in the legislation. Should the prime minister redact information contained in NSICOP's report, the new version of the report must be clearly identified as a revised version. On top of that, the extent of the revisions must be indicated, as well as the reasons for them.

A new clause 31 requires NSICOP to inform the appropriate minister or the Attorney General if, in its opinion, it finds any activity related to national security or intelligence carried out by a department that may not be in compliance with the law. This whistleblower provision is a significant addition to the bill before us. I congratulate the standing committee for championing this provision.

During committee stage, a wide range of witnesses shared the benefit of their experience and advice. The amendments before us today demonstrate that the committee listened to them and that the government also listened to the committee. Committee witnesses included leading professionals and academic experts, human rights advocates, and the heads of our existing national security and intelligence agencies. I thank them for their input.

*Government Orders*

There has been a consensus, I believe, that the bill would improve the accountability and effectiveness of Canada's national security and intelligence system. I urge all members to join me in supporting the bill. I am pleased that the government is supporting a majority of amendments that have come back from the standing committee.

• (1700)

**Mr. Scott Duvall (Hamilton Mountain, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my friend's reasoning in trying to justify the bill to convince us to vote for it. However, we have some problems, and I think Canadians want some answers.

When it was Bill C-51, the Liberals at the time said that they would make amendments. Canadians expected an oversight committee that had teeth. This bill handcuffs the committee to do its job properly.

The Prime Minister, the Minister of Public Safety, and nine other cabinet members voted for Bill C-622 in 2014. That bill would have created an oversight committee with full access and subpoena power. Therefore, why is the government now trying to pry these tools out of the hands of this committee when they thought it was better to have it for the committee then?

**Mr. Anthony Housefather:** Mr. Speaker, I am sure the member knows this, and just misstated it. When Bill C-51 was adopted, the Liberal Party was not in government. We were in opposition. It was a Conservative bill.

With respect to why subpoena powers are not being granted to the committee today, I can see pros and cons in both directions. It is always a balance between achieving national security and fundamental transparency and balancing fundamental freedoms.

This is the first time in Canadian experience that we will have such a parliamentary committee, and we should all support it. It is a step forward. There will be a review within five years and we will can learn from the committee's experience during those five years. Perhaps subpoena power will be something that in the future, in that five-year review, may indeed be introduced. I do not believe it is critical at this juncture.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this legislation has gone through second reading. A number of people have made reference to presentations by individuals at committee, and there were some incredible presentations. Amendments were moved, and a number of those amendments were actually accepted by the government, which gave the bill more strength. Prior to those amendments, there were professionals saying that this is wonderful legislation, it is very robust, and it is a great starting point for Canada in providing parliamentary oversight.

Today we have a healthier piece of legislation than we had at second reading because of the good efforts of those who made presentations and because of the committee membership. I wonder if my colleague could provide his thoughts and comments.

**Mr. Anthony Housefather:** Mr. Speaker, the principle of this legislation is incredibly important. It is important for us to have parliamentary oversight of the security apparatus in this country. I do not think any member of the House would think any differently. We

may disagree about the framework for the proposed committee, but we should agree that such a committee should exist.

I believe that the committee worked exactly as a committee should work. It worked across party lines to adopt a number of amendments. The government accepted a good number of the amendments made by committee members. The government listened to the committee, the committee listened to the witnesses, and the bill was improved. That is how committees should work. It is not that all government members vote one way and all opposition members vote another way. At the public safety committee, government and opposition members joined together, back and forth, to support amendments. That was a highlight of and a compliment to the parliamentary process.

**Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, today I rise to speak to Bill C-22, an act to establish parliamentary oversight of our security and intelligence services. Bill C-22 aims to plug a gap by giving a unique committee of nine security-cleared and secrecy-sworn MPs and senators substantial but not complete access to classified information and a whole-of-government mandate to review security and intelligence operations, policy, legislation, and administration.

Canada has not seen any progress toward security accountability in decades. In 1977, the government created the McDonald Commission to investigate the security services activities of the RCMP. The commission resulted in two key recommendations in its final report in 1981. The first was to separate security services from the RCMP, a recommendation that was fully implemented in 1984 with the establishment of CSIS. The other key recommendation, to create a special oversight committee of parliamentarians, was ignored and has gone ignored for decades.

Time after time, governments have resisted the call to create a body for parliamentary oversight of security and intelligence services. They have ignored experts in this country and around the world who have insisted that parliamentary oversight is crucial to bridging the gap between ordinary Canadians and the women and men of our intelligence services.

In 2005, a Liberal government bill was introduced that was almost a carbon copy of Bill C-22 in its original form. An interim committee of parliamentarians on national security, when studying that bill, actually toured allied nations and met with their oversight bodies. It too came to the conclusion that an oversight committee must be provided with complete access to classified information. Unsurprisingly, the Liberals rejected that provision.

*Government Orders*

Without oversight, Canada has been left behind. All of our closest allies, including those with parliamentary governments similar to ours, have adopted legislative oversight to ensure that national security efforts are being executed in the best interests of all citizens. In fact, Canada is the only member of the Five Eyes intelligence-sharing alliance with the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, and New Zealand that does not have any parliamentary oversight of its security and intelligence services.

It is not good enough to simply look at past mistakes and attempt to evaluate where we went wrong. We need proactive, ongoing parliamentary oversight to ensure not only that everything is operating properly but to stop activities that we believe are not in the best interests of Canadians.

Canadians expect a watchdog with teeth. This committee must have full access to classified information, adequate resources, independence, and, subject only to justifiable limits, the power to share its findings with Canadians in an informative and transparent manner.

Without adequate access to information, the committee would not be able to do its job. This work is far too important to do half-heartedly or ineffectively. We will not support creating a committee that simply wastes time and erodes Canadians' trust.

While the Liberals insisted on watering down Bill C-22 to strip parliamentarians' access to crucial information, we believe that committee members must have full access in order to provide full and thorough oversight. When law professor Craig Forcese, from the University of Ottawa, testified at committee, he remarked that "Unless the committee can access information allowing it to follow trails, it will give the appearance of accountability without the substance".

This is exactly what the Liberal government has become known for: all talk and very little action, no real commitment, just smoke and mirrors, just as we have seen with Bill C-51.

If the government truly believes that there should be a committee of parliamentary oversight of security and intelligence issues, it must stop trying to strip the committee of the ability to do its job effectively.

Since Bill C-51 was introduced in 2015, there has been a true awakening about the balance we expect the government to uphold between our privacy rights and national security objectives. This awakening did not happen overnight. In February 2015, 82% of Canadians supported Bill C-51, but by April, the level of support was down to 33%. The more Canadians learned about the bill, the less they liked it, and for good reason.

• (1705)

It is the New Democrats who fought against a very strong current to make sure that Canadians knew the rights we were all signing off and losing forever. It was politically risky, but we knew it was the right thing to do.

Still, to this day, Bill C-51's broad interpretation allows the government to cast a wide net, with the potential to scoop up union members, environmentalists, and aboriginal rights activists. The language in this bill is so broad that the definition of terrorist was

watered down to individuals who practise their legal right to dissent. Under this legislation, police forces have the power to detain people they suspect of planning to break the law. The Canadian Security Intelligence Service will have new powers to arrest. These are only some of the examples of what the NDP stood against, whereas the Liberals in opposition were decidedly unreliable. They flip-flopped, ultimately deciding to amend the bill when they got into power. The problem is that they have not. The government is still playing lip service to its campaign promise. It is disappointing and frustrating that the Liberals are not living up to their commitments on Bill C-51.

To rebuild trust, the committee must be strong, independent, and effective. The current government must fulfill its promise to repeal the problematic elements of Bill C-51. Even the Canadian Civil Liberties Association agrees that legislation is needed to undo the damage done by Bill C-51.

While we agree that oversight of our national security and intelligence apparatus is badly needed, we cannot use such a bill as this one to cover up the inaction on Bill C-51.

The former auditor general has stated that review powers must be proportionate to the intrusiveness of powers wielded by security agencies and that anything less falls short of true oversight. In light of Bill C-51's expansion of security powers, should this committee's oversight powers not also be greater than what was envisioned a decade ago in a previous government's bill?

The original version of Bill C-22 gave committee members substantial access to classified information, but not complete access. Based on expert testimony and study, the public safety committee presented evidence-based amendments to the bill. These amendments aimed to give the committee the powers and access to information it would need to do its job effectively.

Furthermore, the bill aimed to limit the power of the Prime Minister to censor committee reports. Other efforts to amend the bill, like including a provision to elect the chair of the committee, were rejected by the government, even though it had the support of all opposition parties. Despite this, we were happy with Bill C-22 when it was amended. The amended bill fulfilled a crucial campaign promise by both the NDP and the Liberals and ensured that the committee would be both independent and well informed. However, it is clear that the government intends to neglect the evidence-based decisions of the committee and to bring Bill C-22 back to its original, watered-down form.

In *The Globe and Mail* op-ed on January 27, four national security and legal experts stated this point clearly:

Should the government choose to force a return to the restrictive original bill, it risks potentially undermining a new and historic Parliamentary ability that it has enthusiastically championed.

I strongly urge the government to keep the amendments as made by the committee. These amendments were made after hearing from 25 expert witnesses and with the united support of all opposition parties.

*Government Orders*

This country needs strong parliamentary oversight of our security and intelligence services that is transparent and accountable and serves the best interests of Canadians. I hope this government will live up to its election promises, respect the work of the committee, and pass this legislation as amended.

• (1710)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I was here during the debate on Bill C-51. The Liberal Party, in opposition to Bill C-51, raised a number of concerns. Ultimately, we saw fit to support Bill C-51. The NDP opposed it straight through. However, we understood the importance of rights and freedoms. We also understood the importance of security.

We made a commitment to Canadians to bring back parliamentary oversight. We have had professionals and scholars indicate that this was good, sound legislation, even before it was amended. I would suggest that the NDP critique of the legislation could be applied to other pieces of legislation that other Five Eyes countries have. Canada does not have a parliamentary oversight committee. Other countries do. We will find that in many ways, our legislation is more robust than those other countries', and this is our first time with it.

Will the NDP be voting yes for parliamentary oversight?

• (1715)

**Ms. Rachel Blaney:** Mr. Speaker, I want to mention again about the great integrity I felt as a candidate in my riding when people would come to talk to me about the real concerns they had about Bill C-51. It opened up the doors for people to have their ability to protest, their ability to speak out, vastly limited. A lot of indigenous leaders came to me and talked about their very serious concerns around what their rights would mean and how they were going to fight for their indigenous rights in their province and in their country. I think it is important that we remember that sometimes we have to stand up and speak up against these things, because they really silence people. We could do better. That is what we stood on.

As for this issue, I think it is important to remember that if this committee does not have the tools it needs to get the job done, it will be a waste of time and money for the taxpayer. Canadians in this country want to see something that works well. When we have a committee that works together, that comes together and has good discussions, and comes with amendments, and then suddenly it is changed again by the governing party, we have to ask these questions. That is why we are here. We are here to ask those questions and make sure that when a parliamentary committee is put together around a very important issue, that it is done well, that it is done meaningfully, and that it is done in a way that there are actual teeth to it. I think Canadians want to know that they are being protected and that the oversight is there. It is very unfortunate that the government has seen fit to water down this important bill.

[Translation]

**Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet (Hochelaga, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I will quote Suzanne Legault, the Information Commissioner of Canada. Because of Bill C-22, there will be a "ministerial override of the committee's review function".

Does my colleague feel that the committee's loss of autonomy could put Canadians at greater risk?

[English]

**Ms. Rachel Blaney:** Mr. Speaker, I think this is what we are talking about today. If the Prime Minister or the ministers have the ability to put things aside so this committee does not have access to the information, how is it supposed to do its job?

Again, I think Canadians are looking for a process and a committee that will work hard, that will have the information it needs, and that will provide the accountability that it needs to move forward. If it does not have the information it requires, how is it supposed to show the Canadian people that it is doing the work it is legislated to do?

I appreciate this question. I think it is very important that this is part of the debate. Are the folks on this committee going to be allowed to do their work in a meaningful way? Or is this going to be a symbolic thing that does not fulfill its commitments but is there to look good for the government?

**Mrs. Karen McCrimmon (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise during this report stage to continue our review of Bill C-22, which would create a committee of parliamentarians on national security matters.

I am pleased to see that today this bill has not only been through committee scrutiny, but thanks to all of that work, the advice of experts, many stakeholders, and the voices of Canadians, we have landed on a version that balances all those concerns. We have agreed to an expanded mandate. We have agreed to remove certain exclusions to the unprecedented level of classified information that this committee will be able to access, and we have balanced concerns about ministerial powers of redaction and national security limitations with reasonable compromises.

As we have moved this significant legislation forward, much has been made about how Canada's committee will compare with counterparts in other Five Eyes countries. Indeed, Bill C-22 would have favourably compared to them as initially introduced. However, this amended version will make it even stronger. If we look closely at another country with a Westminster system comparable to Canada's, for example, the United Kingdom, we see very interesting comparisons with parliamentary review of national security and intelligence. There, in particular, the balance between access to highly sensitive information and protection of national security is reflected in the U.K. Intelligence and Security Committee of Parliament.

In the U.K. model, ministers may choose to withhold certain types of sensitive information, as long as the disclosure would be counter to the interests of national security. Specifically in the U.K., its Justice and Security Act states that if asked to disclose information, the government can withhold the information because it is "sensitive information" and that "in the interests of national security, should not be disclosed."

*Government Orders*

If we look to the Australian model, similarly, the government cannot be compelled to provide operationally sensitive information, including intelligence sources, operational methods, or foreign intelligence, if that information is deemed injurious to either national security or foreign relations. All international partners agree that access to information must be balanced with the need for safety of sources and the integrity of the national security framework, and that ongoing investigations should be free of political interference.

Under Bill C-22, Canada's committee would have a statutory right to access highly classified information in any department, any agency, and now, thanks to an amendment adopted by the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security, any crown corporation, making our committee an international leader in terms of information access.

To continue with comparisons, Canada's committee would also be in line administratively with other Westminster systems, for example, on security clearances. However, Canada's committee would go further still in the scope of its mandate, as its jurisdiction would not be limited to the main national security agencies.

Also, unique to Canada, the committee would be able to engage and collaborate with existing expert review bodies, including the Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the RCMP, the Security Intelligence Review Committee for CSIS, and the Communications Security Establishment Commissioner.

What is more, Canada's committee would have a unique membership. We are now proposing a body with up to eleven members, including up to three senators, and with a limit of five MPs from the governing party. Certainly this will be reflective of Canada's diversity in advice and expertise, in experience, and in opinion. It will ensure that the government does not control the committee.

I also want to emphasize that this is a made-in-Canada approach. We have taken the best of what we have learned from our allies and applied it to our own system and reality, establishing a body that is unprecedented in Canadian history. It has been lacking for a long time. This goes further than what the government under Prime Minister Paul Martin envisioned in 2005, and it goes further than what many of our allies actually have. What is more, I want to remind hon. members about the checks and balances we have in place to ensure that the committee can evolve and become stronger in the future.

• (1720)

As with any new institution, there will be early experiences that can lead to subsequent improvements. There will also need to be a confidence-building process with the security and intelligence community, as well as with the Canadian public, and with us as parliamentarians. In fact, when Dominic Grieve, the chair of the British committee, visited Ottawa last year, his advice was to start small, build trust, and enhance the committee over time. With Bill C-22, we will actually be starting rather large, with a committee that would have more access and more teeth than many of its international counterparts, including the United Kingdom. A mandatory five-year review included as part of this bill would ensure that the committee's effectiveness and experiences could be studied and lessons applied, so that this new institution in the

Canadian national security landscape could become as effective as possible.

I see no reason at this stage of this bill's journey to hold back this truly collaborative and long-overdue legislation. It reflects values that we have long agreed upon, and the final version will incorporate, with the government's agreement, a significant number of amendments proposed by the public safety committee. I commend all members for their valued input, and I applaud the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security for its review. We are at an important juncture in the history of our country's security framework, and this bill gets to the root of the dual objectives that Canadians have told us they want achieved: keeping our country safe while protecting our values, rights, and freedoms. I urge all members to support this bill.

• (1725)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to express some thoughts in regard to the importance of this legislation, in the sense that for many years Canada did not have parliamentary oversight. In fact, this will be the first time that we will have parliamentary oversight. With other countries, specifically the U.K., Australia, New Zealand, and the United States, we are all a part of the Five Eyes organization, and we are the only country that does not have a parliamentary oversight committee. Therefore, passing this legislation is somewhat historic, in the sense that we will have parliamentary oversight for the very first time.

There would be parliamentary oversight of the many different agencies of government such as the member made mention of, including corporations and departments and so forth. Parliamentarians would be chosen to be on this committee, and the number of government members appointed would actually be a minority of the committee. This would be a first, and it is important for us to recognize that it would be a great balance in holding accountability and ensuring more transparency, and at the same time protecting the rights and freedoms of Canadians by their knowing that the committee exists.

Could my colleague share her thoughts in terms of the importance of what we are passing today as being something that is somewhat historic?

**Mrs. Karen McCrimmon:** Mr. Speaker, we have missed having a committee that could do this kind of parliamentary oversight in terms of national security. What we have proposed is a committee that would be effective in being able to review and oversee national security. It is balanced. It is responsive to the security situation. It would be much less partisan, by virtue of what is at stake. It is a made-in-Canada solution, and I believe that is absolutely essential. Also, when we look at what we want to do with this committee, which is to keep Canada safe and at the same time protect our values, our rights, and our freedoms, we have hit the right balance.

*Government Orders*

[Translation]

**Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, in her speech, my colleague talked about the work of the parliamentary committee that studied this matter. I feel that, in a parliamentary committee, each member's work must be recognized. A non-partisan parliamentary committee can be said to do excellent work and to deliver positive results when the government accepts recommendations from all political parties. Unfortunately, few of the recommendations from the official opposition have been adopted by the government, specifically those pertaining to the appointment of the chair and to the fact that we really do want a non-partisan committee.

My colleague was full of praise for the quality of the committee's work; what does she have to say about the fact that the recommendations have unfortunately come from one side only?

[English]

**Mrs. Karen McCrimmon:** It is always a balancing act, Mr. Speaker. It is about finding that best compromise, about trying to build that consensus.

The member is right that people do not get everything they want, but what we came up with is a compromise that would best suit Canada, that would best balance the need for national security oversight with rights and values and freedoms. We must remember that this legislation will be reviewed again in five years and that we will have learned lessons in those five years. There will be opportunities to improve if such improvements are needed.

This is just step one. There are many more steps ahead of us.

**Mr. David Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am glad to be here this afternoon.

I am not sure I have seen a bill more emblematic of the Liberals than this bill. As I sit here and listen today, I see there is all kinds of enthusiasm over there, but no assurance of any kind of effectiveness. There is all kinds of work being planned here, but it is likely to have no results. There are all kinds of appointments in the mix, but it does not look as though there would be any balance either.

The Liberals made a promise in the campaign. Their promise was that they were going to set up a non-partisan parliamentary national security oversight committee. Bill C-22 is another broken promise from a government that is becoming famous for breaking them. I will talk about how it has broken that promise, but certainly there is no opportunity for this to be non-partisan or to be a real parliamentary committee, and it certainly is not going to have the oversight it should have.

There are several ways to set committees up around here. The one we thought the Liberals were promising was a non-partisan parliamentary committee. I assume that if we put that in place, we would be talking about equal numbers such that the opposition would be able to contribute on an equal basis and the power on that committee would be shared, perhaps through dual chairs or sharing the chairmanship. It would have the powers of a parliamentary committee. If it was a security committee, it would probably have to deal with some sort of secrecy issues around the content of what it is looking at.

There is a second opportunity, which is to set up a regular parliamentary committee that has parliamentary powers. All of us in the House sit on those types of committees. They always pretty much favour the government, because the numbers on the committee are set by the numbers we have in the House. Those committees are under the control of the government, and we recognize that.

There are also advisory committees of parliamentarians that can be set up, and then there is an advisory committee to the prime minister. We know the specialization that the Liberals across the way have on consultation, but typically those committees are appointed by the prime minister himself.

It is interesting that we saw the Liberals promise number one, a non-partisan parliamentary committee. What they are actually trying to deliver today is number four, which is that advisory committee to the prime minister, a committee that can consult with him and that he can talk to about these issues, but one which has very little power.

I want to take a bit of a look at some of the other countries involved in these committees. One of my colleagues across the way in the government a while ago talked about the United States intelligence committee structure and was actually trying to compare this structure to that. He talked about how there needs to be fairness and justice and that the rule of law must be guaranteed and protected by the bill. Bill C-22 does not do that. It does not compare in any way to the structure that is set up in the United States.

The previous speaker talked about the United Kingdom model being similar too. I am going to go through that a bit as well. I think we will find out that this committee does not have much similarity to the authority and power that the United Kingdom committees have either.

There are a number of other Commonwealth countries that do have oversight committees. New Zealand, for example, has a committee, but it basically is to examine issues of efficacy and efficiencies for budgetary matters, policy settings, and those kinds of things. It really does not have much to do directly with intelligence oversight. The members of that committee are the prime minister, two members of parliament nominated by him, the leader of the opposition, and one member nominated by the leader of the opposition. We can see in that situation that the Government of New Zealand would control that committee at all times. It is basically focused on budget oversight, not intelligence gathering.

The Australian model is a little bit different. It has a committee that is administrative. Its main functions are to do expenditure review and oversight there as well. It can also review matters that relate to some of the agencies that are referred to it, but it does not review intelligence gathering or operational procedures or priorities, and it does not conduct inquiries. Again, we see it is an oversight committee, but it is not what the Liberal government has promised to set up as a committee for Canadians.

The United Kingdom has a little stronger committee. It has a committee of parliament with greater powers. It was actually set up in 1994 as more of a monitoring committee, and in 2013 it was restructured or reformed to give it more powers and increase its strength. It now includes oversight of operational activity and the wider intelligence and security activities of government.



*Government Orders*

● (1730)

When people were thinking about this committee that the Liberals were promising during the campaign, they really thought that is what was going to be brought in, and it certainly is not, as we see when we look at the legislation, what the Liberals are doing to the legislation, and the work the committee did.

Bill C-22 is called the “national security and intelligence committee of parliamentarians act”. Usually a committee is named for what it really is, and if that is the case here, it probably should be called “the Prime Minister’s advisory committee”, because while the bill may establish a committee, it clearly fails to meet either the election promise or to establish a real and true intelligence oversight committee.

It is a bit of an embarrassment, I think, for the government to find itself having to completely change its direction from what it promised. It is unfortunate that it is using time allocation this afternoon to cover what I would call its incompetence on this issue. It is unfortunate that we find ourselves once more in the situation of the government wanting to limit debate on a bill that is clearly not going to meet the priorities and needs of Canadians.

We have a Prime Minister who seems to love running around and appearing on stages more than he likes to do this kind of hard work, so it is not surprising to see legislation, time after time, that is written in ways that the government itself is unable to support. It has to reject the work of the committees, reject the amendments made by members from all parties in this Parliament, and basically turn its back on the promises it made.

The bill to set up this committee was introduced in June of 2016. The interesting thing is that the Prime Minister actually appointed a chair to this committee months before the legislation was even presented and long before it was even debated. I understand the member has been travelling around the world. I guess he thinks he is doing some work on this in his committee, but it is probably a pretty good gig to be appointed before the parliamentary committee is even set up and have the government pay to travel around to examine some of these issues. At least there is one person getting something out of this, if the rest of Canadians are not.

As I said, forming an effective non-partisan committee was a Liberal campaign promise. Every one of us in the House would like to ensure that there is an appropriate review of our national security agencies. Conservatives believe that is important and would like the committee, when it is set up, to have the capacity and the tools to be able to do what is required. I think we would all be glad to support a committee that would properly supervise and provide oversight to our national security and intelligence organizations, but the way it is being done in the House this afternoon is a clear demonstration that this whole project is far more about optics than it is about effectiveness.

If this committee is put in place, we need to make sure that it has the tools to do what is required, and that clearly has not happened. I just mentioned that the Prime Minister appointed a chair of the committee long before the legislation was written, or certainly before it was presented and long before it was debated. The person

appointed, from my understanding, has very little expertise and does not have a history in these issues.

One of the issues here is that committees usually elect their own chairs and do not have ones imposed by the Prime Minister’s Office.

The Liberals promised they were going to form this committee. It is not a parliamentary committee. It is controlled by the Prime Minister and the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness. I do not know how anyone in the House could possibly see a committee set up like that to be non-partisan. What does it mean when the Prime Minister has the authority to appoint the members of the committee? Again, as I mentioned earlier, if Liberals really wanted to treat this matter seriously, why would we not be talking about co-chairs and an equal number of party representatives in the House? Without that, we really have nothing useful.

This is just one more broken promise. The budget is being presented this week, and we will be reminded again of how many promises the government has broken. This is one more of those broken promises. This will not be a non-partisan committee. The Prime Minister will be controlling it. It will not be a parliamentary committee. It will not have the powers of a parliamentary committee. What the committee gave the legislation in its work the government is now taking away.

The point is that if it were going to be effective, it would not be under the control of the Prime Minister and the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness. It would be under the control of the members of Parliament who sit on that committee. If there were equal numbers of members and a sharing of the chairmanship, Conservatives could see how this committee might work effectively, but the government has made a decision that it is not going to do things that way, and that is unfortunate. It is unfortunate that the government finds itself in a situation like this today, but it is even more unfortunate that Canadians will end up paying for another mistake that has been made by the Liberal government.

● (1735)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, what I find unfortunate is that the Conservative Party is completely out of touch with what Canadians really want on this issue.

The Prime Minister made a commitment to bring in parliamentary oversight, and that is exactly what the bill would do. It is a promise kept by the Prime Minister. It seems it is only the Conservative Party that really does not support parliamentary oversight.

The member across the way focuses his attention on the powers of the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister works in consultation with the leaders of the opposition parties to assist in some of those appointments. Government members are actually a minority on the committee itself.

*Government Orders*

In many ways, this legislation is more robust than legislation where there is parliamentary oversight as part of the Five Eyes nations. Would the member ultimately argue that the EU parliamentary oversight system and the New Zealand parliamentary oversight system are fundamentally flawed? We have some areas that are more robust than those areas.

It just seems to me the Conservatives are—

● (1740)

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. member for Cypress Hills—Grasslands.

**Mr. David Anderson:** My colleague across the way is scrambling this afternoon, Mr. Speaker.

I understand the committee did a lot of hard work on this and it came up with a number of amendments that would have given powers to this committee. It would have made it non-partisan. Appointments would not have been made by the Prime Minister. It would have brought in an acceptable level of accountability and transparency. The government rejected those amendments.

Canadians need to be paying attention tonight when we vote. They need to look at what the government is doing to this committee, because when it is done, the committee will have little review. It will have no transparency. It will not have the accountability it should have. It will not have powers of subpoena, even though other parliamentary committees do have that authority.

This committee does not need to be an extension of the Prime Minister's Office. That seems to be what the government is bound and determined to make it.

**Ms. Cheryl Hardcastle (Windsor—Tecumseh, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, since we are talking in the House today about what Canadians understand and the fact that Canadians are watching, I wonder if the member could highlight once again for Canadians exactly what is happening. Some of the recent comments by the hon. member from the governing party do not delve into what really is happening and what Canadians are concerned about.

I wonder if my colleague would discuss some of the issues with regard to parliamentary oversight in the counterpart Five Eyes nations and some of the shortcomings that our committee actually mentioned, which were about appointing the chairperson. Does he think there is a risk with no trust from Canadians if the books are not handed over to the government and other information that has been withheld? Maybe the member could expand on some of those shortcomings.

**Mr. David Anderson:** Mr. Speaker, I wish I had more time to speak to this today because it is important that Canadians understand what the government is doing. Actually, it is important that they understand the work that the committee did.

We have a committee with all members on it who worked together to try to make the bill better. They brought back amendments and the government rejected the amendments that were made by a committee on which the government has a majority.

We need to make sure this thing has transparency. The government is going to remove that tonight with its vote. I am told there are multiple locking mechanisms entrenched in Bill C-22

that block committees from accessing information and calling witnesses. The government is making sure that those locks are in place so the committee will not be able to do the work it should.

We need to make sure this committee is non-partisan. The government is not guaranteeing that. Its chair and its members should not be appointed by the Prime Minister. We need to see that happen. Members of the committee need to be appointed by Parliament. Most important, the committee needs to report not to the Prime Minister but to Parliament. If it could do that, perhaps it could do some work that would be really valuable for Canadians.

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, although I do not think I agreed with a single thing my friend from Cypress Hills—Grasslands said, we are friends.

I want to know if he can explain why the previous Conservative government in the 41st Parliament in omnibus budget Bill C-38 did not allow for any amendments or any discussion and used time allocation at every stage, eliminated the office of the inspector general for CSIS, the only internal oversight that used to exist for CSIS. I think we need to bring back that office, as well as have the parliamentary committee.

**Mr. David Anderson:** Mr. Speaker, we are here today to talk about Bill C-22 and the committee the government is proposing to establish for the future.

We need to come back to the fact that the committee needs to have authority. It needs to report back to Parliament, not to the Prime Minister. It needs to be appointed by Parliament. It also needs to be able to do a good job of intelligence oversight, or else we are just pretending that we have something that we really do not have.

● (1745)

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Alexandra Mendès (Brossard—Saint-Lambert, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have the great pleasure and honour to speak today to Bill C-22.

This bill will give Canada its first national security and intelligence committee of parliamentarians. By enacting legislation to create this new committee, our government is fulfilling its commitment to protecting national security while ensuring the utmost respect for rights and freedoms.

I would also note that the government has made it a priority to make Parliament more useful by consolidating its institutions and mobilizing parliamentarians. The national security and intelligence committee of parliamentarians that will be created by Bill C-22 is intended to be a forum where national security agencies will be able to exchange highly classified intelligence with parliamentarians who have received the proper security clearance.

The public wants national security and intelligence activities to be carried out in a responsible way. They are entitled to know that this important work is being done in accordance with the rule of law and in full recognition of individual rights, including the right to privacy. Because our government knows this is possible, it is committed to consolidating the national security framework in order to protect Canadians without compromising their values, rights and freedoms or the openness and inclusivity that this country represents.

*Government Orders*

Within the strong framework laid down by Bill C-22, the government will be able to disclose highly classified information to a committee that will include members of both Chambers and all parties. The parliamentarians who sit on the committee will have a broad mandate, defined in the bill, that consists of verifying whether the government's work in the realm of national security and intelligence meets high standards and is carried out rigorously and responsibly. For that reason, I would like to focus on two fundamental aspects of this bill: accountability and transparency.

People expect that we, as parliamentarians, will be able to hold the government to account concerning the work done by national security and intelligence agencies. My esteemed colleagues know that SIRC, the Security Intelligence Review Committee that oversees CSIS, the Office of the Communications Security Establishment Commissioner, for the CSE, and the Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the RCMP are well established entities that were created many years ago to ensure the transparency and accountability that people expect of the corresponding agencies in their mandatory annual reports.

Each of these entities oversees a national security or intelligence agency to ensure that it adheres to the rule of law and the directives given by its minister, namely the Minister of Public Safety for SIRC and the CRCC and the Minister of National Defence for the CSE.

To date, however, Canada has not been able to address national security and intelligence issues from a government-wide perspective, that is, to cast a wider net than any of the three entities we just spoke about do, wider even than the three of them together. That is what we want to remedy with Bill C-22. I would like to commend the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security for the fine work it did in its examination of this important bill.

At this stage, the government is proposing to reinstate several important provisions of Bill C-22. More specifically, the government wants to reintroduce three mandatory exemptions relating to the committee's access to classified information: first, protection of information respecting ongoing law enforcement operations; second, protection of the identity of informants and sources; and third, protection of persons in the witness protection program. This is because it is essential to guarantee the independence of police investigations and the safety and security of individuals who work in national security and intelligence.

The government has also proposed an amendment that reinstates clause 16, so that ministers have the necessary discretion not to disclose certain special operational information, but only if providing the information might be injurious to national security, for example, where operations or the safety of the individuals involved are in issue. As an additional safety measure, the bill provides that a minister who exercises his or her discretion in this regard must do so on a case-by-case basis. Moreover, the minister must, under the bill, inform the committee and provide the reasons why he or she has done so.

• (1750)

I congratulate the government for responding to the concerns of the standing committee while at the same time preserving the necessary protection measures and guarantees specified in the bill. I support the amendments proposed by the government.

I also want to point out that parliamentarians must review the bill every five years, starting from the date on which it comes into force. This is an important provision, because it establishes a legislative basis that gives the committee the ability to make changes.

As parliamentarians, we introduce, debate, and promulgate legislation dealing with matters of national security. The committees of the House and the Senate consider matters of national security policy and carry out studies of the government's national security and intelligence activities and of the associated laws.

To date, however, Canadians have not had the benefit of an entity that gives parliamentarians a mandate to examine the government's overall national security and intelligence infrastructure. That is what we are seeking to accomplish with the bill we are proposing, Bill C-22, an act to establish the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians and to make consequential amendments to certain acts.

By creating the committee of parliamentarians proposed in Bill C-22 and holding a debate on the amendments proposed by the government at this stage of the report, we are showing Canadians that the government is resolutely taking a stance as protector of their individual rights, their freedoms, and their values, while at the same time focusing on their security and their safety.

That is why I intend to vote for the bill, and I encourage all my colleagues to do the same.

**Ms. Karine Trudel (Jonquière, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her speech, which I listened to with interest.

I would like to go back to 2014, when the Prime Minister, the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, and nine other ministers voted in favour of Bill C-622, which sought to create an oversight committee with complete access and subpoena powers.

Why is the government trying to take these tools away from the committee proposed by Bill C-22? Why are the Liberals flip-flopping today, when they are now in government?

**Mrs. Alexandra Mendès:** Mr. Speaker, I think it is important to recall that the government has made a point of taking the time to consult its colleagues of other authorities, in order to see what the best practices of those parliamentary committees were. The government's conclusion that the minister should be allowed certain limits is based on reasons of security. That is why the government is maintaining its restrictions, which are still very limited and must be justified to parliamentarians.

[English]

**Mr. Ken Hardie (Fleetwood—Port Kells, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it has been interesting to hear the comments and concerns about the lack of transparency of this new committee and yet the party on this side would have the minority of the people on it.

*Government Orders*

Perhaps because the appointments would be made by the Prime Minister, the Prime Minister would have some enormous power that would actually neuter the voices of those sitting in the opposition preventing them from raising issues as they saw them come up, especially about the process, especially about the transparency. Surely if they saw a problem, they would have the freedom to speak up.

**Mrs. Alexandra Mendès:** Mr. Speaker, I agree with my colleague that obviously the fact that the Prime Minister would appoint the parliamentarians that would sit on the committee would definitely not be an indication that they would be limited in the scope both of their work and of their liberty to do the work as fully as necessary to do their job.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am not at all reassured when I hear my colleagues opposite saying that the fact that the government does not have a majority on a committee means that there is more democracy within that committee.

Let us recall the electoral reform committee. When a committee says the opposite of what the government wants to hear, the government could not care less about the committee's recommendations and decides to make the decisions itself. That is our criticism of Bill C-22. Let us have a real parliamentary committee that will really have its say, and not a committee managed by the Prime Minister's Office. The proof is that this bill is being passed under a gag order, because they are tired of hearing opposition representatives tell the truth about Bill C-22.

What does the member have to say about that?

• (1755)

**Mrs. Alexandra Mendès:** Mr. Speaker, the member on this side has a good memory and recalls very clearly the 10 years of Conservative government during which the infamous gag order was imposed on us at nearly every turn, and during which that committee never had a chance to see the light of day because the government refused to allow it.

I really do not need any lectures from my opposition colleagues.

[*English*]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, would the member provide some of her thoughts with regard to the valuable work that we saw at the committee stage, in particular, those who made presentations and the committee members who got together with some amendments?

**Mrs. Alexandra Mendès:** Mr. Speaker, I absolutely commend the work done by the committee members. It was a very thoughtful process. They took the time to examine and to receive all the witnesses they could to provide as much information as possible in coming up with their recommendations. I think the government was also thoughtful in coming back with some acceptance and some non-acceptance of the recommendations from the committee. I have to commend the work done by the committee.

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it is a great honour to rise today to take part in this very important debate on Bill C-22.

I feel honoured to give voice to the serious concerns that many of my constituents have in the great riding of Cowichan—Malahat—Langford. I also want to note that this debate is taking place under the yoke of time allocation. In other words, the ability of parliamentarians to provide oversight on a bill dealing with oversight has now been curtailed by the government.

Bill C-22 cannot be debated without being properly placed in the context of Bill C-51 from the 41st Parliament. Bill C-51 was one of the most draconian pieces of security legislation to emanate from the previous Conservative government. Indeed, more than 100 of Canada's brightest legal experts from institutions across the country sent an open letter to all members of Parliament at the time, expressing their deep concern about Bill C-51. They called that bill a dangerous piece of legislation, in terms of the potential impacts on the rule of law, on constitutionally and internationally protected rights, and on the health of Canada's democracy.

We had former prime ministers, former justices of the Supreme Court of Canada, and all sorts of experts who gave close scrutiny to Bill C-51 and were convinced it was unconstitutional. Many of my constituents were very vocally opposed to Bill C-51, and indeed many of them took part in the protests that erupted across Canada during that time.

It was a sad day in Parliament when the Liberals joined with the Conservatives to pass that bill. I think, and many of my colleagues will agree with me, that on Bill C-51, the Liberals were indecisive, unreliable, and plain wrong to support it at the time. I do not think they realized how much of a serious misjudgement they had made with the Canadian public on the mood of Canadians.

Then, when we edged closer to the 2015 election, we suddenly saw a commitment in the Liberal campaign platform to introduce new legislation that would balance collective security with our rights and freedoms. Part of that promise was to establish an all-party national oversight committee, which we see today in Bill C-22.

In our system today, we have a history of having opposition chairs in oversight committees. Committees on ethics, public accounts, status of women, and government operations all have elected opposition chairs to ensure proper accountability and oversight. It is most unfortunate that the government, through clause 6 of the bill, has provided for the Governor in Council to designate the chair of the committee. In fact, the government has not even bothered to wait for the passage of this bill, because, as we all know, it has been widely reported that the member for Ottawa South is to be the chair. The government has also rejected attempts at the committee stage to allow for the committee to elect its chair, something which I think is unfortunate.

If I could deliver one message today, it is that Canadians expect to have a watchdog and oversight committee that has real teeth. I think this committee must have full access to classified information, have adequate resources, and, most importantly, it must have independence subject only to justifiable limits and the power to share its findings with Canadians in an informative and transparent manner.

*Government Orders*

Without adequate access to information, the committee will not be able to do its job effectively. I think this work is far too important to do half-heartedly or ineffectively. I will not support creating a committee that cannot properly provide oversight in accordance with what Canadians expect.

One of the government's proposals is to allow cabinet ministers to withhold information from the oversight committee. This is evident in Motion No. 5, which the government has presented, which seeks to reinstate clause 16. It is worded in a way that allows a minister to withhold information if he or she feels that it is special operational information or that the provision of the information would be injurious to national security.

If injurious to national security is not a blanket statement to cover any kind of reason, I do not know what is. I have heard Liberal MPs say that there is a proper accountability in oversight because the minister simply has to inform the committee of his or her decision and the reasons for it, as if that somehow makes everything okay.

● (1800)

I cannot support such a reinstatement of that clause. The public safety committee and the experts who were heard made it very clear that the executive branch having this kind of power over an oversight committee simply will not fly. It would make the committee completely ineffective anytime that a minister wanted to withhold information. With regard to the way that the government wants to write the bill, the minister could claim that a confidential inquiry somehow jeopardizes the country's national security. I think that giving the government the ability to shut down any kind of investigation into its actions is too dangerous for a functioning and accountable democracy.

The other thing is that we need to build Canadians' trust in our security and intelligence community, and the way to do that is to create meaningful parliamentary oversight. We need to have a fully briefed parliamentary oversight committee that can issue authoritative reports to Canadians. Without full access and full trust from the agencies, the oversight committee cannot help those agencies earn the trust of Canadians. It is very disappointing and frustrating that the Liberals are not living up to the commitments they made trying to fix Bill C-51. To rebuild this trust, the committee must be strong, independent, and effective. The Liberals must fulfill their promise to "repeal the problematic elements of Bill C-51".

I find it very troubling that the government cannot seem to place its trust in a select group of parliamentarians who will be security cleared, sworn to secrecy, and who will have waived all immunity based on parliamentary privilege. To underline how ridiculous this premise is, I would like to point out that there are members of the Conservative Party in opposition who were once members of cabinet in the previous Parliament. At that time, they had access to all kinds of sensitive information and are still bound by secrecy. Why the government will not now trust this committee to have full access and provide proper oversight remains an elusive mystery.

All parties worked hard during the committee process to improve Bill C-22. The final product, as was reported back to this House, was praised by four of Canada's leading authorities on intelligence and oversight issues. They wrote a joint op-ed in *The Globe and Mail*, calling on the government to accept the improvements and pass the

bill. The last-minute changes that the government is now trying to make are unsupported by evidence heard at the committee, and they would undermine the effectiveness of the committee and the trust of Canadians. The Information Commissioner and the Privacy Commissioner of Canada, Kent Roach and Craig Forcece, the first chair of the Security Intelligence Review Committee, and a representative of the Canadian Bar Association, all testified that the oversight committee should not be restricted in its access to necessary information. I do not understand why the government is attempting to reject that expert evidence.

There are three core agencies responsible for security and intelligence work in Canada: CSIS, CSE, and the RCMP. They have a combined budget of approaching \$4 billion, and they employ close to 34,000 people. Clearly such a vast network needs to have the accountability and oversight of Parliament in order to regain Canadians' trust. The role of Parliament is to scrutinize the government, represent the Canadian people, and bring forth good laws to govern our people.

I call on the Liberal MPs sitting in the back rows to go back to that special day on March 8 during the vote on Bill S-201, when they had the courage to stand up and assert their power as legislators in the face of the opposition from cabinet. As they did then, those Liberal MPs should reject the government's 11th-hour amendments to this bill, and instead listen to the evidence that was so clearly presented to the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security. I ask all MPs in this House to remember that the government is accountable to Parliament, not the other way around.

● (1805)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the comments from the member, but I disagree with a number of the points. I was there when there was a great deal of opposition to Bill C-51. The Liberal Party was different from the NDP back then. We believed there was a need to see Bill C-51 passed because of a wide variety of reasons. The security of Canadians was the predominant reason. We also made the commitment back then that we would bring in the parliamentary oversight. This bill would do just that.

My question for the member is this. I have been a parliamentarian now for about 25 years. I know how committees work. At the end of the day, I believe in the integrity of the members who would make up that committee. A majority of that committee would not be held by government members of Parliament. The government members of Parliament would be in a minority. It would take others to be onside in order to get something passed. Does that not provide any reassurances whatsoever for members across the way?

*Government Orders*

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor:** Mr. Speaker, in a short answer, no, it does not. I appreciate that members of the governing party on a committee may not have a majority position. However, if the member had correctly listened to my speech, I do not really care about that particular section. My main concern is with clause 16 of this bill, which still allows a minister, with this blanket provision, to keep information from that committee. No matter what the membership of the committee is, the problem is not solved if we still have a clause allowing a minister to withhold information. We need proper oversight. We need proper accountability.

I do not know what the government's problem is when we have parliamentarians who are sworn to secrecy, have received security clearance, and basically have waived their right to parliamentary privilege so they will be accountable and fully subject to the law if they break that secrecy. I am not sure why the government cannot trust those parliamentarians when there are members in this House who used to be members of the previous Conservative government who are still maintaining that oath of secrecy.

I think what the member is talking about is window dressing. He did not address our real concerns regarding this bill.

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague from Cowichan—Malahat—Langford for putting the concern so very clearly as to why that parliamentary committee of MPs and senators, with all of the stringent qualifications they would have to undertake to be members of the committee, should have information withheld from them.

I do plan to vote for Bill C-22, because I think it is important to have parliamentary oversight. We have never had it. However, I am still putting forward my own amendment, which I hope the hon. member will support, to delete the clause of the bill which removes parliamentary privilege from MPs. Other countries with parliamentary oversight of intelligence operations do allow their MPs to continue to have parliamentary privilege. I see that one deletion as a way of pushing back on the overall message from the government that MPs are not trusted with information.

• (1810)

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague from Saanich—Gulf Islands for that part. I am still examining her proposed deletion of clause 12, because I think that in our system of checks and balances, in order to afford parliamentarians that privilege of accessing this information, there do need to be some checks. However, I do not think that the government would accept that in any case. Therefore, one of the important amendments that my colleague from Victoria has moved is the deletion of clause 31. If the government rejects everything else, we hope at least that by deleting clause 31 in this bill we can allow that accountability to a federal court, because we know that certain federal judges are sworn to secrecy. They deal with very sensitive information on an ongoing operational basis, and sometimes they have to issue warrants with very sensitive information. We hope that, at the very least, by eliminating clause 31, we have that recourse for the courts to actually enforce some of the things the committee is trying to do.

**Ms. Jennifer O'Connell (Pickering—Uxbridge, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to address the House today with respect to the passage of Bill C-22, which would establish the national security

and intelligence committee of parliamentarians, also known as NSICOP.

Canadians want and need to be assured that our national security and intelligence community's activities are conducted responsibly. This means that these important activities fully respect individual rights, including privacy, and that they are carried out according to the rule of law.

Canadians also expect that we as parliamentarians are in a position to hold the government accountable as to the conduct of these activities so that both Canada's national security and Canadians' rights and freedoms are assured.

Bill C-22 provides a well-designed framework within which the government would be able to share highly classified information with a statutory committee of members of the House of Commons and the Senate to be selected on a multi-partisan basis according to the provisions set out in this legislation. As members of this committee, they would be able to review the government's national security and intelligence activities to ensure this highly sensitive work is conducted responsibly and thoroughly.

Such a bill is long overdue. Once it is enacted and when the committee of parliamentarians becomes operational, the committee would be independent of the government for the purposes of its mandate. This would include the ability of the committee to decide which matters to review, in what priority and to what depth, while ensuring that the appropriate safeguards are firmly in place.

Bill C-22 enables the committee to review any federal department or agency that performs national security or intelligence activities. For example, activities at the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, CSIS, the Communications Security Establishment, the Canada Border Services Agency, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and a number of other organizations would be part of the committee's responsibility.

The national security and intelligence committee of parliamentarians would be unique in Canada in that it would have a government-wide mandate that sets it apart from other bodies established to review a specific agency, for example, either the Security Intelligence Review Committee, the commissioner of the Communications Security Establishment, or the Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the RCMP. In this way, NSICOP represents the biggest change to the national security review structure in a generation.

The proposed committee of parliamentarians would review the legal, policy, and administrative frameworks that underpin national security operations. It would also be able to scrutinize the operational aspects of security and intelligence work. To do this, Bill C-22 grants the committee the powers to access the information it would need, including highly classified information.

*Government Orders*

It is important that hon. members appreciate that Bill C-22 has been carefully crafted to avoid unnecessary duplications of efforts within the broader national security community. This means that relevant information, such as reports, findings, and opinions, may be shared between the committee of parliamentarians and the other review bodies during the conduct of their respective work. This represents an important way of leveraging the good work of these organizations to help NSICOP get up to speed on issues and to fulfill its role in ensuring that national security and intelligence activities are in Canada's best interests.

To ensure accountability and transparency, the national security and intelligence committee of parliamentarians would be required to report annually on its work, including its findings and recommendations, as appropriate, and these reports would be tabled in Parliament. The committee would also be able to independently issue special reports as necessary.

Although the bill requires that reports would be submitted to the Prime Minister before tabling for the sole purpose of ensuring that classified information is not contained in the reports, I want to reassure hon. members that the bill does not provide the Prime Minister with the power to change the committee's findings or recommendations. To reiterate, the intent of this provision is to ensure, in the final stages before a report becomes public, that classified information is not inadvertently included. This is in everyone's interest.

• (1815)

It should also be noted that Bill C-22 enables the committee to provide classified reports to a minister or ministers at its own discretion. In doing so, however, the committee would still be required to include an unclassified summary of any such report in its annual report.

While it is vital to involve more parliamentarians in examining how federal national security entities and agencies carry out their national security responsibilities individually or collectively, there must also be some boundaries to ensure that ministers remain fully responsible and accountable for their department's activities. Every department and agency of the security and intelligence community reports to the minister, who is ultimately responsible for its conduct. This minister is accountable to Parliament, and ultimately to Canadians, for ensuring that the organization under her or his charge carries out its duties to keep us safe, while respecting our fundamental rights and freedoms and the rule of law.

With respect to access to information for the committee of parliamentarians, I believe that the amendments proposed by the government at report stage represent a balanced, reasonable approach to some of the changes proposed by the standing committee. Notably, the proposal by the government to reintroduce some of the mandatory exceptions to the committee's access in clause 14 is intended to ensure that certain categories of sensitive, highly restricted information are protected from any inadvertent release that may cause harm to individuals and/or to national security related operations.

The government's proposed reinstatement of clause 16, as it appeared when the bill was tabled, would further provide ministers

with a mechanism to ensure that special operational information can be protected, but only where necessary to protect national security.

Bill C-22, with the amendments proposed by the government, provides the necessary checks and balances, and I encourage hon. members to join me in supporting it. For example, if a minister determines it to be necessary to withhold information from the committee at a specific point in time to ensure the integrity of a national security operation, the minister would be required to explain the request to the committee. If disputed by the committee, the committee would have the ability to report this matter to Parliament.

I can assure hon. members that Bill C-22, with the proposed amendments, would give the committee of parliamentarians the ability to hold the government accountable as to its national security and intelligence activities. Also, the committee would be able to play a key role in ensuring that ministers take the necessary action to address problems and to fix deficiencies within their own areas of responsibility.

I want to emphasize that the bill would provide the national security and intelligence committee of parliamentarians significant powers with which to conduct its important work. However, it is also important to add that the bill also provides support for the committee by creating a professionally staffed secretariat.

Bill C-22 demonstrates that the government intends to set the bar higher for national security and intelligence matters because of the transparency and accountability it requires. Our government wants Canadians to feel confident that their Parliament will be able to hold the government to account in this regard.

I want to share with hon. members that it is my wish that the bill be seen as one of the building blocks to restore a high level of trust and respect of Canadians in parliamentarians. I hope hon. members from all parties will join me in supporting the enactment of the bill with the amendments we have proposed at this time.

• (1820)

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

Mr. Speaker, whether it has been the minister of public services or the minister responsible for House business, we have seen a great deal of working with opposition members and the many different stakeholders. We have seen a number of amendments actually brought through at the committee stage. The presentations from the expert witnesses were very convincing. Now we have a good piece of legislation that all of us can be very proud of.

I would ask my colleague to provide some of her thoughts on how important it is that today we will be voting on something that is somewhat historic as this will be Canada's first attempt at having a parliamentary oversight committee, and even though it is our first attempt, it is a very robust system we are putting in place. It is arguably some of the best legislation, even in comparison to other Five Eyes countries that have parliamentary oversight legislation. Perhaps she could provide her thoughts on the significance and importance of providing that oversight for Canadians.

*Government Orders*

**Ms. Jennifer O'Connell:** Mr. Speaker, I think all of us the House of Commons can understand that we have a role, a responsibility, and a duty to Canadians. Oftentimes that duty comes with oversight. For something as important as national security and our intelligence agencies, it is members of the House who ultimately must ensure that the rule of law and human rights, that all of these things are always being upheld. In my opinion, it is for that reason that this oversight committee is long overdue. I think it is what Canadians expect of us and expect of a reasonable government.

**Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is a sad day. Here we are again, debating important legislation and the Liberals have moved closure on it, not allowing us to have a full debate and denying members the ability to speak to the bill.

The member talks about how great the bill is, but we know that the proposed changes by the opposition in committee were not accepted by the Liberals. We know the Liberals are trying to withhold information from this new security and intelligence committee to do its job. There is censorship. The PMO has oversight over the ability of the non-partisan, all-party committee to get down to the heart of whether our Charter of Rights and Freedoms and privacy are being protected, whether our national security agencies, such as CSIS, CSEC, the RCMP, the National Security Agency or an investigation agency within national defence, are performing their duties and responsibilities in a way that not only protects Canadians, but also protects our privacy rights and our Charter rights.

Does the member agree that the government is doing the right thing by censoring the ability of the committee to call for papers, to call for people, to call for reports, and publish those reports on a public matter without having them edited and censored by the PMO?

• (1825)

**Ms. Jennifer O'Connell:** Mr. Speaker, in my speech, I clarified the fact that the Prime Minister could not actually alter the recommendations. It is simply a review to ensure that privacy of national security is not inadvertently leaked to the public for obvious reasons. While I appreciate my hon. colleague's comments, saying it is "censorship", I would think national security and keeping Canadians safe is a non-partisan issue that we all should advocate.

This legislation and this committee is really about balance: how do we ensure we have the right oversight without risking national security? I think Canadians, broadly, will appreciate that we are working on that balance, that it is a sensitive mix. I am proud that our government has that balance right. Frankly, I do not take many lessons from the members of the Conservative Party who, in the previous government, decided never to consult with Canadians on matters like this and instead decided to impose their will and their opinions. This balance is what Canadians expect of us.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Michel Picard (Montarville, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to speak today in support of Bill C-22, an act to establish the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians and to make consequential amendments to certain acts.

After considering this bill at second reading and reviewing it in committee, we now have the opportunity to examine it at report stage. The sound parliamentary process has served us well. The bill

was carefully reviewed by members from all parties in the House, who listened to advice from expert witnesses, and the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security proposed amendments.

As currently worded, the bill will move our country towards a more accountable and effective national security system. The creation of a new national security and intelligence committee of parliamentarians will allow the government to keep one of its major promises to Canadians.

This committee will be a very important addition to our parliamentary landscape and will allow the following: extraordinary access to classified information in order to closely examine intelligence and security operations; increased scrutiny of national security and intelligence activities; a broader mandate than that of corresponding committees in other modern democracies; the ability to develop its own agenda completely independent from government; the duty to be accountable to Canadians by reporting annually to Parliament; and the power to examine activities across the entire federal government, including ongoing operations.

Under the current version of this legislation, the committee must meet the dual objectives we set in that regard at the outset: ensuring that our national security apparatus works properly in order to keep Canadians safe, while also protecting Canadians' rights and freedoms.

When this bill was first introduced, it proposed a more robust committee than those of many of our international allies. The amendments would further broaden the scope, powers, and access we are proposing for the committee, and the government indicated that it would accept most of those amendments.

With respect to the scope, for example, we all agree that the committee must have the authority to examine all operations related to national security and intelligence. As amended, this would now include the activities of crown corporations. Furthermore, according to the amendments, if the minister were to determine that a study would be injurious to national security, his power to delay would be limited to the time during which the activity is under way. The committee could examine the activity afterwards.

The provision concerning whistle-blowers is another important amendment that would require the committee to inform a minister and the Attorney General of any activity related to national security or intelligence undertaken by a department that may not be in accordance with the law. Like my colleagues, I am pleased to see that this amendment received broad support.

I also agree that the committee chair should have a vote in the event of a tie. I also agree with the many changes regarding exemptions to access to information that the bill initially proposed. The recent amendments, for example, will allow the committee to receive information about activities under way, related to defence intelligence, in support of military activities.



*Government Orders*

The Committee will also have access to pertinent information collected by the Financial Transactions and Reports Analysis Centre of Canada and the information protected by the Investment Canada Act. The government also agreed to amend the bill so that the reason for any redaction is provided.

The government was open to reasonable amendments throughout the parliamentary process. Not only did we carry out a careful study of this vital bill, but we also benefited from many years of reflection on the creation of a committee, and a long collaboration with international partners.

Each member of the Five Eyes alliance, including Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States, has a legislative body with access to classified information in order to monitor national security issues.

• (1830)

Canada has tried for more than a decade to create one. It is time for us to give Canadians and parliamentarians a mandate to examine these activities that we all want to have and that we all need.

Today, we are taking one more step toward implementing this important new body. We are getting closer to a system in which parliamentarians are in a better position to hold the government accountable. We can have greater assurance that concrete measures are taken when we target the flaws and problems associated with our security framework and operations.

We have learned lessons from some of our allies' best practices. We are getting closer to a genuinely Canadian approach to accountability when it comes to national security. This is a major step forward for Canada.

This bill is as bold and progressive as it is well-thought-out and balanced. I am very proud to be part of the Parliament that will finally, I hope, put this essential accountability mechanism in place.

I would like to thank all the members and all the parties for their support, advice, consideration, and discussions, as well as the constructive attitude that has made it possible to craft a better bill. I urge all my colleagues to support the passage of this important legislation.

[*English*]

**Ms. Cheryl Hardcastle (Windsor—Tecumseh, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it is very interesting to hear all of the comments with regard to the bill coming forward.

I want to stress for Canadians what is actually happening here. I would like to have the member explain for Canadians why it does not pose a risk to have information withheld from a committee that has the mandate of oversight and why it is not a risk to deny information with regard to financing and books to an auditor.

Could the member explain how this committee can actually move forward and be a bona fide oversight committee with these glaring shortcomings? We expected this to address some of the concerns that came forward with Bill C-51. Now we have something that is toothless.

I am very concerned. Perhaps the member could explain why these risks are acceptable for Canadians to take on, when we are

creating this new committee that is supposed to have oversight but actually has no weight whatsoever.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Michel Picard:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her question.

I would remind my hon. colleague that what I have just said is that certain information that is kept confidential during operations will be available to the committee members afterward, so that the committee can analyze national security-related operations.

I would also remind the member that the party to which she belongs was prepared to remove from the legislative landscape the bills that we are trying to improve to ensure Canadians can be safe, which is the basis of this bill, and, most importantly, can have confidence in a committee that will be able to verify and oversee what at least 17 agencies, organizations, and bodies in the security field are doing, to ensure that operations are conducted properly and that their freedoms and rights are upheld.

• (1835)

[*English*]

**The Deputy Speaker:** Resuming debate, the hon. member for Barrie—Innisfil. I will let him know that there are just shy of 10 minutes remaining for his remarks. I will give him the usual indication just before his time is up. He will have approximately eight and a half minutes.

**Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, if truth be known, I only expected to speak for four minutes, so I want to thank you for the extra time. I just wish my colleague from Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman would have stood up and asked a question at that point.

However, I want to speak to a very important issue as the last speaker in this debate. What is interesting to me is to see the level of control that is going on within the Liberal government and within the Prime Minister's Office. In the election campaign the Prime Minister talked about doing things differently, holding his hand over his heart saying that for Canada things will be better, yet here we are, dealing with a time allocation situation. There have not been that many speakers, quite frankly, to speak to this very important issue.

The reality is that this was a campaign promise that was made by the Liberal government, and it is effectively fast-tracking it through Parliament.

As I prepared to speak to this issue in the short time that I had, I saw that a Google search on Bill C-22 shows us the level of concern that exists among Canadians, and certainly it has been editorialized as well that we have to make sure we get this right. Getting it right is important. That means giving oversight of this committee to this body, to Parliament, not having it consolidated through the PMO. It means making sure that information is accessible to this committee. That is extremely important.

*Government Orders*

I know that the NSICOP would report to the Prime Minister's Office when it should be reporting to Parliament. The Prime Minister campaigned on a reduced role for the Prime Minister's Office, but again his actions do not speak to and certainly do not follow those words. There were several amendments that were proposed at the public safety committee to make this security committee much more effective. Some of those proposals and amendments would have provided truly effective scrutiny for members of Parliament on this oversight committee, yet they were rejected. As a result, the committee will not have the power it needs in order to have true oversight.

A lot of discussion has gone on about our Five Eyes allies. What the government has done is it has not used some of the examples from the United Kingdom with respect to a very similar parliamentary committee that the U.K. has. The new committee does need the powers to ensure that it has this democratic oversight.

One of the issues that is concerning all of us is that this bill, Bill C-22, was tabled in the final hours of the last session of Parliament to ensure there would be virtually no debate. That is effectively what is happening here. The government is shutting down debate on this issue. My colleagues and I on this side do not think that needs to be done. However, it is a systemic pattern of the current government.

I go back to the campaign. I know the government can criticize the time allocations brought by the previous government all it wants, but when we go back to the throne speech, when the Prime Minister's words were delivered by the Governor General in the Senate, it said that every voice in this chamber would be heard. In the throne speech it said that every member who represents Canadians will have their say, yet so far, not many voices in this chamber have been heard. Those voices were even echoed at committee, yet the Liberals, through the committee, decided that they would not accept any of the amendments.

I am pleased to say that there are a couple of amendments that we will be voting on this evening. One is from the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands. This motion was moved to remove the provision of the bill that states that the national security and intelligence committee of parliamentarians is not protected by parliamentary privilege. This is an amendment that is easily supportable, because the committee proposed by the legislation would make any type of disclosure or whistle-blowing from the proposed committee liable to prosecution under the Security of Information Act. That is a critical element.

• (1840)

The member for Beloeil—Chambly is also proposing an amendment to the motion, and this amendment to the motion is due for consideration because it would partially stifle the Liberal attempt to remove powers of the proposed committee. That really is the basis of concern with respect to this piece of legislation. Just what powers will the committee have, and how much of that power will be controlled by the Prime Minister's Office?

The other area of concern, and it has been mentioned several times, is that the committee chair has already been appointed. The committee chair was known a year ago, even before this legislation came to Parliament. Do we know the qualifications of the chair? Is this just a partisan play, in saying to a member that the member will

not be in cabinet but will be put in charge of this important committee? It is not a committee of Parliament but effectively is turning out to be a committee of the Prime Minister's Office. Will it be a political arm of the Prime Minister's Office? A fair question for Canadians to ask is, what are the qualifications of the members who are going to be on this committee?

We on this side of the aisle understand how important it is for government to look after the safety and security of its citizens. Many times in the history of this Parliament it has been argued, and I would argue the same thing, that this is the number one priority of government.

The committee will view a lot of information, but unfortunately the truth is that it is not going to get to see all the information that it needs. In order for the committee to be effective, in order for it to achieve its objective as a true national security committee of Parliament, it needs as much information as it can get.

Furthermore, the committee should report to Parliament. Parliament represents Canadians. We are the ones that the committee should report to.

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

Mr. Speaker, I will take this opportunity to emphasize how important this legislation is. We went through a process at committee stage. The member made reference to the number of people who spoke to this legislation. Well over 40 members have spoken to the bill here in the House, not to mention the over 120 opportunities for people to get engaged in the House. There was plenty of feedback at committee stage.

All the fine work that has been done has led to a number of amendments that ultimately have given more strength to the legislation. I wonder if the member could provide some comments in terms of the effectiveness of the committee at proposing amendments.

• (1845)

**Mr. John Brassard:** Mr. Speaker, as we have heard throughout the day, many of the more significant amendments to this piece of legislation were rejected by the Liberal majority on the committee.

This speaks to the issue of the openness of this Parliament. As I said earlier, the Prime Minister said that members of the House will have a voice for Canadians, but that voice is being denied because of the actions of the Liberal government.

[*Translation*]

**The Deputy Speaker:** It being 6:45 p.m., pursuant to an order made earlier today, it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the report stage of the bill now before the House.

[*English*]

The question is on Motion No. 1. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

*Government Orders*

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those opposed will please say nay.

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Deputy Speaker:** In my opinion the yeas have it.

*And five or more members having risen:*

**The Deputy Speaker:** The recorded division on the motion stands deferred.

[*Translation*]

The question is on Motion No. 2. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those opposed will please say nay.

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Deputy Speaker:** In my opinion, the nays have it.

*And five or more members having risen:*

**The Deputy Speaker:** The recorded division on the motion stands deferred.

[*English*]

The question is on the amendment to Motion No. 3. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the amendment?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those in favour of the amendment will please say yea.

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those opposed will please say nay.

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Deputy Speaker:** In my opinion the nays have it.

*And five or more members having risen:*

**The Deputy Speaker:** The recorded division on the amendment stands deferred.

[*Translation*]

The question is on Motion No. 4. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those opposed will please say nay.

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Deputy Speaker:** In my opinion, the yeas have it.

*And five or more members having risen:*

**The Deputy Speaker:** The division on Motion No. 4 stands deferred.

● (1850)

The question is on Motion No. 5. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those opposed will please say nay.

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Deputy Speaker:** In my opinion, the yeas have it.

*And five or more members having risen:*

**The Deputy Speaker:** The recorded division on Motion No. 5 is stands deferred.

[*English*]

The question is on Motion No. 7.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those opposed will please say nay.

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Deputy Speaker:** In my opinion the nays have it.

*And five or more members having risen:*

**The Deputy Speaker:** The recorded division on the motion stands deferred.

[*Translation*]

The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred divisions at the report stage of this bill.

*Government Orders*

Call in the members.

● (1915)

[English]

(The House divided on Motion No. 1, which was agreed to on the following division:)

*(Division No. 214)*

**YEAS**

Members

Aboultarif	Albas
Albrecht	Aldag
Alghabra	Alleslev
Allison	Ambrose
Amos	Anandasangaree
Anderson	Arnold
Arseneault	Arya
Ayoub	Bagnell
Bains	Barlow
Baylis	Beech
Bennett	Bergen
Berthold	Bezan
Bibeau	Blair
Block	Bossio
Boucher	Brassard
Bratina	Breton
Brison	Brown
Caesar-Chavannes	Calkins
Carr	Carrie
Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)	Casey (Charlottetown)
Chagger	Champagne
Chan	Chen
Clarke	Clement
Cooper	Cormier
Cuzner	Dabrusin
Damoff	DeCoursey
Deltell	Dhaliwal
Dhillon	Di Iorio
Diotte	Dreeshen
Drouin	Dubourg
Duclos	Duguid
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Dzerowicz
Eglinski	Ehsassi
El-Khoury	Ellis
Eyking	Eyolfson
Falk	Fergus
Fillmore	Finley
Finnigan	Fisher
Fonseca	Fragiskatos
Fraser (West Nova)	Fraser (Central Nova)
Freeland	Fry
Fuhr	Gallant
Garneau	Généreux
Genuis	Gerretsen
Gladu	Godin
Goldsmith-Jones	Goodale
Gould	Gourde
Graham	Grewal
Hajdu	Harder
Hardie	Harvey
Holland	Housefather
Hussen	Hutchings
Iacono	Jeneroux
Joly	Jordan
Jowhari	Kang
Kelly	Kent
Khalid	Khera
Kitchen	Kmiec
Lake	Lametti
Lamoureux	Lapointe
Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengary)	Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)
Lebel	Lebouthillier
Lefebvre	Lemieux
Leslie	Levitt
Liepert	Lightbound
Lobb	Lockhart
Long	Longfield
Ludwig	Lukowski
MacKenzie	MacKinnon (Gatineau)

Maguire	Maloney
Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)	
May (Cambridge)	
McCauley (Edmonton West)	McCrimmon
McDonald	McQuinty
McKenna	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)	McLeod (Northwest Territories)
Mendès	Medicino
Mihychuk	Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Socurs)
Monsef	Morneau
Morrissey	Motz
Murray	Nassif
Nater	Nault
Nicholson	Nuttall
O'Connell	Oliphant
Oliver	O'Regan
Ouellette	Paradis
Paul-Hus	Peschisolido
Peterson	Petipas Taylor
Philpott	Picard
Poilievre	Poissant
Qualtrough	Ratansi
Reid	Rempel
Richards	Rioux
Ritz	Robillard
Rodriguez	Romanado
Rota	Rudd
Ruimy	Rusnak
Sahota	Saini
Sajjan	Samson
Sarai	Saroya
Scarpaleggia	Schieffe
Schmale	Schulte
Serré	Sheehan
Shields	ShIPLEY
Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)	Sidhu (Brampton South)
Sikand	Sohi
Sopuck	Sorbara
Sorenson	Spengemann
Stanton	Strahl
Stubbs	Sweet
Tabbara	Tan
Tassi	Tilson
Tootoo	Trudeau
Van Kesteren	Van Loan
Vandal	Vandenbeld
Vaughan	Vecchio
Viersen	Virani
Warawa	Warkentin
Watts	Waugh
Webber	Whalen
Wilkinson	Wilson-Raybould
Wong	Wrzesnewskyj
Young	Yurdiga
Zahid	Zimmer— 246

**NAYS**

Members

Benson
Blaney (North Island—Powell River)
Boulerice
Brosseau
Choquette
Cullen
Donnelly
Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)
Duvall
Garrison
Harcastle
Johns
Laverdière
Malcolmson
Mathysen
Mulcair
Pauzé
Quach
Rankin
Sansoucy
Stetski
Thériault
Weir— 46

**PAIRED**

Members

Foote

Moore — 2

**The Speaker:** I declare Motion No. 1 carried.

[*Translation*]

The next question is on Motion No. 2.

• (1925)

(The House divided on Motion No. 2, which was negated on the following division:)

(*Division No. 215*)

**YEAS**

Members

Aboultaif  
Albrecht  
Ambrose  
Arnold  
Bergen  
Bezan  
Boucher  
Brassard  
Calkins  
Clarke  
Cooper  
Diotte  
Egliniski  
Finley  
Gallant  
Genuis  
Gladu  
Gourde  
Hoback  
Kelly  
Kitchen  
Lake  
Lebel  
Lobb  
MacKenzie  
Marcil  
McCauley (Edmonton West)  
Motz  
Nicholson  
Paul-Hus  
Plamondon  
Reid  
Richards  
Saroya  
Shields  
Sopuck  
Stanton  
Strahl  
Sweet  
Tilson  
Van Loan  
Viersen  
Warkentin  
Waugh  
Wong  
Zimmer — 91

Albas  
Allison  
Anderson  
Barlow  
Berthold  
Block  
Boudrias  
Brown  
Carrie  
Clement  
Deltell  
Dreeshen  
Falk  
Fortin  
Généreux  
Gill  
Godin  
Harder  
Jeneroux  
Kent  
Kmiec  
Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)  
Liepert  
Lukiwski  
Maguire  
May (Saanic—Gulf Islands)  
McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)  
Nater  
Nuttall  
Pauzé  
Poilievre  
Rempel  
Ritz  
Schmale  
Shipley  
Sorenson  
Ste-Marie  
Stubbs  
Thériault  
Van Kesteren  
Vecchio  
Warawa  
Watts  
Webber  
Yurdiga

**NAYS**

Members

Aldag  
Alleslev  
Anandasangaree  
Arya  
Ayoub  
Bains  
Beech  
Benson  
Blaikie  
Blaney (North Island—Powell River)

Alghabra  
Amos  
Arseneault  
Aubin  
Bagnell  
Baylis  
Bennett  
Bibeau  
Blair  
Bossio

*Government Orders*

Boulerice  
Bratina  
Brisson  
Caesar-Chavannes  
Carr  
Casey (Charlottetown)  
Champagne  
Chen  
Christopherson  
Cullen  
Dabrusin  
Davies  
Dhaliwal  
Di Iorio  
Drouin  
Dubourg  
Duguid  
Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)  
Duvall  
Ehsassi  
Ellis  
Eyolfson  
Fillmore  
Fisher  
Fragiskatos  
Fraser (Central Nova)  
Fry  
Garneau  
Gerretsen  
Goodale  
Graham  
Hajdu  
Hardie  
Holland  
Hughes  
Hutchings  
Johns  
Jordan  
Kang  
Khera  
Lametti  
Lapointe  
Laverdière  
Lefebvre  
Leslie  
Lightbound  
Long  
Ludwig  
MacKinnon (Gatineau)  
Maloney  
Mathysen  
McCrimmon  
McGuinty  
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)  
Mendès  
Mihychuk  
Socurs)  
Monsef  
Morrissey  
Murray  
Nassif  
O'Connell  
Oliver  
Ouellette  
Peschisolido  
Petipas Taylor  
Picard  
Quach  
Ramsey  
Ratansi  
Robillard  
Romanado  
Rudd  
Rusnak  
Sahota  
Sajjan  
Sansoucy  
Scarpaleggia  
Schulte  
Sheehan  
Sidhu (Brampton South)  
Simms  
Sorbara  
Stetski

Boutin-Sweet  
Breton  
Brousseau  
Cannings  
Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)  
Chagger  
Chan  
Choquette  
Cormier  
Cuzner  
Damoff  
DeCoursey  
Dhillon  
Donnelly  
Dubé  
Duclos  
Duncan (Etobicoke North)  
Dusseau  
Dzerowicz  
El-Khoury  
Eyking  
Fergus  
Finnigan  
Fonseca  
Fraser (West Nova)  
Freeland  
Fuhr  
Garrison  
Goldsmith-Jones  
Gould  
Grewal  
Harcastle  
Harvey  
Housefather  
Hussen  
Iacono  
Joly  
Jowhari  
Khalid  
Kwan  
Lamoureux  
Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)  
Lebouthillier  
Lemieux  
Levitt  
Lockhart  
Longfield  
MacGregor  
Malcolmson  
Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)  
May (Cambridge)  
McDonald  
McKenna  
McLeod (Northwest Territories)  
Mendicino  
Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-  
Morneau  
Mulcair  
Nantel  
Nault  
Oliphant  
O'Regan  
Paradis  
Peterson  
Philpott  
Poissant  
Qualtrough  
Rankin  
Rioux  
Rodriguez  
Rota  
Ruimy  
Saganash  
Saini  
Samson  
Sara  
Schiefke  
Serré  
Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)  
Sikand  
Sohi  
Spengemann  
Stewart

*Government Orders*

Tabbara  
Tassi  
Trudeau  
Vandal  
Vaughan  
Weir  
Wilkinson  
Wrzesnewskyj  
Zahid— 203

Tan  
Tootoo  
Trudel  
Vandenbeld  
Virani  
Whalen  
Wilson-Raybould  
Young

Sansoucy  
Schmale  
Shipley  
Sorenson  
Ste-Marie  
Stewart  
Stubbs  
Thériault  
Trudel  
Van Loan  
Viersen  
Warkentin  
Waugh  
Weir  
Yurdiga

Saroya  
Shields  
Sopuck  
Stanton  
Stetski  
Strahl  
Sweet  
Tilson  
Van Kesteren  
Vecchio  
Warawa  
Watts  
Webber  
Wong  
Zimmer— 128

**PAIRED**

Members

Foote

Moore— 2

**The Speaker:** I declare Motion No. 2 lost.

[*English*]

The question is on the amendment to Motion No. 3.

• (1935)

[*Translation*]

(The House divided on the amendment to Motion No. 3, which was negated on the following division:)

(*Division No. 216*)

**YEAS**

Members

Aboultaif  
Albrecht  
Ambrose  
Arnold  
Barlow  
Bergen  
Bezan  
Blaney (North Island—Powell River)  
Boucher  
Boulerice  
Brassard  
Brown  
Cannings  
Choquette  
Clarke  
Cooper  
Davies  
Diotte  
Dreeshen  
Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)  
Duvall  
Falk  
Fortin  
Garrison  
Genuis  
Gladu  
Gourde  
Harder  
Hughes  
Johns  
Kent  
Kmiec  
Lake  
Laverdière  
Liepert  
Lukowski  
MacKenzie  
Malcolmson  
Mathysen  
McCauley (Edmonton West)  
Motz  
Nantel  
Nicholson  
Paul-Hus  
Plamondon  
Quach  
Rankin  
Rempel  
Ritz

Albas  
Allison  
Anderson  
Aubin  
Benson  
Berthold  
Blaikie  
Block  
Boudrias  
Boutin-Sweet  
Brosseau  
Calkins  
Carrie  
Christopherson  
Clement  
Cullen  
Deltell  
Donnelly  
Dubé  
Dusseau  
Eglinski  
Finley  
Gallant  
Généreux  
Gill  
Godin  
Hardcastle  
Hoback  
Jeneroux  
Kelly  
Kitchen  
Kwan  
Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)  
Lebel  
Lobb  
MacGregor  
Maguire  
Marcil  
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)  
McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)  
Mulcair  
Nater  
Nuttall  
Pauzé  
Poilievre  
Ramsey  
Reid  
Richards  
Saganash

Aldag  
Alleslev  
Anandasangaree  
Arya  
Bagnell  
Baylis  
Bennett  
Blair  
Bratina  
Brisson  
Carr  
Casey (Charlottetown)  
Champagne  
Chen  
Cuzner  
Damoff  
Dhaliwal  
Di Iorio  
Dubourg  
Duguid  
Dzerowicz  
El-Khoury  
Eyking  
Fergus  
Fimmigan  
Fonseca  
Fraser (West Nova)  
Freeland  
Fuhr  
Gerretsen  
Goodale  
Graham  
Hajdu  
Harvey  
Housefather  
Hutchings  
Joly  
Jowhari  
Khalid  
Lametti  
Lapointe  
Lebouthillier  
Lemieux  
Levitt  
Lockhart  
Longfield  
MacKinnon (Gatineau)  
Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)  
May (Cambridge)  
McCrimmon  
McGuinty  
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)  
Mendès  
Mihychuk  
Soeurs  
Monsef  
Morrissey  
Nassif  
O'Connell  
Oliver  
Ouellette  
Peschisolido  
Petipas Taylor  
Picard

**NAYS**

Members

Alghabra  
Amos  
Arseneault  
Ayoub  
Bains  
Beech  
Bibeau  
Bossio  
Breton  
Caesar-Chavannes  
Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)  
Chagger  
Chan  
Cormier  
Dabrusin  
DeCoursey  
Dhillon  
Drouin  
Duclos  
Duncan (Etobicoke North)  
Ehssasi  
Ellis  
Eyolfson  
Fillmore  
Fisher  
Fragiskatos  
Fraser (Central Nova)  
Fry  
Garneau  
Goldsmith-Jones  
Gould  
Grewal  
Hardie  
Holland  
Hussen  
Iacono  
Jordan  
Kang  
Khera  
Lamoureux  
Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)  
Lefebvre  
Leslie  
Lightbound  
Long  
Ludwig  
Maloney  
McDonald  
McKenna  
McLeod (Northwest Territories)  
Mendicino  
Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-  
Morneau  
Murray  
Nault  
Oliphant  
O'Regan  
Paradis  
Peterson  
Philpott  
Poissant

*Government Orders*

Qualtrough	Ratansi
Rioux	Robillard
Rodriguez	Romanado
Rota	Rudd
Ruimy	Rusnak
Sahota	Saini
Sajjan	Samson
Sarai	Scarpaleggia
Schiefke	Schulte
Serré	Sheehan
Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)	Sidhu (Brampton South)
Sikand	Simms
Sohi	Sorbara
Spengemann	Tabbara
Tan	Tassi
Tootoo	Trudeau
Vandal	Vandenbeld
Vaughan	Virani
Whalen	Wilkinson
Wilson-Raybould	Wrzesnewskyj
Young	Zahid— 166

**PAIRED**

Members

Moore— 2

**The Speaker:** I declare the amendment to Motion No. 3 lost.  
[*English*]

The question is on Motion No. 3. A vote on this motion also applies to Motion No. 6.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Speaker:** All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

**The Speaker:** All those opposed will please say nay.

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Speaker:** In my opinion the yeas have it.

*And five or more members having risen:*

● (1940)

(The House divided on Motion No. 3, which was agreed to on the following division:)

*(Division No. 217)*

**YEAS**

Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Alleslev	Amos
Anandasangaree	Arseneault
Arya	Ayoub
Bagnell	Bains
Baylis	Beech
Bennett	Bibeau
Blair	Bossio
Bratina	Breton
Brisson	Caesar-Chavannes
Carr	Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)
Casey (Charlottetown)	Chagger
Champagne	Chan
Chen	Cormier
Cuzner	Dabrusin
Damoff	DeCoursey

Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Di Iorio	Drouin
Dubourg	Duclos
Duguid	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Dzerowicz	Ehsassi
El-Khoury	Ellis
Eyking	Eyolfson
Fergus	Fillmore
Finnigan	Fisher
Fonseca	Fragiskatos
Fraser (West Nova)	Fraser (Central Nova)
Freeland	Fry
Fuhr	Garneau
Gerretsen	Goldsmith-Jones
Goodale	Gould
Graham	Grewal
Hajdu	Hardie
Harvey	Holland
Housefather	Hussen
Hutchings	Iacono
Joly	Jordan
Jowhari	Kang
Khalid	Khera
Lametti	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)
Lebouthillier	Lefebvre
Lemieux	Leslie
Levitt	Lightbound
Lockhart	Long
Longfield	Ludwig
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maloney
Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)	
May (Cambridge)	
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)	McCrimmon
McDonald	McGuinity
McKenna	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McLeod (Northwest Territories)	Mendès
Mendicino	Mihychuk
Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Soeurs)	
Monsef	
Morneau	Morrissey
Murray	Nassif
Nault	O'Connell
Oliphant	Oliver
O'Regan	Ouellette
Paradis	Peschisolido
Peterson	Petitpas Taylor
Philpott	Picard
Poissant	Qualtrough
Ratansi	Rioux
Robillard	Rodriguez
Romanado	Rota
Rudd	Ruimy
Rusnak	Sahota
Saini	Sajjan
Samson	Sarai
Scarpaleggia	Schiefke
Schulte	Serré
Sheehan	Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)
Sidhu (Brampton South)	Sikand
Simms	Sohi
Sorbara	Spengemann
Tabbara	Tan
Tassi	Tootoo
Trudeau	Vandal
Vandenbeld	Vaughan
Virani	Whalen
Wilkinson	Wilson-Raybould
Wrzesnewskyj	Young
Zahid— 167	

**NAYS**

Members

Abouttaif	Albas
Albrecht	Allison
Ambrose	Anderson
Arnold	Aubin
Barlow	Benson
Bergen	Berthold
Bezan	Blaikie
Blaney (North Island—Powell River)	Block
Boucher	Boudrias

*Government Orders*

Boulerice  
 Brassard  
 Brown  
 Cannings  
 Choquette  
 Clarke  
 Cooper  
 Davies  
 Diotte  
 Dreeshen  
 Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)  
 Duvall  
 Falk  
 Fortin  
 Garrison  
 Genuis  
 Gladu  
 Gourde  
 Harder  
 Hughes  
 Johns  
 Kent  
 Kmiec  
 Lake  
 Laverdière  
 Liepert  
 Lukiwski  
 MacKenzie  
 Malcolmson  
 Mathysen  
 McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)  
 Mulcair  
 Nater  
 Nuttall  
 Pauzé  
 Poilievre  
 Ramsey  
 Reid  
 Richards  
 Saganash  
 Saroya  
 Shields  
 Sopuck  
 Stanton  
 Stetski  
 Strahl  
 Sweet  
 Tilson  
 Van Kesteren  
 Vecchio  
 Warawa  
 Watts  
 Webber  
 Wong  
 Zimmer — 127

Boutin-Sweet  
 Brosseau  
 Calkins  
 Carrie  
 Christopherson  
 Clement  
 Cullen  
 Deltell  
 Donnelly  
 Dubé  
 Dusseault  
 Eglinski  
 Finley  
 Gallant  
 Génèreux  
 Gill  
 Godin  
 Hardcastle  
 Hoback  
 Jeneroux  
 Kelly  
 Kitchen  
 Kwan  
 Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)  
 Lebel  
 Lobb  
 MacGregor  
 Maguire  
 Marcil  
 McCauley (Edmonton West)  
 Motz  
 Nantel  
 Nicholson  
 Paul-Hus  
 Plamondon  
 Quach  
 Rankin  
 Rempel  
 Ritz  
 Sansoucy  
 Schmale  
 Shipley  
 Sorenson  
 Ste-Marie  
 Stewart  
 Stubbs  
 Thériault  
 Trudel  
 Van Loan  
 Viersen  
 Warkentin  
 Waugh  
 Weir  
 Yurdiga

Bagnell  
 Baylis  
 Bennett  
 Blair  
 Bratina  
 Brison  
 Carr  
 Casey (Charlottetown)  
 Champagne  
 Chen  
 Cuzner  
 Damoff  
 Dhaliwal  
 Di Iorio  
 Dubourg  
 Duguid  
 Dzerowicz  
 El-Khoury  
 Eyking  
 Fergus  
 Fimmigan  
 Fonseca  
 Fraser (West Nova)  
 Freeland  
 Fuhr  
 Gerretsen  
 Goodale  
 Graham  
 Hajdu  
 Harvey  
 Housefather  
 Hutchings  
 Joly  
 Jowhari  
 Khalid  
 Lametti  
 Lapointe  
 Leboutillier  
 Lemieux  
 Levitt  
 Lockhart  
 Longfield  
 MacKinnon (Gatineau)  
 Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)  
 May (Cambridge)  
 McCrimmon  
 McGuinty  
 McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)  
 Mendès  
 Mihychuk  
 Soeurs)  
 Monsef  
 Morrissey  
 Nassif  
 O'Connell  
 Oliver  
 Ouellette  
 Peschisolido  
 Petipas Taylor  
 Picard  
 Qualtrough  
 Rioux  
 Rodriguez  
 Rota  
 Ruimy  
 Sahota  
 Sajjan  
 Sarai  
 Schiefke  
 Serré  
 Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)  
 Sikand  
 Sohi  
 Spengemann  
 Tan  
 Tootoo  
 Vandal  
 Vaughan  
 Whalen  
 Wilson-Raybould  
 Young

Bains  
 Beech  
 Bibeau  
 Bossio  
 Breton  
 Caesar-Chavannes  
 Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)  
 Chagger  
 Chan  
 Cormier  
 Dabrusin  
 DeCoursey  
 Dhillon  
 Drouin  
 Duclos  
 Duncan (Etobicoke North)  
 Ehsassi  
 Ellis  
 Eyolfson  
 Fillmore  
 Fisher  
 Fragiskatos  
 Fraser (Central Nova)  
 Fry  
 Garneau  
 Goldsmith-Jones  
 Gould  
 Grewal  
 Hardie  
 Holland  
 Hussen  
 Iacono  
 Jordan  
 Kang  
 Khera  
 Lamoureux  
 Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)  
 Lefebvre  
 Leslie  
 Lightbound  
 Long  
 Ludwig  
 Maloney  
 McDonald  
 McKenna  
 McLeod (Northwest Territories)  
 Mendicino  
 Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-  
 Morneau  
 Murray  
 Nault  
 Oliphant  
 O'Regan  
 Paradis  
 Peterson  
 Philpott  
 Poissant  
 Ratansi  
 Robillard  
 Romanado  
 Rudd  
 Rusnak  
 Saini  
 Samson  
 Scarpaleggia  
 Schulte  
 Sheehan  
 Sidhu (Brampton South)  
 Simms  
 Sorbara  
 Tabbara  
 Tassi  
 Trudeau  
 Vandenbeld  
 Virani  
 Wilkinson  
 Wrzesnewskyj  
 Zahid — 166

**PAIRED**

Members

Foote

Moore — 2

**The Speaker:** I declare Motion No. 3 carried. I therefore declare Motion No. 6 carried.

[Translation]

The next question is on Motion No. 4.

● (1950)

(The House divided on Motion No. 4, which was agreed to on the following division:)

*(Division No. 218)***YEAS**

Members

Aldag  
 Alleslev  
 Anandasangaree  
 Arya

Alghabra  
 Amos  
 Arseneault  
 Ayoub



*Government Orders*  
*(Division No. 219)*

**NAYS**

Members

Aboutaif  
Albrecht  
Ambrose  
Arnold  
Barlow  
Bergen  
Bezan  
Blaney (North Island—Powell River)  
Boucher  
Boulerice  
Brassard  
Brown  
Cannings  
Choquette  
Clarke  
Cooper  
Davies  
Diotte  
Dreeshen  
Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)  
Duvall  
Falk  
Fortin  
Garrison  
Genuis  
Gladu  
Gourde  
Harder  
Hughes  
Johns  
Kent  
Krnjec  
Lake  
Laverdière  
Liepert  
Lukiwski  
MacKenzie  
Malcolmson  
Mathysen  
McCauley (Edmonton West)  
Motz  
Nantel  
Nicholson  
Paul-Hus  
Plamondon  
Quach  
Rankin  
Rempel  
Ritz  
Sansoucy  
Schmale  
Shipley  
Sorenson  
Ste-Marie  
Stewart  
Stubbs  
Thériault  
Trudel  
Van Loan  
Viersen  
Warkentin  
Waugh  
Weir  
Yurdiga

Albas  
Allison  
Anderson  
Aubin  
Benson  
Berthold  
Blaikie  
Block  
Boudrias  
Boutin-Sweet  
Brosseau  
Calkins  
Carrie  
Christopherson  
Clement  
Cullen  
Deltell  
Donnelly  
Dubé  
Dusseau  
Egliniski  
Finley  
Gallant  
Généreux  
Gill  
Godin  
Hardcastle  
Hoback  
Jeneroux  
Kelly  
Kitchen  
Kwan  
Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)  
Lebel  
Lobb  
MacGregor  
Maguire  
Marcil  
May (Saanic—Gulf Islands)  
McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)  
Mulcair  
Nater  
Nuttall  
Pauzé  
Poilievre  
Ramsey  
Reid  
Richards  
Saganash  
Saroya  
Shields  
Sopuck  
Stanton  
Stetski  
Strahl  
Sweet  
Tilson  
Van Kesteren  
Vecchio  
Warawa  
Watts  
Webber  
Wong  
Zimmer — 128

**PAIRED**

Members

Moore — 2

Footnote

**The Speaker:** I declare Motion No. 4 carried.

The next question is on Motion No. 5.

• (2000)

[English]

(The House divided on Motion No. 5, which was agreed to on the following division:)

**YEAS**

Members

Aldag  
Alleslev  
Anandasangaree  
Arya  
Bagnell  
Baylis  
Bennett  
Blair  
Bratina  
Brison  
Carr  
Casey (Charlottetown)  
Champagne  
Chen  
Cuzner  
Damoff  
Dhaliwal  
Di Iorio  
Dubourg  
Duguid  
Dzerowicz  
El-Khoury  
Eyking  
Fergus  
Finnigan  
Fonseca  
Fraser (West Nova)  
Freeland  
Fuhr  
Gerretsen  
Goodale  
Graham  
Hajdu  
Harvey  
Housefather  
Hutchings  
Joly  
Jowhari  
Khalid  
Lametti  
Lapointe  
Lebouthillier  
Lemieux  
Levitt  
Lockhart  
Longfield  
MacKinnon (Gatineau)  
Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)  
May (Cambridge)  
McCrimmon  
McGuinty  
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)  
Mendès  
Mihychuk  
Soeurs  
Monsef  
Morrissey  
Nassif  
O'Connell  
Oliver  
Ouellette  
Peschisolido  
Petitpas Taylor  
Picard  
Qualtrough  
Rioux  
Rodriguez  
Rota  
Ruimy  
Sahota  
Sajjan  
Sarai  
Schieffe  
Serré  
Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)  
Sikand  
Sohi  
Spengemann

Alghabra  
Amos  
Arseneault  
Ayoub  
Bains  
Beech  
Bibeau  
Bossio  
Breton  
Caesar-Chavannes  
Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)  
Chagger  
Chan  
Cormier  
Dabrusin  
DeCoursey  
Dhillon  
Drouin  
Duclos  
Duncan (Etobicoke North)  
Ehsassi  
Ellis  
Eyolfson  
Fillmore  
Fisher  
Fragiskatos  
Fraser (Central Nova)  
Fry  
Gameau  
Goldsmith-Jones  
Gould  
Grewal  
Hardie  
Holland  
Hussen  
Iacono  
Jordan  
Kang  
Khera  
Lamoureux  
Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)  
Lefebvre  
Leslie  
Lightbound  
Long  
Ludwig  
Maloney  
McDonald  
McKenna  
McLeod (Northwest Territories)  
Mendicino  
Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Érables)  
Morneau  
Murray  
Nault  
Oliphant  
O'Regan  
Paradis  
Peterson  
Philpott  
Poissant  
Ratansi  
Robillard  
Romanado  
Rudd  
Rusnak  
Saini  
Samson  
Scarpaleggia  
Schulte  
Sheehan  
Sidhu (Brampton South)  
Simms  
Sorbara  
Tabbara

*Government Orders*

Tan  
Tootoo  
Vandal  
Vaughan  
Whalen  
Wilson-Raybould  
Young

Tassi  
Trudeau  
Vandenbeld  
Virani  
Wilkinson  
Wrzesnewskyj  
Zahid — 166

**NAYS**

## Members

Aboultaif  
Albrecht  
Ambrose  
Arnold  
Barlow  
Bergen  
Bezan  
Blaney (North Island—Powell River)  
Boucher  
Boulerice  
Brassard  
Brown  
Cannings  
Choquette  
Clarke  
Cooper  
Davies  
Diotte  
Dreeshen  
Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)  
Duvall  
Falk  
Fortin  
Garrison  
Genius  
Gladu  
Gourde  
Harder  
Hughes  
Johns  
Kent  
Kniec  
Lake  
Laverdière  
Liepert  
Lukiwski  
MacKenzie  
Malcolmson  
Mathysen  
McCauley (Edmonton West)  
Motz  
Nantel  
Nicholson  
Paul-Hus  
Plamondon  
Quach  
Rankin  
Rempel  
Ritz  
Sansoucy  
Schmale  
Shipley  
Sorenson  
Ste-Marie  
Stewart  
Stubbs  
Thériault  
Trudel  
Van Loan  
Viersen  
Warkentin  
Waugh  
Weir  
Yurdiga

Albas  
Allison  
Anderson  
Aubin  
Benson  
Berthold  
Blaikie  
Block  
Boudrias  
Boutin-Sweet  
Brosseau  
Calkins  
Carrie  
Christopherson  
Clement  
Cullen  
Deltell  
Donnelly  
Dubé  
Dusseault  
Egliniski  
Finley  
Gallant  
Généreux  
Gill  
Godin  
Hardcastle  
Hoback  
Jeneroux  
Kelly  
Kitchen  
Kwan  
Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)  
Lebel  
Lobb  
MacGregor  
Maguire  
Marcil  
May (Saenich—Gulf Islands)  
McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)  
Mulcair  
Nater  
Nuttall  
Pauzé  
Poilievre  
Ramsey  
Reid  
Richards  
Saganash  
Saroya  
Shields  
Sopuck  
Stanton  
Stetski  
Strahl  
Sweet  
Tilson  
Van Kesteren  
Vecchio  
Warawa  
Watts  
Webber  
Wong  
Zimmer — 128

**PAIRED**

## Members

Foote

Moore — 2

**The Speaker:** I declare Motion No. 5 carried.*[Translation]*

The next question is on Motion No. 7.

● (2010)

(The House divided on Motion No. 7, which was negated on the following division:)

*(Division No. 220)***YEAS**

## Members

Aboultaif  
Albrecht  
Ambrose  
Arnold  
Barlow  
Bergen  
Bezan  
Blaney (North Island—Powell River)  
Boucher  
Boulerice  
Brassard  
Brown  
Cannings  
Choquette  
Clarke  
Cooper  
Davies  
Diotte  
Dreeshen  
Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)  
Duvall  
Falk  
Fortin  
Garrison  
Genius  
Gladu  
Gourde  
Harder  
Hughes  
Johns  
Kent  
Kniec  
Lake  
Laverdière  
Liepert  
Lukiwski  
MacKenzie  
Malcolmson  
Mathysen  
McCauley (Edmonton West)  
Motz  
Nantel  
Nicholson  
Paul-Hus  
Plamondon  
Quach  
Rankin  
Rempel  
Ritz  
Sansoucy  
Schmale  
Shipley  
Sorenson  
Ste-Marie  
Stewart  
Stubbs  
Thériault  
Trudel  
Van Loan  
Viersen  
Warkentin  
Waugh  
Weir  
Yurdiga

Albas  
Allison  
Anderson  
Aubin  
Benson  
Berthold  
Blaikie  
Block  
Boudrias  
Boutin-Sweet  
Brosseau  
Calkins  
Carrie  
Christopherson  
Clement  
Cullen  
Deltell  
Donnelly  
Dubé  
Dusseault  
Egliniski  
Finley  
Gallant  
Généreux  
Gill  
Godin  
Hardcastle  
Hoback  
Jeneroux  
Kelly  
Kitchen  
Kwan  
Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)  
Lebel  
Lobb  
MacGregor  
Maguire  
Marcil  
May (Saenich—Gulf Islands)  
McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)  
Mulcair  
Nater  
Nuttall  
Pauzé  
Poilievre  
Ramsey  
Reid  
Richards  
Saganash  
Saroya  
Shields  
Sopuck  
Stanton  
Stetski  
Strahl  
Sweet  
Tilson  
Van Kesteren  
Vecchio  
Warawa  
Watts  
Webber  
Wong  
Zimmer — 128

**NAYS**

Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Alleslev	Amos
Anandasangaree	Arseneault
Arya	Ayoub
Bagnell	Bains
Baylis	Beech
Bennett	Bibeau
Blair	Bossio
Bratina	Breton
Brison	Caesar-Chavannes
Carr	Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)
Casey (Charlottetown)	Chagger
Champagne	Chan
Chen	Cormier
Cuzner	Dabrusin
Damoff	DeCoursey
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Di Iorio	Drouin
Dubourg	Duclos
Duguid	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Dzerowicz	Ehsassi
El-Khoury	Ellis
Eyking	Eyolfson
Fergus	Fillmore
Finnigan	Fisher
Fonseca	Fragiskatos
Fraser (West Nova)	Fraser (Central Nova)
Freeland	Fry
Fuhr	Gameau
Gerretsen	Goldsmith-Jones
Goodale	Gould
Graham	Grewal
Hajdu	Hardie
Harvey	Holland
Housefather	Hussen
Hutchings	Iacono
Joly	Jordan
Jowhari	Kang
Khalid	Khera
Lametti	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)
Lebouthillier	Lefebvre
Lemieux	Leslie
Levitt	Lightbound
Lockhart	Long
Longfield	Ludwig
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maloney
Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)	
May (Cambridge)	
McCrimmon	McDonald
McGuinty	McKenna
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLeod (Northwest Territories)
Mendès	Medicino
Mihychuk	Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Soeurs)
Monsef	Morneau
Morrissey	Murray
Nassif	Nault
O'Connell	Olipphant
Oliver	O'Regan
Ouellette	Paradis
Peschisolido	Peterson
Petitpas Taylor	Philpott
Picard	Poissant
Qualtrough	Ratansi
Rioux	Robillard
Rodriguez	Romanado
Rota	Rudd
Ruimy	Rusnak
Sahota	Saini
Sajjan	Samson
Sarai	Scarpaleggia
Schiefke	Schulte
Serré	Sheehan
Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)	Sidhu (Brampton South)
Sikand	Simms
Sohi	Sorbara
Spengemann	Tabbara
Tan	Tassi
Tootoo	Trudeau

*Government Orders*

Vandal	Vandenbeld
Vaughan	Virani
Whalen	Wilkinson
Wilson-Raybould	Wrzesnewskyj
Young	Zahid— 166

**PAIRED**

Members

Moore— 2

**The Speaker:** I declare Motion No. 7 lost.

[English]

**Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.)** moved that bill, as amended, be concurred in at report stage with further amendments.

**The Speaker:** Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Speaker:** All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

**The Speaker:** All those opposed will please say nay.

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Speaker:** In my opinion the yeas have it.

*And five or more members having risen:*

**The Speaker:** All those in favor of the motion will please rise.

● (2015)

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

(Division No. 221)

**YEAS**

Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Alleslev	Amos
Anandasangaree	Arseneault
Arya	Ayoub
Bagnell	Bains
Baylis	Beech
Bennett	Bibeau
Blair	Bossio
Bratina	Breton
Brison	Caesar-Chavannes
Carr	Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)
Casey (Charlottetown)	Chagger
Champagne	Chan
Chen	Cormier
Cuzner	Dabrusin
Damoff	DeCoursey
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Di Iorio	Drouin
Dubourg	Duclos
Duguid	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Dzerowicz	Ehsassi
El-Khoury	Ellis
Eyking	Eyolfson
Fergus	Fillmore
Finnigan	Fisher
Fonseca	Fragiskatos

*Government Orders*

Fraser (West Nova)	Fraser (Central Nova)	Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)	Dusseault
Freeland	Fry	Duvall	Egliniski
Fuhr	Garneau	Falk	Finley
Gerretsen	Goldsmith-Jones	Fortin	Gallant
Goodale	Gould	Garrison	Généreux
Graham	Grewal	Genius	Gill
Hajdu	Hardie	Gladu	Godin
Harvey	Holland	Gourde	Harcastle
Housefather	Hussen	Harder	Hoback
Hutchings	Iacono	Hughes	Jeneroux
Joly	Jordan	Johns	Kelly
Jowhari	Kang	Kent	Kitchen
Khalid	Khera	Kmiec	Kwan
Lametti	Lamoureux	Lake	Lauson (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Lapointe	Lauson (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)	Laverdière	Lebel
Lebouthillier	Lefebvre	Liepert	Lobb
Lemieux	Leslie	Lukiwski	MacGregor
Levitt	Lightbound	MacKenzie	Maguire
Lockhart	Long	Malcolmson	Marcil
Longfield	Ludwig	Mathysen	McCauley (Edmonton West)
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maloney	McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)	Motz
Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)		Mulcair	Nantel
May (Cambridge)		Nater	Nicholson
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)	McCrimmon	Nuttall	Paul-Hus
McDonald	McGuinity	Paupé	Plamondon
McKenna	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	Poilievre	Quach
McLeod (Northwest Territories)	Mendès	Ramsey	Rankin
Medicino	Mihychuk	Reid	Rempel
Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Sœurs)		Richards	Ritz
Monsef		Saganash	Sansoucy
Morneau	Morrissey	Saroya	Schmale
Murray	Nassif	Shields	Shipley
Nault	O'Connell	Sopuck	Sorenson
Oliphant	Oliver	Stanton	Ste-Marie
O'Regan	Ouellette	Stetski	Stewart
Paradis	Pescholido	Strahl	Stubbs
Peterson	Petitpas Taylor	Sweet	Thériault
Philpott	Picard	Tilson	Trudel
Poissant	Qualtrough	Van Kesteren	Van Loan
Ratansi	Rioux	Vecchio	Viersen
Robillard	Rodriguez	Warawa	Warkentin
Romanado	Rota	Watts	Waugh
Rudd	Ruimy	Webber	Weir
Rusnak	Sahota	Wong	Yurdiga
Saini	Sajjan	Zimmer — 127	
Samson	Sarai		
Scarpaleggia	Schiefke		
Schulte	Serré		
Sheehan	Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)		
Sidhu (Brampton South)	Sikand		
Simms	Sohi		
Sorbara	Spengemann		
Tabbara	Tan		
Tassi	Tootoo		
Trudeau	Vandal		
Vandenbeld	Vaughan		
Virani	Whalen		
Wilkinson	Wilson-Raybould		
Wrzesniewski	Young		
Zahid — 167			

**NAYS**

## Members

Aboutaif	Albas
Albrecht	Allison
Ambrose	Anderson
Arnold	Aubin
Barlow	Benson
Bergen	Berthold
Bezan	Blaikie
Blaney (North Island—Powell River)	Block
Boucher	Boudrias
Boulerice	Boutin-Sweet
Brassard	Brousseau
Brown	Calkins
Cannings	Carrie
Choquette	Christopherson
Clarke	Clement
Cooper	Cullen
Davies	Deltell
Diotte	Donnelly
Dreeshen	Dubé

**PAIRED**

## Members

Foote

Moore — 2

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

[Translation]

Pursuant to order made on Thursday, March 9, 2017, the House shall now resolve itself into committee of the whole to consider Motion No. 12 under Government Business.

[English]

I do now leave the chair for the House to go into committee of the whole.

**GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

● (2020)

[Translation]

**OPERATION UNIFIER**

(House in committee of the whole on Government Business No. 12, Mr. Anthony Rota in the chair)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota):** Before we begin this evening's debate, I would like to remind hon. members of how the proceedings will unfold.

*Government Orders*

[English]

Each member speaking will be allotted 10 minutes for debate followed by 10 minutes for questions and comments. The debate will end after four hours or when no member rises to speak. Pursuant to the order adopted Thursday, March 9, 2017, members may divide their time with another member, and the Chair will not receive any dilatory motions, quorum calls, or requests for unanimous consent.

[Translation]

We will now begin tonight's take note debate.

[English]

**Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.)** moved:

That the House take note of Operation UNIFIER.

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Chair, I want to thank this House for the opportunity to lead this important debate on the extension of Operation Unifier, a critical part of our assistance to support Ukraine sovereignty, security, and stability. I am confident that all hon. members will support Canada's ongoing efforts to support the people of Ukraine and to help them defend their territory.

Earlier this month, the Minister of National Defence and I were pleased to announce the extension of Unifier until March 2019. The extension means that Canada will continue to support the professional development of the Ukrainian armed forces, an institution that is essential for the sustainable stabilization and development of Ukraine.

Canada is deploying approximately 200 Canadian Armed Forces personnel to Ukraine until the end of March 2019. Canadian Armed Forces members will come from all parts of Canada, bringing with them their unique skills and capacities in support of Unifier training programs.

Last summer, together with the Prime Minister, I had the honour of visiting our troops and seeing them in action, in Yavoriv, working with their Ukrainian partners. I was proud and I was impressed. We are privileged to have them represent us in Ukraine. On behalf of this House, on behalf of the government, I would like to say to all of our troops in Ukraine, we thank them very much. *Dyakuyu*.

Many members in this House know that the people of Ukraine have very close ties with the people of Canada. Diversity is our strength. In fact, our countries have enjoyed a close relationship going back more than 125 years. The first two Ukrainian settlers, and members can imagine how brave they were, arrived in Montreal on board the steamship SS *Oregon* in 1891. This marked the beginning of many waves of Ukrainian immigration to Canada, waves that would help build some of the most vibrant and caring communities across our country.

Ukrainian immigrants played a particularly important role in settling the Canadian prairies, where I, and many members of this House, grew up. Our Ukrainian-Canadian community played a central role in creating what I considered to be one of Canada's greatest political ideas and accomplishments: multiculturalism. There are now over 1.2 million Canadians of Ukrainian descent.

However, Canada's support for Ukraine goes beyond the strong and long-standing human ties between our countries. We support Ukraine because of our values. We support Ukraine because we support democracy. We support Ukraine because we support the sanctity of borders. We support Ukraine because we support the international rule of law.

Today Canada stands alongside Ukraine in defending its borders and sovereignty against illegal acts of aggression. Canada has led its G7 partners in condemning Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea and the invasion of Crimea. We continue to take action to help the people of Ukraine defend their country and to stabilize and rebuild their economy. Canada has imposed sanctions against Russian and Ukrainian individuals and entities and has announced more than \$700 million in assistance to Ukraine and more than \$240 million in development assistance.

As Canadians have heard from the Minister of National Defence and from me, the extension of Operation Unifier will support the professional development of the Ukrainian armed forces, who are essential in deterring aggression and creating a safe space for the sustainable social and economic development the people of Ukraine need and deserve.

Last summer I was honoured to sign, in Kiev, in the presence of our Prime Minister and Ukraine's President Petro Poroshenko, the Canada-Ukraine Free Trade Agreement. I am delighted and grateful that it was unanimously supported by all members of this House.

These measures, taken with strong cross-party support and with strong support across our country, are working. The Ukrainian economy has overcome the shock of this ongoing conflict and has actually been growing for the past year. Foreign investment, including by such Canadian flagships as Fairfax Financial, is resuming.

Decentralization, supported by our local economic development programs, is putting resources into the hands of grassroots communities, resulting in modernized hospitals and social services. An honest and trusted new police force, with a significant female presence, is on the streets of the country's 32 biggest cities, thanks in part to the great work of committed Canadians, like Montreal's Natalia Shuster, who I was pleased to meet in Ukraine last summer.

● (2025)

Canada's support for Ukraine has only grown stronger in the face of unprecedented challenges to Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity stemming from Russia's illegal invasion and annexation of Crimea in March 2014 and its ongoing support to the separatists in eastern Ukraine.

We were in opposition at the time, but I and my party were pleased to support the government of the day when Canada joined the international community in immediately condemning Russia's occupation of Crimea, and we supported United Nations General Assembly resolution 68-262, which affirmed the General Assembly's commitment to the territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders.

*Government Orders*

Canada has also imposed sanctions against key officials involved in the annexation. Additional sanctions related specifically to Crimea were subsequently introduced. Most recently, in November 2016, our government imposed sanctions against an additional 15 individuals, including six who were elected to the Russian State Duma from the illegally annexed territory of Crimea.

Let me be very clear: Canada does not and will not recognize Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea.

[Translation]

We have also been clear that we will continue to strongly condemn Russia's continued support for the separatist insurrection in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions in eastern Ukraine. The sharp rise in violence in and around Avdiivka earlier this year reminds us that the civilian population in the conflict zone pays a heavy price. An estimated 20,000 people had to go without electricity, potable water, or heating when temperatures threatened to drop to -20 degrees Celsius. That is why it was possible for Ukrainians to come to Canada.

We will continue to pressure Russia, including through the current sanctions, to fully implement the commitments it made under the Minsk agreements and use its influence on the separatists to meet its obligations.

The ultimate goal of our support is to promote the security, stability, and prosperity of Ukraine.

We will continue to build on the solid foundation that we have established with Ukraine and we will continue to engage in a rich and mutually beneficial partnership based on common values and a commitment to regional and international security.

When I was Minister of International Trade, I had the honour of attending the signing of the Canada-Ukraine Free Trade Agreement. Now, as Minister of Foreign Affairs, I look forward to exploring opportunities to further strengthen our close and mutually beneficial relationship with Ukraine.

• (2030)

[English]

One of my favourite Ukrainian poets is Ivan Franko, and one of his great poems is called *To the Big Moment*. In that poem he writes, "Let every one of you be ready for the great moment".

This really is Ukraine's great testing moment. I think the people of Ukraine are showing themselves to be ready and I am proud that the people of Canada are showing themselves ready to support the people of Ukraine.

In this House we often disagree. Indeed, one of the reasons we are here is to highlight for Canadians the differences between our parties. However, when it comes to the issue of Ukraine and the issue of the values we are standing for in supporting Ukraine, all of us are united. This is truly not a partisan issue, and I am glad to be here to speak up for Ukraine and for Canada's support for Ukraine.

**Hon. Tony Clement (Parry Sound—Muskoka, CPC):** Mr. Chair, I thank the hon. minister for her remarks, which were a *tour d'horizon* of the previous government's support, and obviously the support of the minister and the government as well.

I was in Ukraine, as the hon. minister knows, from February 28 to March 3, on a humanitarian mission with One Free World International. There are over one million displaced persons in Ukraine right now. They have been displaced by the horrific war that is still going on. It is not a cold war, but a hot war in the Donbass region. I visited the military hospital. Many Canadian doctors are there, working overnight shifts because there are young men who need their help after being in the war zone.

I also met with a number of Ukrainian officials. They worried about the corruption in their society still and how Canada could help them.

I have a three-part question for the hon. minister. I know we have Operation Unifier, which is amazing and should be continued, but how can we help combat corruption? How can we help make sure Ukrainian soldiers can better defend their homeland? How can we help the displaced persons who need our help?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland:** Mr. Chair, I would like to thank the hon. member for Parry Sound—Muskoka for his very strong and long-standing support for Ukraine and for taking a position on this issue in particular which does rise above partisanship. I am pleased to acknowledge that here, and it shows how the House can be a really great and strong place in support not only of Ukrainian democracy but Canadian democracy.

On the issues that the member opposite raised, I would like to join with him in highlighting the very important work that many Canadian members of civil society are doing in supporting the people of Ukraine, particularly on the medical side. We all have people in our constituencies who are providing humanitarian aid and doctors who are working there. I was in touch with one woman in my constituency yesterday who is involved in such an effort, and we should salute those private efforts of Canadians.

Definitely our government is engaged in humanitarian support for the people of Ukraine. As the hon. member mentioned, that includes medical support, but we need to think about what we can do for those displaced people. It really is a crisis. I spoke about Ukraine's economic performance. It is important for us, as we consider what the Ukrainian government is able to do, to appreciate that this is happening against the backdrop of an ongoing hot military conflict and a backdrop of a huge internal displaced persons crisis. That makes what the government has managed to do really all that much more impressive.

To the point the member raises about corruption, like him, I have heard concerns about corruption from many Ukrainians. Perhaps as Ukraine's strongest friends in the international community, we need to support both Ukraine civil society and the Ukrainian government in fighting against that corruption. At the end of the day, important though we all know Operation Unifier to be, I ultimately think Ukraine's sovereignty is going to be secured on the economic battlefield. If Ukraine is able to reform its economy, to reform its political institutions, to end corruption, then Ukraine will be strong enough to remain independent. There is a lot of work that Canada is able to do to help Ukraine in that effort.

*Government Orders*

● (2035)

**Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP):** Mr. Chair, I would like to thank the hon. minister for her speech. We are well aware of each other's commitment to the community and through her family.

I am glad that the minister raised the issue about civil society. I had the privilege a number of years back to travel with the foreign affairs committee to Ukraine, before the government changed, to look into the erosion of rule of law and the erosion of democracy.

I met with representatives of the media, representatives of families who had been jailed, representatives of families who had been kicked out of the country. I heard concerns from human rights organizations. It is great that we now have a trade agreement with Ukraine. The problem is that we need to give more support to civil society to make sure that all Ukrainians benefit from economic development. As members in this place have mentioned, there is continuing corruption.

Does the minister agree that the government should be increasing its support to civil society? Young Ukrainians like the ones who have come here to intern have gone back to Ukraine and want to work with the government toward their direct engagement in the future of their country—not just in the development of the economy, but in creating better courts and a better judicial system.

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland:** Mr. Chair, I would like to start by personally acknowledging the long-standing commitment of the member for Edmonton Strathcona to Ukraine and the work she has done over many years in supporting Ukraine, very much in collaboration with and on behalf of her constituents.

The member referred to the Canada-Ukraine Free Trade Agreement. I know that my colleagues in the New Democratic Party are not always wildly enthusiastic about trade agreements, so I was particularly pleased that the NDP supported, together with the rest of the House, the Canada-Ukraine Free Trade Agreement. That says a lot about the cross-party support in this House for Ukraine and a lot about the understanding we all have that supporting Ukraine economically is such a central part of the support we can give that country.

As I said earlier, I share with the member opposite a real admiration for and belief in the power of Ukrainian civil society. That is probably the strongest element of Ukraine right now. It is what Ukraine really has going for it: an active, engaged, often querulous, courageous, unafraid-to-criticize-the-government civil society, particularly with very engaged young people.

Canada's government and Canadian civil society are very closely engaged with Ukrainian civil society. We are already working hard to support them. However, I would agree with the member opposite that this is a group of people we should be working closely with and supporting.

The member opposite referred to the parliamentary internship program. A lot of us have worked with Ukrainian parliamentary interns. It has been a pleasure for me to go to Ukraine and discover how many members of this new democratic government of Ukraine cut their teeth learning about democracy in this House. I certainly join with the member opposite in strongly supporting that effort.

● (2040)

**The Assistant Deputy Chair:** We have time for a brief question.

The hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands.

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Chair, unfortunately, it is hard to ask a brief question about an issue so complex. I will quickly say that one reason I had no problem voting for the Canada-Ukraine Free Trade Agreement was that it did not include an investor state provision that had been brought in separately in advance.

I appreciate that it is a badge of honour for the minister personally to have been singled out by Vladimir Putin for sanctions, but on the other hand, the situation in the region is one in which we do not want to let things devolve into black and white. Crimea is clearly culturally different and it is Russian in its makeup. Solzhenitsyn, even as the USSR was falling apart, asked what would be done for Russian nationals who had been distributed through all of these other states. There is a complexity here that I do not want us to lose so that we can play a diplomatic role.

While I agree in large measure with what the minister has said, I remain concerned that Poroshenko came to power initially through what looks a lot like a coup. Now we want to support the people of Ukraine, but we also want to support the cause of peace and turning down the temperature.

I wonder if the minister has any help for me, given that I very briefly expressed something too complex for brevity.

**The Assistant Deputy Chair:** In 45 seconds or less, if possible, the hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs.

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland:** Mr. Chair, since I have to be very brief, let me say that I absolutely agree that politics are complex, domestic politics are complex, and international politics are complex, but some issues are black and white.

The invasion of Crimea and its subsequent annexation were illegal. They were clear violations of international law. That is why the world community has been united in opposing them, and that is why our government is proud to oppose them clearly and unambiguously.

**Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC):** Mr. Chair, it is indeed an honour to speak about Operation Unifier. I want to thank the minister for her comments, and I want to thank the Liberal government for extending the Conservative Party's original Operation Unifier. It is the same in size and scope, and has the same ideal, which is to provide the training that so many military in Ukraine need.

We have to remember that when this battle broke out, when Russia invaded and illegally occupied and illegally annexed Crimea, Ukraine's military had been somewhat decimated under the leadership of President Yanukovich. Yanukovich had taken away their ability to train and their ability to fight. He had sold the Ukraine military equipment and machine behind it.

*Government Orders*

To hear the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands talk about a coup, she is completely discrediting the students, the citizens of Kiev, the citizens of Lviv, the citizens right across Ukraine who took to the streets to protest against the corrupt government of Viktor Yanukovich and everything that he stood for.

He turned his back, after negotiating a comprehensive economic free trade agreement and co-operation agreement with Europe that actually was the catalyst for the people of Ukraine, especially the youth, tired of being lied to by Viktor Yanukovich and his regime. He was there, propped up by Vladimir Putin, propped up by illegal money coming in from the Russian mafia, funnelled through Donbass, especially through Donetsk. That individual robbed the treasury of the people of Ukraine. He took all of the gold reserves, all of the cash reserves, and fled to Rostov-on-Don in Russia.

That was not a coup. It was not orchestrated by anyone in the west. This was a citizens' revolution of dignity on the Euromaidan that took place in Kiev and across Ukraine. We must never, ever forget that. For anyone to come in here with fake news from RT television, Russia Today television, I can say upsets me, as members can tell, to no extent of my better judgment.

I have to say that as Conservatives, although we are happy that the government has extended Operation Unifier, we did present the government a couple of weeks ago with our own Ukrainian defence and aid package, because there is so much to be done. There is so much that Ukraine has asked for. There is so much that the Ukrainian community has called upon the Government of Canada to continue to do. The Ukrainian Canadian Congress sent out a great briefing to all members of Parliament for tonight's debate talking about what needs to happen, what the background is for those members who are not familiar with everything that has taken place in Ukraine, of the interference that is coming from Vladimir Putin and the regime in the Kremlin.

I have to share my sentiments with the Minister of Foreign Affairs. I know she is sincere. She is as passionate as I am about Ukraine and everything that Ukraine stands for. As prairie farm kids of Ukrainian heritage, she and I share that ideal and connection to the homeland of our baba and gido and want to make sure that our families' roots of the old country, as we always called it out in the Prairies, are never forgotten, and that we stand with the people of Ukraine.

As is being demonstrated tonight in the debate here, we are in solidarity with the people of Ukraine. We stand with them in their support of democracy. We stand with them as they want to have reform of their judicial system, of their economy. As the minister alluded to, the negotiation of the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement started under the previous Conservative government of Stephen Harper and was finalized by the minister herself. I thank her for carrying the ball over the goal line and making sure that this deal happened to ensure that Ukraine has that opportunity for economic prosperity. That will be the telling tale at the end of the day, that Ukraine has succeeded.

On top of expanding and continuing Operation Unifier, I have to thank the brave men and women of the Canadian Armed Forces. Even though the government just announced a week and a half ago that it was extending the mission for another two years, fresh troops,

fresh trainers out of the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry stationed in Edmonton were deployed more than three weeks ago. They are on the ground doing the training. They have taken over from the troops that are returning to Canada. I thank all members of the Canadian Armed Forces who are over there helping Ukraine.

● (2045)

As a former parliamentary secretary to the minister of defence I had the opportunity to accompany our delivery of non-kinetic defensive equipment for the military of Ukraine. I am talking 70,000 pairs of boots, winter coats, jackets, night vision goggles, and also the supply of RADARSAT imagery which is so important. Unfortunately, last year the government cancelled that program. I still call upon the Liberals to reinstate RADARSAT 2 imagery. It was saving lives. When he visited here two years ago, President Poroshenko said in the House that RADARSAT 2 imagery was saving lives. We shared that data so Ukraine knew what the Russian-backed rebels were doing in Donbass. When it could see the movement of troops and heavy artillery across the Russian border into Ukraine, Ukraine's troops were able to reposition themselves accordingly. Without those radar images from RADARSAT 2, we are putting those troops in danger.

As we have witnessed since the end of 2016, the Minsk agreements are not at all being enforced. They are not being respected by Russia. They are definitely not being respected by the Russian-backed rebels in Donetsk and Luhansk, and Ukraine is paying the price.

It is contingent upon us, especially the Government of Canada, to resupply Ukraine's military with RADARSAT images so it knows what the Russians are up to and what equipment they are providing and it does not just rely on intel.

We called on the government to add Ukraine to the automatic firearms country control list so that officials could come to Canada and buy Canadian-made weapons. They have to be able to defend themselves. If we could supply them with sniper rifles, Javelin missiles, anti-tank missiles, if we could provide them with the equipment to take out any short-range mortar attacks and defend their sovereignty, defend their troops, defend civilians in Ukraine, they would be better off. Canada would be better off and all of NATO would be better off if Ukraine was better able to defend itself. If the Ukrainian military had the equipment it needs to stop the advancement of Russia and its imperialistic advancement into eastern Ukraine, and who knows how far it is willing to go, Ukraine would be able to slow down the progress and prevent us some point down the line from having to put our troops in harm's way to stop this war in Ukraine. We definitely do not want to see it spread to other NATO members.

I do appreciate that Canadian troops are going to Latvia as part of Operation Reassurance, that our CF-18s are going to be redeployed in NATO, as the Conservative government did, to do Baltic air policing and air policing in Romania, Iceland, and other countries. I also appreciate that our frigate from the Royal Canadian Navy is always in the Mediterranean, in the Black Sea and in the Baltic Sea.



*Government Orders*

In the past, the Minister of Foreign Affairs has called for Magnitsky-style legislation. I tabled a bill in the House. Our colleague Conservative senator Raynell Andreychuk has Bill S-226 in the Senate, which is at third reading stage. I call upon the government to support that bill when it comes to the House of Commons so that we can have Magnitsky-style legislation to put in place the proper sanctions for corrupt foreign officials and stop the abuse that is happening at the hands of the people of Ukraine and the people of Russia and other countries around the world.

I just wish the minister would put in place the sanctions that she herself had called for. When she was in the opposition as a member of the third party, she used to call repeatedly for the government to sanction Igor Sechin and Vladimir Yakunin and still they are not sanctioned. The minister will have to explain that one herself.

• (2050)

As a Conservative government, we did provide a pile of support. The minister talked about \$700 million of support for Ukraine. Some \$600 million of that was provided by the Conservative government.

Again, we stand united for Ukraine in this House of Commons, and I just have to say, *Slava Ukraini*.

**Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP):** Mr. Chair, I, along with the member, was privileged to be part of the defence committee delegation that was in Washington, D.C., two weeks ago. What was most striking to me was the assurances we received no matter whom we met with. People felt that Putin would challenge President Trump, that he was certain to challenge him. From almost everyone who was asked more specifically from where that challenge would come, the answer was Ukraine. Therefore, I am glad we are having this debate tonight.

Does the member for Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman share my concern that we really need to step up both the actual support and our diplomatic support for Ukraine in the face of this expected Russian challenge that will come to Trump in Ukraine?

**Mr. James Bezan:** Mr. Chair, I want to thank my colleague, the NDP critic for defence, for the great work that he does on the defence committee.

I share his view that there is definitely a concern in Washington, as there is here, that Russia is no longer a trusted partner in the geopolitics not only of eastern Europe and Ukraine but also with respect to the aggression it is showing around the world, and its complete dismissive attitude toward other world leaders and the rule of law from an international standpoint. What it did in Crimea is a case in point on how it is prepared to redraw international boundaries without any respect or apprehension at all for how the world may react. We do have to continue isolating Vladimir Putin on the world stage. We have to continue the sanctions until Russia and the people of Russia realize that the path they are on is not acceptable to the world as a whole.

There is a concern from the lessons learned on how Vladimir Putin thinks. The member is correct in pointing out that Vladimir Putin will test President Trump. He tested President Obama early on in his presidency when President Obama made the decision that he was going to draw a red line on whether or not he was going to bring military action against Syria for the use of chemical weapons and

then did nothing. That was the signal for Vladimir Putin to actually invade Ukraine. When he sees someone waffling, he takes it as a weakness and an opportunity to advance his own imperialistic aspirations to expand the Russian Federation. Although Vladimir Putin is KGB trained, has been the President of Russia for a very long time, and is probably the richest man in the world, we have to also realize that this individual has an imperialistic view of a return of the old days, not of the Soviet Union but of the Russian empire itself.

• (2055)

**Hon. Tony Clement (Parry Sound—Muskoka, CPC):** Mr. Chair, I would like the hon. member to expand on the legal framework, because I hear apologists who take the Putin line ask, and we heard it in this House just a few minutes ago, why we should care about Crimea as it is primarily Russian. Perhaps the hon. member can describe in more detail the legal framework that was based on the fact that the major powers guaranteed the sovereignty and the borders of Ukraine at the time it gave up its nuclear arsenal at the breakup of the Soviet Union. Perhaps the hon. member could delve into that a bit.

**Mr. James Bezan:** Mr. Chair, I want to thank our public safety critic. He knows all too well that the Budapest memorandum was signed in 1991 by the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Ukraine, and Russia, five partners, who all said that they would honour the sovereign territory of Ukraine if they gave up their nuclear warheads. It was the second-largest arsenal in the world, even ahead of the United States at that time. They gave it all up. Where did most of those nuclear warheads go? They ended up back in Russia to be dismantled, to be disposed of.

How were they paid back? Just over 20 years later, they were invaded by Russia itself. Mother Russia came back to claim what they consider to be Russian territory.

We have to remember that Ukraine existed before Russia did. We have to remember that the Crimean Tatars, the indigenous people of Crimea, have said no to this invasion and illegal occupation and now are being banned of their human rights. They are no longer allowed to worship in their mosques. They are no longer allowed to meet and associate together in their parliamentary assembly, the Mejlis. They are no longer allowed to produce their papers or have their radio stations or television stations. Freedom of speech and freedom of the press have been completely removed by the Russian occupier in Crimea. The Kremlin illegally annexed it, they fixed the referendum, and the world did not honour the Budapest memorandum.

What do these legal treaties and world laws mean if nobody is going to enforce them? The least that we can do, as Canada, is to continue to isolate Vladimir Putin and the regime in the Kremlin from carrying out their aspirations on the world stage, ignore them in international organizations, and work through other groups like NATO to force them back to the table and out of Ukraine.

Crimea is Ukraine, Donbass is Ukraine, and Canada will always stand with the people of Ukraine.

*Government Orders*

• (2100)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Jean Rioux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Chair, if I understand correctly, the hon. member spoke in his remarks about having more lethal weapons.

We are currently part of the International Joint Commission, and agreements exist that provide for the United States and other countries to deal with that. In 2014, the Conservative Party provided non-lethal equipment. I am thinking mainly of winter equipment, including boots and coats, and various types of equipment after that.

Why would we not keep the Conservatives' approach while respecting the agreement with the International Joint Commission, of which we are part?

[*English*]

**Mr. James Bezan:** Mr. Chair, I want to thank the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence for his comments, and I want to remind him that we have to remember first and foremost, I actually advocated for the non-lethal military equipment that we provided to the Ukrainian military. I accompanied some of those equipment deliveries in 2014 and 2015. At that point, we had just signed the second Minsk agreement. That agreement was holding. It was working. We were participating in the co-operation training agreement with the United Kingdom and the United States in training up Ukrainian forces.

However, in the last six months, the Minsk agreements are no longer holding. The violations are rising on a daily basis. Troops are killed and injured every single day. There have been 10,000 Ukrainians who have been killed because of the situation. The military in Ukraine have been trained up by Canadian, British, and American forces to provide them with the equipment to properly defend themselves, such as sniper rifles, anti-tank missiles, anti-ballistic missiles, ways of dealing with mortar attacks, and also blocking radar from Russian sources. Things like proper radio equipment and night vision goggles are needed now. Those things are always needed and are something that we should be supplying without any hesitation. However, the lethal weapons are required for Ukraine to protect their citizens, first and foremost, and to make sure that this war in Donbass does not spread to the rest of Europe.

**Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP):** Mr. Chair, I will be splitting my time this evening with the member for Edmonton Strathcona.

I am pleased to rise in the debate tonight to support Canada's recent decision to extend Operation Unifier for the next two years. This is a very welcome commitment to the promotion of stability, not just in Ukraine, but in the wider scope of eastern Europe. It is also an important commitment to the preservation of international law in the face of Russian aggression.

Ukraine represents a strategic opportunity for NATO member countries at this time to display a strong and unified front against Russian aggression, both by providing military support to Ukraine and by keeping up the diplomatic pressure on Russia over its role in the occupation of Crimea and its role in eastern Ukraine.

In addition to Canada's military involvement, though, there is an important role for us to play in supporting Ukraine's democratic development. In the former soviet state, if we are to have long-term stability, Canada needs to be a partner in supporting Ukraine's civil society organizations, in helping to build good governance and economic stability, as well as in providing the military training support and non-lethal military aid that we are providing.

The deep corruption in Ukraine is also a threat to its own stability, as much as I would say are the Russian-backed fighters in eastern Ukraine. Therefore, Canada's role in Ukraine must include assistance in addressing this corruption for the long-term positive progress of Ukraine.

In the limited time I have tonight, I do not want to forget to thank the Canadian troops who are doing the training in Ukraine. One of the things we heard in Washington when I was there two weeks ago with the defence committee was the recognition from the Americans that there are two things they can count on from Canadian troops: one is their high skill levels, and two is their professionalism. As much as the training is about skills, I think it is also very important that the professionalism of the Canadian military become an example for those in Ukraine, where too often corruption has played a major role.

In the storm of everyday events around the world, and I suppose I would say the storm of tweets from the U.S. President, it can be too easy to forget that the situation is quite fragile in eastern Ukraine. The United Nations estimates that more than 10,000 civilian deaths have occurred since the beginning of this conflict. Now there is an estimate that 3.8 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance and that 1.7 million of those people have been displaced by this conflict.

We often pay attention, as we should, to the number of displaced and internally displaced people in the Middle East, but we should not at the same time forget that the same situation is of crisis proportions in eastern Ukraine. We understand that the humanitarian situation, as of the end of January, early February, began to deteriorate even faster in the Donetsk region, amid the outbursts of violence and the disruption of the supposed ceasefire. According to UNICEF, at least one million children are now in need of humanitarian assistance. Again, the daily violations of the ceasefires that are taking place put the children's physical safety and psychological well-being at risk as well.

At the same time, we have to remind ourselves that the human rights situation on both sides of this conflict is often not very good. The reports on civilians in detention, both on the Russian side of the line and in Ukraine, are subject to serious human rights abuses. Certainly we have more influence over what happens in Ukraine. This is an example where Canada needs to work with the authorities to better train police, to better train prison officials, and to give them that example of Canadian professionalism that is of such a high standard here in our country. However, we will also have to keep up diplomatic pressure on Ukraine to do better in the human rights and democracy area. There is no better way, no more secure way, to defeat what Russia intends to do in eastern Ukraine than by promoting democracy in Ukraine itself.

*Government Orders*

The NDP remains concerned by the ongoing Russian-backed violence in Ukraine and the continued violation of ceasefire agreements. That is why we support the training mission, and that is why we support continuing to provide non-lethal military assistance to Ukraine.

● (2105)

We will not go as far as the Conservatives have gone tonight because we have concerns that the trade in small arms remains difficult to police. It is difficult to make sure that arms that get shipped to Ukraine remain in the hands of those they are intended for and do not get—

**The Deputy Chair:** Questions and comments, the hon. member for Etobicoke Centre.

**Mr. Borys Wrzesnewskij (Etobicoke Centre, Lib.):** Madam Chair, I would like to put a question for the hon. member from the NDP. He mentioned incarceration. There are over 20 Ukrainian citizens who have been kidnapped from Ukrainian territory into Russia, and they are currently incarcerated within Russia. It is well documented by international human rights organizations that they have often been severely tortured, and they have undergone show trials in some cases. Considering this, would the NDP support efforts, first, to sanction those individuals who have been involved in the kidnapping, and, second, in the prosecution and show trials of Ukrainian citizens who have been kidnapped from Ukraine and are incarcerated in Russia at this time?

**Mr. Randall Garrison:** Madam Chair, we have all along argued that sanctions against individuals in Russia who are responsible for human rights abuses should be stepped up and that people we know are involved in both corruption and human rights abuses should be placed on those lists. We have been disappointed that the government has been slow to move on some of those additions to the lists for sanctions. We would, of course, support that at any time. However, it is also true that we have to keep up the pressure on Russia on so many fronts at the same time. If Canada does not play this role, for instance, by leading the mission in Latvia, and does not continue this assistance to Ukraine, Russia would only be emboldened with regard to further territorial ambitions and also further human rights abuses.

● (2110)

**Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC):** Madam Chair, I want to ask my friend from the NDP from Esquimalt about the experience he has had. Russia is trying to position itself in Ukraine, in eastern Europe. Why does he believe that Vladimir Putin and the regime he has at the Kremlin have been so disruptive in supporting any semblance of democracy, of human rights, of respecting the rule of law? How does the member feel that Canada could do better in addressing those concerns, whether from the standpoint of increasing sanctions or of trying to open dialogue with the rebels themselves? Do we need to continue on this path of supporting Ukraine to ensure that Ukrainians have the ability to, one, defend their sovereignty; two, protect their citizens; and, three, ensure that their rule of law is respected as they try to reform themselves economically through democracy and through their judiciary?

**Mr. Randall Garrison:** Madam Chair, it is a pretty broad question and tonight's time is very limited. What I would say, as I

was trying to conclude in my remarks earlier, is that Canada has a role to play in NATO and all other multilateral organizations that we belong to, in making sure that questions of Russian activity in terms of violation of international law and violations of human rights are raised in all the forums possible, and that we speak with a united voice to Putin and his oligarchs. It will not be tolerated, and there will be consequences for them if they continue down this path. It is through that united voice in institutions like NATO and other multilateral institutions that I think we will have the greatest success in putting up resistance to what the Russian agenda appears to be.

**Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP):** Madam Chair, I share my colleague from Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke's concern about instability in the region being exacerbated by the illegal flow of light arms and weapons into the region. I would like to hear his comments about how the Arms Trade Treaty could shed some transparency on the situation, and what the Canadian government's responsibility is in relation to acceding to the Arms Trade Treaty.

**Mr. Randall Garrison:** Madam Chair, I guess it is up to me to turn that into a question for the government. I believe it was last June when the government promised to accede to the Arms Trade Treaty and promised legislation by last December. We have not seen that legislation in the House. I guess I would throw that question to perhaps our next speaker and ask where the government stands on acceding to the small Arms Trade Treaty. It is very important not just to Ukraine, but around the world in preventing the expansion of conflict.

**Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP):** Madam Chair, it is my privilege to stand to speak to this take-note debate.

First, I want to speak about the Edmonton Ukrainian Canadian community and how stalwart it has been across the country in standing up and giving support to their families overseas. It is absolutely incredible and it keeps pressure on us, getting us to speak out. I particularly want to mention Daria Luciwi who is the former past president of the Edmonton UCC. She has been incredible in reaching out to me and telling me the views of the Edmonton UCC.

It is absolutely important that everyone in this place and across Canada takes the time and the opportunity available through the Ukrainian Canadian community to inform us about historic travesties that have gone on in Ukraine. I have had the privilege of participating in the Holodomor commemorations each year. There is a Holodomor travelling exposition, but there is also the *Bitter Harvest* film. I encourage people see it in the theatres. It talks about the crisis that Ukraine suffered in the past and continues to suffer.

A new play has been produced in Alberta, with the support of St. John's Institute, called *Blood of our Soil*. It is the most powerful presentation that I have seen of the long history of travesties that the people of Ukraine have suffered from the time of Stalin through Hitler and now under Putin. I hope the play will come to Ottawa.

*Government Orders*

As the Minister of Foreign Affairs has advised, Ukrainians were early settlers to our Prairies and many of them descended from the train in Edmonton Strathcona, becoming tillers of the soil, and now holding places in all the governments of our country. It is to their credit. As a number of speakers here have said, it is important for us all to stand up for Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty, and speak out in support of Ukraine.

My colleagues and I support Operation Unifier continuing. Many have been waiting for this decision to be made and finally it has been. My guess is that two years probably will not be enough unless Mr. Putin backs off and takes away the support of what is going on in eastern Ukraine.

We celebrate and honour the commitment of Canadian troops, some of which include the Princess Patricia from Edmonton. I am very proud they have gone overseas again to share their skills and professionalism with the Ukrainian troops, many of which are completely untrained. I have met many of the young men and women who head off to the eastern edge of Ukraine with absolutely no training, putting their own lives at risk.

However, as has been mentioned in the House, it is equally important not only that we give this direct assistance to build the army and the troops of Ukraine, but that we give increased support to the development of a democracy and restoration of the rule of law in the country. I spent a good deal of time over the four or five times I have visited in meeting with human rights advocates and with independent media that are struggling to be a voice for ordinary Canadians. Governments in the local area need our assistance in teaching them how they can work effectively with civil society. There are many young Ukrainians who are desperate to work hand in glove with the Ukrainian government in teaching them how to be more democratic. It is absolutely critical that we build that democracy if it is to have any hope of getting the confidence of the people in eastern Ukraine, that they can have confidence in their government to represent them.

I also want to mention a number of specific actions that could be taken. Disappointingly, the previous Conservative government gave short shrift to the imposition of sanctions. My colleagues in this place have continued to push to extend the sanctions so they are on par with the sanctions imposed by the U.S. and the EU, particularly Igor Sechin and Vladimir Yakunin, and to get rid of the various existing loopholes that allow Canadians to work with these discreditable entities in Russia, which help to foment and support this war.

Again, we want to give thanks to the troops that are there and to let the people of Ukraine know we are here to support them and that we will hold the Liberal government accountable for delivering on the many promises that it makes.

● (2115)

**Mr. Matt DeCoursey (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Madam Chair, I and the government also share our thanks for the great work of the Canadian Armed Forces. Many of the women and men who will join Operation Unifier will at one time pass through 5th Canadian Division Support Base Gagetown in the riding I have the honour to represent. They will

do important work in helping Ukraine maintain its sovereignty, stability, and security in this current situation.

Operation Unifier is one part of a whole-of-government approach to demonstrate our steadfast support for our friend and ally Ukraine. I would ask the hon. member opposite if she would agree that this whole-of-government support, which includes non-lethal military equipment support, support for humanitarian assistance for those affected in the conflict, support for a range of initiatives to address immediate stabilization and security measures, bilateral development assistance that focuses on democracy, human rights, the rule of law, and support for civil society, as well as support for economic growth, including the signing of the free trade agreement with Ukraine, is the right direction for the government to demonstrate its support for our good friend and ally, Ukraine.

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** Madam Chair, I would like to respond by giving the hon. member a few specifics. Let us go beyond the rhetoric that we will give a whole-of-government support. Let me give a few examples. Would it not be wonderful if the government of the day stepped up and said that it would put the funds in to return Ukrainian interns to the country. That would be one specific thing that could be done that our friendship association would really appreciate. I cannot understate the value of that exercise. I had up to six interns that came to work with me in my office. They have all gone back and are contributing, working hand in glove with the government.

Second, we need to give support to the independent media. We need to give a lot more support through CIDA to civil society. It is civil society in Ukraine that is going to create a more democratic government and will hold it accountable, while supporting its own troops and to be building a society that Ukrainians want to have.

Those are two of the specific recommendations I would make in that regard.

● (2120)

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Madam Chair, I applaud the remarks of my friend, the member for Edmonton Strathcona. The focus on media and civil society, the people of Ukraine who are crying out for help, humanitarian aid, and really in the circumstances we face right now, that focus is one which in addition to the trade the minister spoke of, the economic stability will help. Training Ukrainian soldiers, from my point of view, is the riskier part of the equation. However, supporting civil society is something we should unquestionably be redoubling.

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** Madam Chair, one of the things the Government of Canada could do is support the interaction and trade between farmers and small business in Canada with farmers and small business in Ukraine. We always talk about the backbone of the Canadian economy being small business, yet what are we doing to support and foment that kind of trade?

*Government Orders*

When I travelled in Ukraine and I talked to local governments, civil society, and small business, they are looking for that kind of support. Are we simply going to support the oligarchs and get Canadian or American companies matched up with the oligarchs to exploit gas, or are we going to do something different and lend direct support to small business and Ukrainian Canadian communities here to build that in Ukraine?

**Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP):** Madam Chair, I would like to ask the hon. member whether she shares my concern that in this climate of cuts to international aid budgets around the world, hopefully Canada will not participate in this week, and the increasing humanitarian needs in Ukraine that it will be forgotten in the rush to serve some of the places that get more attention in the media.

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** Madam Chair, I would like to thank my colleague for raising that. A number of people have talked about the number of refugees. Not only do we need to get humanitarian aid to the people in the Donbass region and into the Crimea, we need to support those people who have basically become refugees in their own country.

We know we have a crisis across our border. We know there are announcements by the new American government, saying it will severely cut foreign aid. We need to take a close look at our foreign aid budget. I hope in the coming budget this week we in fact see substantial increases, because we have a crisis going on in Africa, but we also have a crisis going on in Ukraine. They are family members of many Canadians, and we need to be ensuring that we are reaching out to support them.

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Madam Chair, I welcome this opportunity to highlight the extraordinary work of our military members in advancing Operation Unifier, and to proudly stand behind them and our government's decision to renew this campaign in Ukraine. I am also happy that we are debating this issue tonight, because I had the immense privilege of having seen our outstanding soldiers in action, working alongside our allies.

Support for Ukraine is important to Canadians and in particular the Ukrainian Canadian community.

On Thursday and Friday of last week, I took part in town hall meeting with the Ukrainian Canadian communities in Regina and in Winnipeg, hosted by the Ukrainian Canadian Congress. Leaving Ottawa to meet and speak with Ukrainian Canadians was very important to me. They follow and feel more than anyone else in our country the horrible conflict to which Ukraine is being subjected. During these community meetings, I spoke at length about Operation Unifier and Canada's unwavering support for Ukraine.

I also had the opportunity to respond to a wide range of questions, and one point I made clear was that this was not a partisan issue. All parties in the House agree that Canada will always stand shoulder to shoulder with Ukraine in the face of Russian aggression.

I heard first-hand the gratitude that Ukrainian Canadians felt for the tremendous work of our troops on Operation Unifier.

This time last year, I spent several days with our troops serving on Operation Unifier. I observed first hand the skills and determination

our soldiers brought to this mission. I was extremely impressed with the level of training they were providing the Ukrainian armed forces. I was equally heartened by the passion the Ukrainian soldiers demonstrated in their training, and their appreciation for the experience and expertise our military trainers provided. All Canadians can be extremely proud of the work of our soldiers to defend our allies to help secure Ukraine, protect its sovereignty, and contribute to global stability.

Since the summer of 2015, 200 Canadian women and men stationed in Ukraine have trained more than 3,200 Ukrainian soldiers. The Canadian Armed Forces delivered over 90 training programs in that time. Their courses have covered everything from infantry to small team training to more specialized capabilities, such as explosive ordinance disposal, military policing, medical training, and modernized logistics. This invaluable training is building a knowledge base within the Ukrainian military, knowledge that is enabling the Ukrainian soldiers to take on greater responsibility for their country's sovereignty, security, and stability. The critical skills they have gained are strengthening the Ukrainian armed forces and reinforcing the strong bond that unites our countries.

I conveyed the pride of Canadians in these achievements to our service members during a town hall while I was in Ukraine last year. I thanked them for their professionalism and determination to advance democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. That appreciation was echoed by the Ukrainian leaders I met during my visit, the mayor and governor of Lviv as well as the Ukrainian defence minister, General Poltorak.

General Poltorak told the media, "It is common knowledge that true friendship is tested during hard times. Therefore are truly thankful to Canada for its support of our military from the very beginning of the conflict." He continued by saying, "Canada has provided enormous assistance in training Ukrainian military and supplying equipment to strengthen our technical capacity...I am certain that advisory support which has been and continues to be provided by Canada is the best way to ensure that reforms will be successful."

Everyone we met expressed their gratitude for Canada's help in training Ukrainian troops and building their country's capacity to defend its borders. Most of all, they thanked us for demonstrating unwavering support for Ukraine. Protecting Ukraine's sovereignty is fundamental, and it is vital to its identity, economic growth, and social stability. This sentiment has been repeated in this country by the Ukrainian ambassador to Canada, Mr. Shevchenko. He recently told the media, "Every day when your men and women train our officers and soldiers, it means saved lives."

Our soldiers know better than anyone that sustaining this support is essential, especially now as Ukraine faces increased provocation from Russia.

*Government Orders*

● (2125)

We have recently seen the worst outbreak of violence in eastern Ukraine since 2015. Members of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs can attest, from their visit to Ukraine last January, that Russia refuses to respect Ukraine's sovereign territory.

Canada has consistently condemned the Russian Federation's violation of the territorial integrity of Ukraine. Last summer, while visiting Ukraine, the Prime Minister repeatedly reiterated that Canada stands firmly beside Ukraine, because that is what allies do.

Our work in Ukraine is just the latest chapter in our forces' proud heritage, proving yet again that when our friends need us, Canada is there. That is why we will build on the foundation we have established under Operation Unifier. We will continue to provide critical military assistance through to the end of March 2019.

As we thank the soldiers who have achieved so much during the latest phase of this mission, the next rotation of Canadian Armed Forces service women and men has deployed. Again, it is made up mostly of the members of the 1 Canadian Mechanized Brigade Group, based in Edmonton, Alberta, many of whom I have personally served with, and their commanding officers as well. These highly skilled soldiers will carry on Canada's efforts to increase Ukraine's ability to maintain its sovereignty, security, and stability. In practical terms, this means a continuation of tactical soldier training. This involves individual weapons training, marksmanship, tactical movement, explosive threat recognition, communication, combat survival, and ethics training.

We will continue to train Ukrainian soldiers on explosive ordnance and improvised explosive device disposal. We will continue to teach force and basic investigative techniques as part of military police training. We will continue to provide casualty evacuation and combat first aid training as well as ongoing logistics system modernization.

We will also support strategic institutional reform of Ukraine's defence establishment. Our goal is to enhance peace support operations, interoperability, military capacity building, and professional development.

Canada's assistance to Ukraine includes the purchase and shipment of non-lethal military equipment. We have already delivered equipment such as tactical communications systems, a mobile field hospital, explosive ordnance disposal equipment, tactical medical kits, and night-vision goggles. Our next shipment will include first aid kits, military police training materials, and more explosive ordnance disposal equipment. This is vital equipment that will enhance the capability of the Ukrainian armed forces while at the same time reducing the financial burden on the Ukrainian government.

March 2017 marks three years since the Russian Federation's annexation of Crimea, an act condemned by countries the world over. Since 2014, the conflict has killed close to 10,000 people. Canada did not stand idly by when duty called. We joined Ukraine, the United States, and the United Kingdom under the Multinational Joint Commission. We demonstrated our reliability as a partner to our allies and our firm commitment to European security. Through

Operation Unifier, we sent a clear signal of deterrence to Russia, and we also sent a strong message of solidarity and support to Ukraine.

Canada was the first country to recognize Ukraine's independence in 1991. All these years later, we continue to demonstrate global leadership by helping to address ongoing global threats.

Canadian troops with Operation Unifier are already having a meaningful impact in Ukraine. They will keep doing so in the years ahead. Canada will remain at the forefront of the international community's response to Russian aggression in Ukraine, and I, for one, could not be prouder.

Operation Unifier is just part of what we have done, and are doing, to support our allies and partners in eastern Europe. We are also directly involved in central and eastern Europe, in support of our NATO allies, through Operation Reassurance. Last July, the Prime Minister announced that Canada has renewed Operation Reassurance until March of 2019.

In June, we will be deploying 455 Canadian army personnel in Latvia. Canada will be one of four framework nations to establish and lead a multinational battle group. This activity is part of the alliance's enhanced forward presence in central and eastern Europe. I would also like to mention that we have a frigate on an ongoing rotational basis in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea and periodic air policing.

Deepening our engagement with Canada's international partners and allies is important to this government. It was top of mind for Canadians during our defence policy consultations last year. As a result, we will see this important theme reflected throughout the forthcoming new defence policy.

I now welcome further discussion and debate on today's take note debate topic from all my hon. colleagues on both sides of the aisle.

● (2130)

**Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC):** Madam Chair, I congratulate the minister on extending the Conservative-initiated mission, Operation Unifier.

I know that the minister visited the troops last year. He invited me to accompany him, but unfortunately, I was ill and was not able to be there. It is something I hope he and I can do again in the near future.

As everyone in this House always recognizes, our troops are second to none. Their skills and abilities, as the minister knows firsthand, are easily transferrable, and our Canadian Armed Forces are always up to the job of helping those who want to better themselves and defend themselves, and in the case of Ukraine, who want to train to NATO standards. I thank the minister for extending this mission for the next two years.

*Government Orders*

Ukraine has been asking the minister, as well as the government, to sign the Canada-Ukraine defence co-operation agreement so that we can take this relationship even beyond what it is in Operation Unifier by expanding exchanges of officers and bringing their trainers here so they can get even more involved in the Canadian institution and the military culture we have here, which really is, in my opinion, the leader in the NATO nations. Something Ukraine, of course, aspires to is having NATO membership at some point in the future. Of course, they have to train to the standard. They have to make sure that they have that ability.

Will the minister commit to signing that agreement? Will he also take a serious look at providing lethal weapons to the Ukrainian military to defend Ukrainian territory, as the government has done with the Kurdish Peshmerga in fighting ISIS?

• (2135)

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** Madam Chair, hopefully, next time we are able to plan a trip, the member will have good health and will be able to join us.

On the last trip, the defence co-operation agreement topic came up. In fact, we were actually able to move ahead, but there were a few questions on the Ukrainian government side, which we were waiting for. They have been resolved. Regrettably, it is now just a matter of getting the timing right, with my counterparts, to move ahead with the defence co-operation agreement. It is just a matter of time before we do that.

When it comes to training, I think we in this House can all agree on the wonderful work our men and women have done on the ground. It continues to evolve. In addition to the work they do, we also work with the nations that are providing support as part of the joint commission. The requests that come to the government come from the joint commission.

In terms of higher capacity building, we have also assigned our government's representative, Jill Sinclair, as the U.S. and the U.K. have done, and will look at helping them modernize the Ukrainian armed forces to bring them up to NATO standards. A lot of work needs to be done, we have to admit, but we are committed to doing it.

**Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP):** Madam Chair, I thank the minister for his speech tonight and for his extension of Operation Unifier. New Democrats, too, agree with the other parties here in the House that this is an important mission for us to undertake.

One of the problems we have, though, in eastern Ukraine, is that the conflict is being made worse by the illegal flow of small arms and light weapons. It was last June that the government promised to accede to the Arms Trade Treaty, and we were promised that legislation would be introduced by December.

When I was speaking about my position on this, I promised to pass along this question to the next government speaker, so I am going to ask the minister. What is taking so long on the accession to the Arms Trade Treaty, which would help not just in eastern Ukraine but in other conflicts around the world?

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** Madam Chair, we are looking at many different options in terms of how we can support the Ukraine government and the Ukraine armed forces.

There is a considerable amount of complexity, as members will know, when it comes to a conflict like this, in how we can support the government. The defence co-operation agreement is one example of that. We are looking at additional options.

We have representatives on the ground who are directly in contact with their counterparts. In fact, our representative has an office very close to the minister of defence. They are working very closely to figure out the best way to provide support. I am working very closely with the Minister of Foreign Affairs to look at all options in providing that support.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC):** Madam Chair, I would like to ask the minister again if he is thinking of asking his government to add Ukraine to the Automatic Firearms Country Control List and of providing the Ukrainian forces with lethal weapons.

[*English*]

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** Madam Chair, we are looking at many different options, as I stated, for supporting the Ukrainian armed forces and the government. The defence co-operation agreement is one of them, and I look forward to having further discussions. When I have further information, I will be able to provide it directly to the member and even to this House.

**Mr. Borys Wrzesnewskyj (Etobicoke Centre, Lib.):** Madam Chair, the minister referenced his visit to Yavoriv, the base where Operation Unifier is taking place. It is a training mission. However, when I was honoured to visit with the Prime Minister, and then again in September, one of the interesting things I heard over and over from Canadian officers was, number one, how highly motivated these Ukrainian soldiers were. Most were volunteers, but not volunteers in the sense that we imagine, as novices not familiar with the front. They were coming back from a front, where there was trench warfare and deadly artillery barrages. I heard from our Canadian officers that they were not just training; they were learning.

How has that information informed our mission in Latvia as we take the lead in a NATO mission in a front-line state right on the Russian border?

• (2140)

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** Madam Chair, the relationship our men and women are building with the Ukrainian armed forces is unique. In fact, when I witnessed the training, I even asked if we needed to provide these small arms to have the training. When I was driving through the ranges, they were doing such realistic training. It was quite impressive. In fact, it actually brought me some déjà vu moments from my time in Afghanistan. However, it was the relationships that were being built.

*Government Orders*

It was the troops on the ground that actually identified the lessons learned from the front, and one of them, in particular, was the need for first aid training. It is essential, when we look at the fighting on the ground. Those types of skills sometimes get left out. When that was identified by the Canadian troops, our Canadian leadership was able to set it up. I witnessed one of the teams that had finished training, the final scenario, the how-to, when someone is injured and goes to a casualty collection point. For their graduation they actually got the medical kits we provided.

It also goes to show how deep the training on the ground actually evolves. The explosive ordnance training was truly impressive as well.

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Madam Chair, very briefly, I would ask the Minister of National Defence to please convey thanks to all the forces he controls and that he has the honour to serve, if I can put it that way, and I do not think he sees himself in a top-down role, for the role they serve in Ukraine. All Canadians are in their debt.

How do you see the future of Ukraine within the NATO alliance? Is that something—

**The Deputy Chair:** I just want to remind the member to address the questions to the Chair and not to the speaker.

**Ms. Elizabeth May:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I am a bit more relaxed in the take-note debate, and I will take note. To the minister, does the government consider Ukraine joining NATO to be something that should be approached cautiously?

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** First, Madam Chair, I thank the member for recognizing the service. Many members in this House have served, and we can all be proud of our service, but we do not wear a uniform anymore. As I said, as the Minister of National Defence I have the huge privilege of being in this role, and it is now my job to serve them.

When it comes to our NATO meetings, there is not a NATO meeting I go to that I do not get together with my other colleagues to have a separate meeting on Ukraine. We have very detailed discussions. The goal is always to de-escalate the situation. We will always continue to figure out their way of thinking.

**Hon. Peter Kent (Thornhill, CPC):** Madam Chair, I will be splitting my time with the member for Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles.

Time is short in this take-note debate and we have heard the appropriate exchanges of compliments back and forth between members of all parties in the House who know through either service or experience exactly what is at stake in Ukraine, but I will cut to the chase.

We in the opposition have long been worried that the Liberal government's commitment to the defence of Ukraine was half-hearted and fading. That would apply to not all Liberal MPs, as I have just said, but to the actions and attitudes of the government as a whole.

Our concerns were realized two weeks ago, when the government, after ignoring appeals from Ukraine since last summer, finally announced an eleventh-hour bare-bones extension of Operation Unifier. This extension does not speak to the brutal new realities, the

recent deadly surge in the Russian-backed war on Ukraine. The extension does not respond to Ukraine's request for an expansion of the Operation Unifier training mission. The extension does not answer the outgunned Ukrainians' appeal for defensive weapons and the restoration of satellite battlefield imagery. The extension does not address the long-overdue signing and implementation of the Canada-Ukraine defence co-operation agreement. The extension did not mention Ukraine's request for additional support for the widely recommended expansion of the OSCE monitor teams to report on violations of the Minsk agreement.

The Liberals have not spoken a word of increased humanitarian assistance to the thousands of newly displaced eastern Ukrainian civilians driven from their homes by the recent Russian-directed surge, adding to the more than a million and a half internally displaced men, women, and children and the three-year death toll of 10,000.

Canada's commitment to the defence of Ukraine might not rate high on the Liberals' list of public opinion poll-driven priorities, but the Liberals, and in fact all Canadians, need to remember why Russia illegally invaded and still occupies the Ukrainian autonomous Republic of Crimea, why Russia invaded and still supports the euphemistically described rebellion in eastern Ukraine, and why the toll of death, displacement, and destruction continues there. It all comes down to democratic choice.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, the people of Ukraine, along with the populations of many of the former oppressed Soviet republics, chose democracy and chose the west. The western democracies stepped up after Russia's bellicose response to Ukraine's revolution of dignity, the Russian invasion and occupation of Crimea, and Russia's invasion and arming of rebel separatists in eastern Ukraine. Western governments, including Canada's, imposed a range of sanctions on Russia, and in December 2014, Canada committed with the United States and other countries to provide coordinated training assistance through Joint Task Force Ukraine, with the Canadian element known as Operation Unifier.

As we have heard tonight, since deployment in the summer of 2015, the joint task force has trained more than 3,200 Ukrainian soldiers through more than 90 courses.

The Liberals claim their commitment remains strong, but these words often ring hollow. For example, just last December, we saw amazingly blatant duplicity when, on the same day that the Liberals sported traditional Ukrainian embroidered shirts, vyshyvankas, to brag in debate about Liberal support for Ukraine in the form of the free trade agreement negotiated by both our Conservative and Liberal governments, these same Liberals had the temerity to vote against Ukraine in a whipped vote against recognition of the historical deadly Surgunlik—the Soviet Tatar genocide—and Russia's current abuse and deportation of ethnic Tatars from the illegally occupied Ukrainian autonomous Republic of Crimea.



*Government Orders*

That is why we in the official opposition are so disappointed in what I referred to earlier as the Liberals' eleventh-hour bare-bones extension of Operation Unifier. It falls short of our Conservative government's original commitment to Ukraine. It falls short of what Ukraine has requested and in fact appealed for. It falls short of Canada standing up strongly for a democratic Ukraine.

• (2145)

**Mr. Borys Wrzesnewskij (Etobicoke Centre, Lib.):** Madam Chair, I would like to put a question for the hon. member for Thornhill.

Numerous human rights organizations, and in fact even the OSCE monitors, have regularly reported and documented that in the Donbass and the so-called LPR and DPR, as well as in Crimea, there are extrajudicial arrests. It is clearly documented that those arrested and incarcerated are tortured while under arrest and that there are summary executions. There are untold numbers who have just disappeared.

My question for the hon. member is this: would he support a designation of the so-called LPR and DPR as terrorist organizations?

• (2150)

**Hon. Peter Kent:** Madam Chair, I thank my colleague for his continuing efforts over the years in support of Canada's strong and unqualified support for the people of Ukraine who have chosen a democratic course.

With regard to the atrocities, we know atrocities are being committed by a number of groups, some of them organized, some of them directed, some of them spontaneous as a result of the worst tendencies of human nature in areas of conflict, some of them with regard to elements of very basic organized crime, but I think that what is required with fulfillment of the Minsk agreements is greater access for human rights organizations, meaningful monitoring, meaningful investigation of the complete range of atrocities—some of them better documented than others—a very real assignment of blame, and prosecution as crimes against humanity or crimes of war.

**Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP):** Madam Chair, I know the hon. member has spoken long and hard about increasing support to Ukraine and on behalf of Ukrainian Canadians. I wonder if the member might be willing to break with the position of his own party when it was in government, a position that I understand is continuing. There are many corrupt officials involved directly with Putin against whom it would not issue sanctions, including Sechin and Yakunin. There are still Canadian companies that are doing business with these characters. Is the member willing to step forth and say that it is time that we expanded the sanctions against all people who are aligned with Putin?

**Hon. Peter Kent:** Madam Chair, I thank my hon. colleague for a very reasonable question. In fact it is true, and had I had more time I would have mentioned that the mistakes of one government with regard to names left off the list of sanctioned individuals should not be used as an excuse by the current government to continue to keep those names off the list. Igor Sechin is a prime example. As the brutal left-hand man of Vladimir Putin and the head of Russia's oil company, he has in fact, just in the last couple of months, managed to sell 20% of that company, despite U.S. and other sanctions, through a very dark series of negotiated deals. That is exactly why I

would suggest that the names of Vladimir Yakunin and Igor Sechin be considered by the government today to be added to the list of those sanctioned Russian individuals.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC):** Madam Chair, I am pleased to rise this evening to debate this important issue. We are talking about Operation Unifier, but what exactly is that?

Basically, this operation is a demonstration of strength and commitment, made to demonstrate Canada's commitment to Ukraine, an ally, in response to Russian aggression against Ukraine's territory.

Following a coup d'état, Russia took control of Crimea. Putin's Russia continues to support troops fighting the Ukrainian government, in eastern Ukraine. Russia is supporting the chaos for its own personal gains. That is troubling. It is even more troubling to see the recent escalation of conflict in the region despite the Minsk agreement, signed in 2016. The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, or OSCE, has identified over 3,099 violations of the agreement since it was signed. We cannot say that the situation is stable or is improving in any way.

When we were in power, Stephen Harper made a point of sending a clear message to the entire world regarding Canada's position on the Russian-backed rebel actions in Ukraine. The members will recall the G20 summit in Brisbane, Australia, in 2014 when Mr. Harper called on Mr. Putin to withdraw his troops from Ukraine. Mr. Harper never missed an opportunity to raise this issue with the Russian leader.

The Ukrainian government had Canada's full support for ensuring the integrity of its territory. That is why we sent troops to help train the Ukrainian army in its fight against Russian-backed forces. We also collaborated on other levels. We sent materiel that the Ukrainian army needed in its fight: helmets, flak jackets, winter clothing, and night goggles. It is very important to remember that we also shared with the Ukrainian government geostrategic information gathered by our satellites. Through this surveillance we are able to see the trains delivering military equipment, ammunition, and fuel to the Donbass region where anti-government forces are operating.

This evening, this take-note debate gives us the opportunity to discuss everyone's expectations of Operation Unifier. Since the Liberals came to power things have changed, and not always for the best, unfortunately. The Liberals announced that the operation would be extended, but they did so quietly, as though they were afraid to upset their Russian friends, as though they were ashamed to stand by Ukraine.

The Liberals and the Prime Minister go around saying that Canada is back. Yes, Canada is back, but where? We are back to buddy-buddy relations with Putin's Russia, the aggressor in the current situation, and we should not forget that. The Liberals normalized relations with Russia without asking for anything in return that would bring to an end the despicable acts committed in Ukraine or other eastern European countries.

*Government Orders*

Canada has also gone back to political window dressing. In announcing the extension of Operation Unifier, the Liberals eliminated an important element. In fact, on May 6, 2016, the Liberals stopped sharing information collected by our RADARSAT satellites. However, this information is crucial to the operations of the Ukrainian army. This type of information has saved the lives of many Ukrainians. Nevertheless, giving an ally the resources needed to control the advance of Russian-backed forces on its territory is not important for the Liberals, or at least it does not seem to be.

The Liberals are also refusing to sign a defence co-operation agreement with Ukraine, as the United Kingdom did.

We must also be able to read Putin's game. He takes advantage of the instability all over the world for personal gain. While everyone is fighting against ISIS, the Russians continue to throw their weight around in Ukraine to increase their influence in the country.

Considering the situation, we must help our ally, Ukraine, and ensure it has the means to fight foreign aggression. If aggression is on the rise, as it is now, our support must increase accordingly. We should regard an attack on the sovereignty of one of our allies as an attack on Canadian sovereignty.

With this in mind, and this is the goal of tonight's debate, we call on the Liberals to do the following: first, immediately restore the practice of sharing intelligence gathered using our RADARSAT satellite with Ukrainian authorities; second, add Ukraine to the automatic firearms country control list and supply Ukrainian military forces with lethal defensive equipment; third, sign and implement the Canada-Ukraine defence co-operation agreement; fourth, increase the number of OSCE monitors to report on violations of the Minsk agreement; fifth, provide additional humanitarian assistance to support the 1.6 million internally displaced people in Ukraine, urge Russia to respect Ukraine's sovereign territory and abide by all aspects of the Minsk agreement; and lastly, strengthen sanctions to hold corrupt foreign officials to account by implementing our Magnitsky legislation.

• (2155)

If the Liberals really care about the situation in Ukraine, they must tackle each of those points. Otherwise, they will send a clear signal that they could not care less about the future of Ukraine.

**Mr. Jean Rioux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Madam Chair, on March 6, the government was proud to announce the extension of the mission, a mission we are conducting with our partners, primarily those from the International Joint Commission, of which the United States, Great Britain, Ukraine and other countries are members.

With our allies, we have maintained strict sanctions against Russia. We continually denounce the Russian invasion of Crimea. We have worked and talked about RADARSAT intelligence as part of our agreements with the International Joint Commission and our allies. Each party draws on its own skills and strengths.

Since strengthening the economy is the first order of business, I would like to know what my distinguished colleague thinks about the free trade agreement concluded with Ukraine last summer, in July 2016.

• (2200)

**Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus:** Madam Chair, I thank my colleague for the question. I am obviously very pleased with the Canada-Ukraine Free Trade Agreement. If we can at least share our financial resources by signing free trade agreements then that is just great.

However, since Operation Unifier is a military operation, I maintain that we must reinstate the sharing of RADARSAT images in order to give strategic images to the Ukrainian forces. We need to provide this information to the forces on the ground. Ukraine also needs to be added to the list of designated countries with regard to automatic weapons and lethal weapons. Today, of course, we are talking about a military operation, not trade agreements.

[*English*]

**Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC):** Madam Chair, I want to thank my colleague for his intervention, and I want to thank him for his service to Canada as a lieutenant colonel in the Canadian Army and someone who understands what needs to be done when it comes to training to NATO standards. He is an individual who has trained in NATO countries and trained NATO forces. I want to ask him if he feels there is more that can be done under Operation Unifier to bring Ukrainian troops up to NATO standards. I also want to ask if would care to comment on the change of attitude that I hope we are starting to see from the government with the departure of the former foreign minister, Stéphane Dion, who wanted to appease Russia and engage in discussions, which was detrimental to having Russia pull out of Ukraine, and making sure there is no longer this illegal occupation and annexation of Crimea and Donbass.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus:** Madam Chair, I thank my colleague for his excellent question.

The work of our military cannot be disputed. Canadian soldiers sent to the theatre of operations are professionals who provide high quality training to Ukrainian soldiers.

However, it is important to understand that the deployment of military forces must also send a message. As I said at the beginning of my speech, as a country Canada must send a message to Russia, which is the aggressor in this case.

Therefore, we must support the Ukrainian forces, but Canada must take a stand and show a little more aggressively that we oppose Russia and we are defending our ally, Ukraine.

[*English*]

**Mr. Borys Wrzesnewskij (Etobicoke Centre, Lib.):** Madam Chair, I will be sharing my time with the member for Kildonan—St. Paul.

Tonight we have heard in detail about Operation Unifier in support of our ally Ukraine. However, in my limited time, I would like to provide an historical and geopolitical context as to how this effort is the hard military front line of a global hybrid war against liberal democracy launched by President Putin.

*Government Orders*

Over 25 years ago, the Soviet totalitarian empire collapsed, and leading political thinkers declared that liberal democracy and free markets had won the Cold War. They pronounced the end of history and a great peace dividend to come.

Meanwhile, in East Germany, KGB officer Vladimir Putin watched the collapse of the Berlin Wall and the expulsion of the Soviet army and KGB bases from East Germany and the Warsaw Pact countries with personal fury. Later, President Putin called the collapse of the Soviet Union the greatest calamity of the 20th century—not the Holocaust, the Holodomor, or the two world wars, which cost 100 million lives.

Inside the KGB mind of Putin, World War II was a great victory, with the Kremlin's armies stationed on East German borders less than 600 kilometres from France. For agent Putin, the loss of this empire was an historic humiliation.

During the February 23, 2014 closing ceremonies of the Sochi Olympic Games in Russia, the world watched the pageantry in the stadium, including the ominous coming together of a giant hammer and sickle. In the west, most did not notice. As the son and grandson of refugees who escaped the horrors of the Soviet Union, I felt a foreboding. I called family in Ukraine. The symbolism was not lost on anyone in central and eastern Europe. Four days later, on February 27, an unprepared west witnessed a geopolitical event in Crimea that changed our world order. Putin ordered the military invasion and annexation of Ukraine's Crimean peninsula on the false pretext of Russian ethnic grievances. This had not been seen in Europe since the 1930s and Sudetenland. It was the first act in Putin's plan to dismember and collapse the Ukrainian state, its revolution of dignity and democracy. This Russian military annexation violated the letter and spirit of every post-World War II treaty and agreement guaranteeing the integrity of international borders. Our rules-based international order, which has largely prevented territorial wars of expansion, has been jeopardized. Today no small state bordering Russia can feel secure.

Soon after the Russian invasion and annexation of Crimea, and the west's initially confused response, Russia invaded Donbass. Today, three years hence, the result is that there are over 10,000 dead, approximately two million internally displaced, and a frozen hot conflict within Europe. Weekly, we receive reports of more Russian tanks and artillery systems being moved into Ukraine. Daily, we read the front-line casualty figures. In fact, in the last 24 hours, four Ukrainian soldiers have been killed in action.

Within Crimea and occupied Donbass, extra-judicial arrests are commonplace, those incarcerated are tortured, and summary executions are frequent. Crimea's indigenous people, the Crimean Tatars, are particularly targeted. Their Mejlis, mosques, and schools are raided and closed, their leaders arrested or disappeared.

As part of Putin's hybrid global war against liberal democratic values and governments, Russian hydrocarbon billions corrupts political and corporate elites in the west, such as former German Chancellor Schröder and former U.S. security chief Michael Flynn. Far right nativist parties and movements are financed, such as Le Pen's National Front, political elections are sabotaged, the U.S. presidential election is hacked, and there is Montenegro's attempted *coup d'état*.

However, in this amorphous borderless global hybrid war, there is a hard military front line. It stretches from the Baltic to the Black Sea. With our U.S., British, and German allies, we have placed soldiers on Russia's borders with the Baltic states and Poland. In the Black Sea, we have placed a frigate and deployed air force personnel to train with Romania's air force. On this hard military front line, there is an active regional war in Donbass. There the Kremlin is testing the resolve of the democratic west. Will the west sacrifice Ukraine in the hope of satisfying Russian revanchist neo-imperialism in the manner that Czechoslovakia was sacrificed by the west after the invasion of Sudetenland?

Canada has made it clear that there will be no appeasement. While we diplomatically engage Russia, sanctions will continue, and the Canadian military will continue to deploy into Ukraine to help train and equip the Ukrainians as they head to the front lines. With Operation Unifier, we stand shoulder to shoulder with our ally Ukraine in the face of Russia's war against Ukraine, and we are containing Putin's—

• (2205)

**The Deputy Chair:** I am sorry, the time is up. The member may be able to finish in questions and comments.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Thornhill.

**Hon. Peter Kent (Thornhill, CPC):** Madam Chair, indeed I will give the member a chance to continue, with his answer to my question.

In describing this recent deadly, bloody, destructive surge by the Russian-directed forces in eastern Ukraine, my colleague seems to be making the arguments that we on this side of the House have been making for responding to Ukraine's appeal for an expansion of Operation Unifier, and for the defence of lethal weapons, the anti-tank, anti-armoured mobile artillery and satellite imagery, which the government in Kyiv has been so passionately requesting discretely, given the diplomatic appreciation of the basic extension of Operation Unifier. However, my colleague's remarks would seem to be supporting the feeling on this side of the House that we should be responding with much more to the request of the government of Ukraine.

**Mr. Borys Wrzesnewskij:** Madam Chair, in fact, there is no light between the previous government's positions when it comes to Ukraine and the current government's position. What we have seen on this file is a realization in the House of Commons in Canada's Parliament, by all parties, that Ukraine needs to be supported. The NDP, the Greens, the Bloc, the Conservatives, and the Liberals have come together, whether it is the free trade agreement or when it comes to Operation Unifier.

When it comes to the second point with regard to how we can expand on this, our government has the front line of this war, the hard front military line that runs from the Baltic down to the Black Sea. We have engaged in a new mission. We have taken the lead in Latvia. We are on the front line with the Russian border when it comes to Latvia.

*Government Orders*

We have also instituted the Ukrainian Defence Reform Advisory Board, and put Jill Sinclair, a former assistant deputy minister of defence, on this board to help Ukraine as it works toward this ambitious goal to be NATO compliant by 2020. That is a new effort. We are helping Ukraine to become NATO compliant. We are also working on making sure that the whole front line is covered. We understand clearly what this hybrid Putin war entails.

As I said, it is encouraging that in the House everyone stands shoulder to shoulder with the people of Ukraine.

● (2210)

**Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP):** Madam Chair, I would like to thank the hon. member, who is chair of our Canada-Ukraine Friendship Group. He does that very enthusiastically.

My question for the member is something that no one else this evening has spoken to, and it is a matter of contention in Ukraine. We know that some of the regions, like eastern Ukraine, are calling for a federated type of government, some kind of more decentralized government in decision-making, but there is great reluctance within the current national government to move in that direction.

What hope does the member see in there being some kind of resolution of that dispute? Would that in any way help to bring some of the people in eastern Ukraine more onside with Ukraine being on their side and there being some hope of working together as a nation again?

**Mr. Borys Wrzesnewskij:** Madam Chair, this question of federalization of the Ukrainian state has been around since 1991 when I was first engaged in Ukraine. It is a small minority that have pushed that particular political agenda. It does not have broad support among the people of Ukraine, nor does it have the broad political support. Where it did have support, in fact, was among groups such as former president Yanukovich's party, and the remnants of that party that still have some base in eastern Ukraine.

**Hon. MaryAnn Mihychuk (Kildonan—St. Paul, Lib.):** Madam Chair, I am proud to add my voice to those we have already heard on this important topic.

I have had the fortunate experience to visit Ukraine three times: first, with my family, as our place of heritage on my maternal and paternal sides; second, as a business owner and scientist; and finally, last November, as Canada's minister of labour, to provide assistance in workplace safety, especially in the heavy industrial sector of mineral exploration. In addition, I took a tour of Chernobyl, the world's largest single nuclear disaster.

We are continuing to build our connections with Ukraine, not only military ones, but also economic and cultural ones. Today, we are talking about that military stand with the renewal of Operation Unifier. Very significantly on the other front is the fact that we have signed the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement. It represents an important milestone in the Canada-Ukraine relationship and will bring greater prosperity, economic security, and economic independence to the Ukrainian people.

It has been three years since Russia's illegal annexation and invasion of Crimea. Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity were violated. We were right to condemn it then, and we are right to

continue to condemn it now. The occupation has led to distress, economic instability, and severe suppression of human rights. Canada has called on Russia to reverse this illegal and immoral decision. Ukrainians are tough and steadfast in their desire for a free, independent, democratic country.

My grandfathers and father emigrated from the villages of Senkiw and Bridok in Ukraine, and settled in southern Manitoba, in Arbakka and a little village called Senkiw after the one in the homeland with the first wave in 1896. For me as a second-generation Canadian, my connection to Ukraine is strong. There are over 1.25 million Canadians who, like me, call themselves Ukrainian Canadians. We recognize the importance of continuing to partner with Ukraine and keeping our connection to the homeland alive generations down the road. This is why it gives me a great deal of pride to have had the opportunity to participate in sending 10 Canadian ambulances, five from my home province of Manitoba, to Ukraine. This was thanks to the Ukrainian Canadian Congress whose hard work keeps the connection between our two countries alive.

I must thank John Holuk and Myroslava Pidhirnyj of the UCC whose hard work brought the ambulances and medical kits to the people who need it most at the front line and in health service centres. These ambulances are a reminder that Ukrainians are still working hard to reach the same freedoms and standard of living that we enjoy in Canada, but they cannot do it alone. Sometimes they need ambulances; other times they need training and supplies. This is why we are proud to continue Operation Unifier standing at the forefront of the international community's response to the crisis. Operation Unifier gives us the chance to partner our military expertise, delivering military training and capacity building.

Canada's continued engagement in Ukraine demonstrates our reliability as a defence partner and our commitment to European security while we are enabling Ukrainian forces to defend their country's sovereignty and contribute to regional international stability. Canada's support is not limited only to the military assistance. It is much broader and includes policing, financial, developmental, and humanitarian supports.

We look forward to working with our partner, Ukraine, in the future.

● (2215)

**Mr. Matt DeCoursey (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Madam Chair, I can tell the personal nature of this issue for my colleague from Kildonan—St. Paul as well as for my colleague from Etobicoke earlier, and for the people they have the pleasure of representing in their two communities.

I wonder if my colleague could speak to the unwavering support the Government of Canada and all Canadians have for Ukraine, not only as it relates to support and training of the military in Ukraine for the support of their sovereignty, security, and instability, but also the way the government, through development assistance, is supporting civil society and persons affected by the conflict, and the other ways in which Canada is showing its support for her ally, Ukraine.

**Hon. MaryAnn Mihychuk:** Madam Chair, it is difficult in such a short time to explain the number of linkages that we have with Ukraine.

*Government Orders*

As I indicated before, just our scientific knowledge and the sharing we do there has been significant over the years. Back in 2004, we were an active participant in a program with the UN to mobilize Ukrainian scientists who had been trained in war science to find them domestic and industrial occupations around the world. If we look at Chernobyl and the disaster left for Ukraine to manage and ensure the leakage is contained, our contribution has been significant. Canada's contribution has been in engineering and science and monitoring. We also have an opportunity every year to see a group of young Ukrainian interns come to the House, to our Parliament. Many of us have taken on those young interns, and they have gone on to become activists back at home calling for democracy.

Probably the most significant thing we did was to help Ukraine move forward on its goal to become a free, independent country aligned with the EU and Canada through the free trade agreement.

• (2220)

**Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC):** Madam Chair, I understand the member participated in a bit of a dog and pony show the Liberals took into Winnipeg with the Ukrainian Canadian Congress to talk about the extension of Operation Unifier. I understand that the government took full credit for \$700 million of humanitarian assistance in aid and loans that have been provided to Ukraine. I would point out that some 600 million of those dollars were provided by the previous Conservative government. I just offer her this opportunity to correct the record to lay out that this has been bipartisan, and indeed, there has been all-party support for Ukraine.

I would ask her to respond to the Ukrainian Canadian community's questions in Winnipeg of why the government is not supplying lethal weapons to the Ukrainian military to defend themselves from this Russian aggression.

**Hon. MaryAnn Mihychuk:** Madam Chair, there is absolutely no question that the member opposite and the party across the aisle supported Ukraine in their term. That party invested and stood as a strong partner with Ukraine. The record shows that, and I am very proud to be on this side of the House continuing the very strong support in that partnership. There could be no doubt that both parties have been strong and true partners.

The situation now with a very aggressive and active war front on the Donetsk front is very troubling. There have been 10,000 wounded and thousands of soldiers' deaths. The capacity to handle an active front like that with such a large and mobilized opposition is troubling. Is it better to use words or military weapons? Given this circumstance, given what we have to play along the whole Russian front requires very complicated and delicate diplomatic manoeuvring. It is very important that we be very cautious when we look at how we handle the situation.

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, CPC):** Madam Chair, I will be sharing my time with the member for Calgary Nose Hill.

Canada and Ukraine share a special relationship. The Ukrainian diaspora in Canada is the largest outside Ukraine with more than 1.3 million Canadians claiming some connection to Ukraine.

Russia began its invasion of Ukraine in 2014, including the illegal annexation of Crimea on March 21, 2014, three years ago tomorrow. Estimates from different sources place the combined military and civilian casualty rate at close to 50,000. Let there be no misunderstanding that the conflict is ongoing and it can only go from bad to worse.

In April 2015, Prime Minister Harper, on behalf of Canada, responded to the deteriorating situation by announcing Canada would deploy approximately 200 Canadian Armed Forces personnel to Ukraine until March 31, 2017. For nearly two years, Canadian troops have been providing training in explosive ordnance disposal, flight safety, logistics system modernization, military policing, and medical training.

After repeated delays and requests from Ukraine's president, Canada has finally extended the mission to Ukraine until March 2019. As far as Canada's participation with this mission is concerned, my first concern has been and always will be for our Canadian soldiers and their families. This is a hot zone. Even before the announcement that Canada was extending the Ukraine mission, Petawawa was already preparing for a summer deployment.

On March 9, the Conservative Party, after months of giving the Prime Minister the opportunity to do the right thing, brought to the attention of Canadians the most recent example of how the Liberal Party devalues the dangers inherent in missions like the one we are debating today. The decision to claw back the danger pay of soldiers on the front line in the war against international terrorism has soldiers asking me if their pay will be cut by not receiving the proper recognition of being in a hot zone.

Soldiers remember being sent to Afghanistan without the proper uniforms. Soldiers remember their comrades from the conflict in Afghanistan who were killed or injured by a roadside bomb because the Liberal Party played politics with air support when it cancelled the helicopter contract. In fact, history repeats itself with the same type of politics being played with the fighter jet replacement. Without the proper strategic airlift to get soldiers off the roads, lives were needlessly sacrificed.

Soldiers are asking what else the Liberals will take away besides their danger pay. What happens when the injured soldier comes home?

I brought the case of Warrant Officer Roger Perreault to the floor of the House. His treatment has been nothing short of scandalous. What about the Roger Perreaults and other soldiers like him who are waiting to receive the critical injury benefits they so deserve? To the soldiers and veterans who are watching this debate, I want them to know I have their back.

*Government Orders*

As a veteran Conservative member of the Standing Committee on National Defence, I am pleased to confirm that through the defence committee, I have been pushing the government to accept the recommendations of the National Defence and Canadian Armed Forces ombudsman, Gary Walbourne, in the report presented last fall to the Minister of National Defence, “Simplifying the Service Delivery Model for Medically Releasing Members of the Canadian Armed Forces”. Specifically, soldiers need to know that if they are injured and no longer meet the universality of service requirement, the support is there.

Of the many problems that I am called upon to intervene in regarding service in the Canadian Armed Forces, the issues surrounding medical release are the most frustrating, both for releasing soldiers and their families. The need to provide the soldier a seamless transition has become an issue of crisis proportion since Prime Minister Chrétien first committed Canada to the mission in Afghanistan. It is time to move on and do what is right.

The first reform that must take place is to ensure no currently serving member of the Canadian Armed Forces is medically released without all services and benefits in place. Each year approximately 1,500 members of the Canadian Armed Forces are released due to illness or injury, of which about 600 are directly related to military service.

Once released from the Canadian Armed Forces, the soldier becomes the responsibility of Veterans Affairs Canada. Ill and injured members must prove to Veterans Affairs Canada their illness or injury was attributable to or aggravated by their military service. While the Canadian Armed Forces have all the medical and personnel information needed to support a claim, the information systems between the departments are completely independent of one another. Medically releasing soldiers are required to obtain medical and service documents from the Department of National Defence, and then to plead their case to Veterans Affairs.

Once again, I am calling on the government to implement the recommendations given in the report from the military ombudsman.

• (2225)

**Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC):** Madam Chair, I want to thank my colleague from Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, the vice-chair of the national defence committee, for her passion and her support for the Canadian Armed Forces. She has always fought to ensure that they are well represented at committee and in the House; that their care, needs, and benefits are, first and foremost, at the forefront of our debates here; and that they get the proper equipment and kit to do the jobs they are so often called upon to do.

In the situation in Ukraine, there are over 200 members of the Canadian Armed Forces training with Ukrainian military members. They are somewhat removed from harm's way, but at the same time, the situation over there is fluid. Russia has a very advanced military and can move over a lot of territory very quickly.

I would ask the member to talk about the concerns she has about danger pay, tax benefits, and things provided to those in the armed forces and in support of military families back home that are dealing with long periods of separation from their loved ones who are deployed. Can she talk about how that should be implemented for

Operation Unifier and Operation Reassurance, with our troops going to Latvia?

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:** Madam Chair, it is really important to have a seamless transition so that when military personnel are injured, be it in training at home or in helping in training train overseas, they know that if something happens to them, they will be taken care of, and if they cannot meet the universality of service, they will have the proper pension in place without having to fight another fight for it.

My colleague mentioned earlier what is needed over there. In June 2014, there was a Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association meeting in Vilnius. Soldiers from the front were parliamentarians. Oleh Osukhivskyi was leading the delegation. He was on crutches, because he had been injured. I still have his list today, and it sounds like he is still asking for more of the same. He says they do not need advice. What they need are helmets and body armour. Our troops have the wonderful Pacific Safety Products fragmentation protective vests, but they are using pieces of tin. I hope we will provide them with what is needed where we can.

• (2230)

**Mr. Matt DeCoursey (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Madam Chair, no one will debate how much everyone in the House respects the women and men of our Canadian Armed Forces. I am pleased that we finally have a Minister of National Defence who is willing to work hard to overcome some of the challenges the women and men in uniform have faced, given the last 10 years of the previous government's leadership on that file.

As it relates to Canada's mission in Ukraine and support for the Ukrainian people, I wonder if the member opposite has any comments on how important it is that we extend this mission to ensure that the armed forces in Ukraine are receiving the support they need to maintain their sovereignty, security, and stability and how support for the Ukrainian people will help enhance their democracy, the rule of law, and security for the people of Ukraine.

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:** Madam Chair, ongoing support is very important. At that parliamentary association meeting in Vilnius in 2014, the Lithuanians were commemorating their 25 years of independence, and they unveiled a museum. It showed different depictions of what they went through when they were fighting for their independence, but unlike the history itself, they wanted to show solidarity with Ukraine. For every battle they went through for their independence, they showed what Ukraine was going through at that time. It was just a few short months before that Putin's Russian forces had invaded Crimea. The stark memory I have is of the Lithuanians' body armour. They were two flat pieces of tin held together at the shoulders with men's pants belts. That is what they were using for body armour.

*Government Orders*

They require continued support in materials and training, and, of course, in looking for the lost treasury, which was stolen by their former president.

**Hon. Michelle Rempel (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC):** Madam Chair, I will start my speech by giving a deep note of thanks and appreciation to the men and women of the Canadian Armed Forces who are participating in this mission and other missions abroad. Oftentimes we do not take enough time to appreciate the sacrifice of these people and their families in upholding the law and the Canadian vision of democracy and peace around the world.

I am disappointed that the first debate the Liberals have initiated in the House of Commons is on a mission that the Conservatives put forward. The Liberals are really not doing anything different with respect to this mission and have declined to start debate on sending our men and women in the armed forces into harm's way on a peacekeeping mission, which for all intents and purposes is just a bid to buy a seat on the UN Security Council. They should be ashamed of that, given the UN's complete lack of any sort of response to the crisis in Syria. The Liberals are exceptionally misguided in their approach to defence and foreign policy in this regard.

None the less, this debate gives me an opportunity to highlight the fact that it was our Conservative government that took leadership in starting Operation Unifier. We were one of the first voices in the world to firmly and strongly stand against the illegal occupation of Crimea and to stand with the people of Ukraine, especially in light of the exceptional contributions that the people of Ukraine have made to Canada's history. As an Alberta MP, whenever I have an opportunity to talk about the contribution of the Ukrainian community in Alberta, I always choose to do so, and I am acknowledging that today.

In the brief time I have, I would like to speak about my exceptional disappointment in this self-congratulatory exercise that the Liberals are engaging in tonight. They have done little to nothing to address the issue of internally displaced people in Ukraine. I do have to give credit to my colleague who is the chair of the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration. He went against his party to a certain extent and forced a study on internally displaced people around the world and how the government would respond to that. In that committee study, we heard testimony, which frankly made vomit rise in my mouth, about the situation facing over 1.2 million people in Ukraine.

If members have not had a chance to read the recommendations in the report that came out last summer, I would encourage them to read the testimony. The human rights violations and abuses against internally displaced people in Ukraine should light the world on fire. The Liberal government has done nothing on the internally displaced persons issue to date in spite of the Ukrainian community in Canada asking for action.

The Liberal immigration minister stands in the House of Commons and talks about how the Liberals are bringing in tens of thousands of refugees. However, I have not once heard about the prioritization of internally displaced persons from Ukraine. It is wrong for the Liberals to stand in the House of Commons and force a take-note debate on this issue without talking about how IDPs are going to be supported.

There has been a lot of discussion about the amount of aid going from Canada to assist Ukraine. Before my Liberal colleagues get up and offer talking points in this regard, I would note and pre-empt them by saying that most of that money was announced under the previous Conservative government. There has been little to no additional support for Ukraine announced in spite of what we expect to be an unprecedented level of deficit to be presented in the federal budget this year.

With my remaining time, I would draw the attention of my colleagues to the statement made by my colleague from Thornhill on some of the things the Liberal government should be doing to support this initiative, including supporting and implementing Magnitsky legislation. I have heard nothing from the Liberal government indicating that it wants to support this. This is a huge call from the Ukrainian community in Canada and around the world.

A number of recommendations from the Ukrainian Canadian Congress have not been addressed by the Liberal government to date. If the Liberals have the audacity to stand in the House of Commons and pat themselves on the back, I wish they would do so by offering something new.

• (2235)

**Mr. Ken Hardie (Fleetwood—Port Kells, Lib.):** Mr. Chair, I wonder if the hon. member would care to comment on what the missed opportunity might have been with the \$11 billion in lapsed funding that the defence department turned back to the federal treasury in 2015, or perhaps the \$1.13 billion that Veterans Affairs turned back over to the treasury in the years leading up to 2014. It looks as though we missed some opportunities there to do some of the things that the member is advocating now.

**Hon. Michelle Rempel:** Mr. Chair, any time a Liberal, especially a rookie member of Parliament from the Liberal Party, stands in the House of Commons and decries any sort of defence funding, I would ask him to look to his colleagues, who have consistently voted against any sort of expenditure increase to the Department of National Defence. I would ask him to talk to colleagues who were in the House of Commons when a former Liberal government sent our men and women in uniform into the desert in bright green camo.

The Liberal government's record on supporting our men and women in uniform is not only misguided and dangerous: it is woefully abysmal. I find it extremely rich that the member would even raise this point at this hour of the night.

**The Chair:** Before we carry on, I want to ask hon. members not to think of characterizations of other hon. members in such a way.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman.

**Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC):** Mr. Chair, as our immigration critic dealing with issues of refugees, my colleague knows all too well the plight of the people in Ukraine and knows all too well the leadership that was shown by the previous government under Prime Minister Stephen Harper and how Mr. Harper strongly said to Putin to “get out of Ukraine”.

*Government Orders*

Short of Russia pulling out of Ukraine, I would ask the member to comment on how Canada has been there for the people of Ukraine but how much more needs to be done. Over the last year, we have seen the number of internally displaced people increase to 1.6 million Ukrainians without a home, orphans without orphanages to take care of them and families to love them, and widows begging on the street. Also, could she comment on how Canada could play a bigger role in supporting humanitarian efforts in Ukraine?

• (2240)

**Hon. Michelle Rempel:** Mr. Chair, again I would direct colleagues in this place to look at my colleague from Thornhill's statement as of February 23, which contains concrete recommendations that the Liberals could undertake to do exactly what my colleague just said. I would also encourage my colleagues to read page 29 of the report from the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration, which dealt with how to address the issue of internally displaced people. I will read an excerpt:

Witnesses also suggested non-immigration-related measures that Canada could continue or initiate to support the Ukrainian people. These include maintaining sanctions against Russia, continued or increased support for the OSCE and the OSCE special monitoring mission, continued support as election observers... Further, Canada could provide aid to help integrate IDPs, to rebuild institutions such as the media that have been destroyed by the conflict... Training to police officers and border guards and support to civil society organizations were also recommended areas for Canada's support.

This was a report that was sanctioned by the majority of Liberal members on this committee. These recommendations were made by people who have been suffering in this area, and frankly, I do not understand why the Liberal government has initiated a debate without addressing these issues.

**Mr. Matt DeCoursey (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Chair, my colleague across the way mentioned some ways in which the government can aid the people of Ukraine. I will talk about some of the aspects of the whole-of-government approach that is helping Ukraine: support for non-lethal military equipment; support for humanitarian assistance for those affected by the conflict; addressing a range of initiatives, including beefing up the security sector in Ukraine; support for the national police of Ukraine; development assistance to support democracy building, human rights, and the rule of law; and strengthening of the economy, which includes the signing of a free trade agreement with Ukraine this past year.

**Hon. Michelle Rempel:** Mr. Chair, I thank my colleague opposite for reading the record of the Conservative government and for highlighting all the wonderful measures that the former Conservative government initiated to help the people of Ukraine. Certainly I thank my colleague opposite for being a cheerleader of the efforts done by the Conservative government to help these people, and I would like to take this opportunity, because I have not had the opportunity to do so, to thank my colleague from Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman for all of his strong efforts in supporting the Ukrainian diaspora in Canada and people currently affected by conflict in Ukraine.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Michel Picard (Montarville, Lib.):** Mr. Chair, I wish to inform you that I will be sharing my time with the member for Kanata—Carleton.

I am pleased to speak to the House today about extending our military contribution in Ukraine, especially Canadian development co-operation.

As the first western country to recognize Ukraine in 1991, Canada was among the first international donors to provide significant development aid to this country. Independent evaluations have proven many times that Canada has a comparative advantage thanks to the knowledge, language skills, and expertise of the Ukrainian Canadian community. In addition, Canada has an ability to promote innovation and to adapt to a political and socio-economic context that is constantly evolving.

When Ukrainian citizens took charge of the future of their country with the revolution of dignity in 2013, they argued in favour of democratic reforms and integrating with Europe.

Ukraine, which was facing a huge political crisis, the risk of economic collapse, and aggression from the east, seized the opportunity to determine its own future. Canada was among the first donors to increase its support to Ukraine in order to help that country defend its territorial integrity, stabilize its economy, and lay the foundations for long-term development in terms of independence, democracy, and prosperity.

Since January 2014, Canada has contributed approximately \$700 million in technical and financial assistance to strengthen security, deliver critical humanitarian support, stabilize the economy, and support Ukraine's efforts to implement profound and comprehensive democratic and economic reforms.

Canada is very concerned about the individuals who have been affected by the conflict in eastern Ukraine and by the increased risk of poverty. We are committed to delivering effective humanitarian assistance in a timely manner, in accordance with the humanitarian principle of impartiality, humanity, neutrality, and independence.

The Ukrainian government has reported nearly 1.7 million internally displaced people. Those individuals need support, especially since over 73% of those displaced people consist of single-mother families. Canada's humanitarian response involves meeting the needs of the most vulnerable, particularly the specific needs of women and girls.

Since the beginning of the crisis, through our humanitarian partners, Canada has provided more than \$27 million in humanitarian assistance to help millions of vulnerable people who are directly affected by this armed conflict. This assistance includes several components including basic health services, food aid, protection, shelter, and other essential support measures.

Canada also plays a key role by providing the Ukrainian government support in developing policies to help it respond to this conflict. To deal with this external aggression, Ukraine must adopt reconstruction and peacekeeping measures.

The need for humanitarian assistance remains high. This need is exacerbated by the fact that the country does not have control over a significant part of its territory and millions of people are trapped, with nowhere to go.



*Government Orders*

From an economic standpoint, Ukraine posted 2% growth in 2016, which is quite impressive given the tough recession the country has gone through over the past two years. Ukraine has also made unprecedented efforts to reform its public administration and its security and justice sector, while promoting decentralization.

Ukraine has significantly strengthened its anti-corruption measures by creating some key institutions and increasing transparency especially in its public procurement systems. In terms of macroeconomics, Canada has helped Ukraine avoid economic disaster by strengthening the International Monetary Fund's extended credit facility and providing long-term technical support to the National Bank of Ukraine and to the department.

I would be pleased to take any questions about other aspects or key points.

● (2245)

**Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC):** Mr. Chair, my colleague spoke at length about humanitarian aid.

I would like to know whether, in the context of Operation Unifier, he plans to suggest to his government that it take a more robust position on the Russian invader. We could give more money for humanitarian aid, but if we allow the Russians to remain, we will never see the end of it.

Is the member proposing we strengthen our position?

**Mr. Michel Picard:** Mr. Chair, discussions with Ukraine aim to cover every possibility, and they are still ongoing.

Personally, I think Ukraine, which is benefiting from Canada's assistance and wisdom, needs to adopt the means to eventually take charge of its own destiny. When it does, it will no longer need our assistance, which is unfortunately necessary for now.

Discussions regarding the possible need for military assistance continue. However, Canada's decision to offer humanitarian assistance, as has already been mentioned, is in response to what Ukraine asked for.

[*English*]

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Mr. Chair, could the member speak to the withdrawal of support for Ukraine via the sharing of RADARSAT images? This began under the previous government. It was very useful to Ukraine in being able to use those images, which we gather anyway, for security purposes. Why did the government make the decision to withdraw that support, and will the government restore it?

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Michel Picard:** Mr. Chair, I thank my colleague for his question.

It is important to understand that Canada and Ukraine are partners. Discussions regarding RADARSAT imagery showed that, after a certain time, from Ukraine's perspective, it made sense to focus its efforts elsewhere. At Ukraine's request, the two parties agreed to stop that information sharing service.

● (2250)

**Mr. Jean Rioux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Chair, my colleague talked about the importance of the economy in helping and supporting Ukraine.

Could he speak to the importance of the economic agreement reached between Ukraine and Canada last July?

**Mr. Michel Picard:** Mr. Chair, I would quickly point out that a country will develop based on the resources and services it is able to secure. A trade agreement is bound to ensure greater success than any lethal weapons supplier can provide.

[*English*]

**Mrs. Karen McCrimmon (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Chair, I would like to thank the member for Montarville for generously splitting his time with me tonight. I will build upon what he has already spoken this evening.

To assist Ukraine in driving its ambitious reform efforts forward, Canada helped the Government of Ukraine develop key reform plans, following the revolution of dignity, including constitutional, electoral, judicial, social policy, and health plans, under the rubric of the multinational joint commission. In addition, Canada deployed 80 technical experts to key government ministries to support the implementation of these reforms, and is continuing to provide this technical assistance as specific needs are identified.

For example, recognizing the risk that corruption poses to the overall progress of reforms, economic growth, and security in the country, Canada played a key role in advancing political finance legislation, which contributed to the establishment of the national agency for the prevention of corruption and the national anti-corruption bureau of Ukraine, two critical anti-corruption institutions.

Now, let us talk about media. Given the critical importance of independent and quality media for a successful democratic society, Canada supported the development of investigative journalism, which has already resulted in the dismissal of a dozen high-level bureaucrats involved in cases of alleged corruption. We also continue to build the capacity of media to resolve important policy issues, particularly related to Ukraine's conflict-affected population, promoting social cohesion, and tolerance. Canada has also helped institutionalize gender policies in targeted media outlets, which directly correlates to 100% of content being free of gender stereotypes and discrimination.

Having witnessed a significant surge in women's activism and civic movement during the revolution of dignity and women's response to the conflict in the east, including in volunteer combat roles, Canada emphasizes the importance of gender equality and women's empowerment for Ukraine's economic and social development. For instance, a past report from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development in Europe listed Canada as the fourth largest donor to gender equality and women's empowerment, with Ukraine being one of the top 10 recipients of Canada's gender equality focused aid.

*Government Orders*

Canada has also strengthened women's political participation by improving the electoral environment and political party development, including through the women's leadership academy.

More than 65% of the participants trained by Canada applied its newly acquired knowledge during the October 2015 local elections, by running for local office or by working on local election campaigns.

Canada also promotes the growth of small and medium-sized enterprises, including through the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement, ratified by the Ukrainian parliament in March of 2017. Canada's development assistance strengthens the capacity of small and medium-sized enterprises in Ukraine to be able to take advantage of increased trade flows between Canada and Ukraine, and the European Union. Small and medium-sized enterprises were severely affected by the war with Russia. They are less resilient than larger companies and therefore are in need of assistance to transition to the European and Canadian markets.

With Ukraine being called the bread basket of Europe, with its rich black soils, Canada provides significant support to introduce innovative, profitable, and environmentally sustainable practices to the agricultural sector.

Undertaking a comprehensive, sector-wide approach, Canada supported the development of the draft law on agricultural co-operatives and established a new master's program on co-operative management at two Ukrainian universities. For the first time, two regional unions of agriculture service co-operatives were created, improving the competitiveness of over 5,000 small-scale farmers. With the agricultural sector being dominated by men, Canada also specifically targeted and supported women-led farms, creating over 300 women-led businesses. We will continue to ensure that the empowerment of women and girls remains a key component in the support we provide.

● (2255)

Due to the complexity and increasingly protracted nature of the crisis in Ukraine, both humanitarian and longer-term development assistance focusing on democratic development and inclusive and environmentally sustainable growth will remain a cornerstone of our assistance to Ukraine.

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, CPC):** Mr. Chair, parliamentarians from Ukraine tell us that just as ISIL had taken over swaths in Iraq the summer prior, so too were Russians acting just like terrorists to Ukraine, being orchestrated out of the Kremlin, taking over buildings and using women and children as human shields, as we just saw in the battle for Mosul as well.

What is the member's government doing to help the women and children who have been through rape and torture by the Russian terrorists who have taken over their homes and displaced them?

**Mrs. Karen McCrimmon:** Mr. Chair, I would like to reiterate that from the experience and training I have had in the past, I know that one of the keys to providing long-term stability in a country is to understand the networks of women. That is one of the reasons that a great deal of our developmental aid is focused on women. It is because once the fighting is done, it is the women who will knit these countries back together.

We are not only looking at where we are today, but we are trying to look to the longer term and look at not only defence but also at diplomacy and development. It is that very collaborative, co-operative, coordinated approach that will ultimately bring Ukraine back to a state of peace in the long term.

**Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP):** Mr. Chair, the numbers of people impacted by the conflict in Ukraine are stunning, yet they have not been on the front pages of our newspapers. We have a lot of calamity in the world, but this has not been at the forefront. The numbers are shocking: there have been 10,000 civilian deaths since the start of the crisis, and 1.7 million people have been internally displaced by the conflict. UNICEF thinks one million children are in need of humanitarian assistance in Ukraine.

With Canada's international aid assistance at only 0.26% of gross national income this year, which is far below the United Nations target of 0.7% being targeted toward foreign aid, does the member agree that Canada should be increasing its funding for international assistance as a way to ameliorate the humanitarian impact of the conflict on the people in Ukraine and in other countries?

● (2300)

**Mrs. Karen McCrimmon:** Mr. Chair, as I mentioned during my speech, there are advantages to being part of a team, to having a coordinated long-term vision and the idea that a team can work together to maximize and rationalize all the support and effort that it is putting forward. That is why this kind of teamwork approach, a multinational approach, is exactly the right one going forward to make sure that all of the effort is not just in one sector, that it is equally shared, and that each nation gets to provide those pieces of that puzzle that they are most efficient at.

Moving forward, it is this teamwork that is really going to make the difference in the long term.

[Translation]

**Mr. Jean Rioux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Chair, Canada is in Ukraine to ensure the stability, security, and sovereignty of that country. We have done a lot of military training, for instance to teach people how to defuse explosives and munitions. We have provided training on health care and for a mobile hospital. We have also intervened by means of new logistics models.

Canada is present in a military sense, but how can we help improve humanitarian assistance and democracy in Ukraine?

[English]

**Mrs. Karen McCrimmon:** Mr. Chair, I would like to thank my hon. colleague for his question, because it is absolutely key to how we address situations like this in the future. It is not good enough just to talk about defence or just to talk about development or just to talk about diplomacy; we need all three pieces of the puzzle.

Thinking that there is just a military solution to this is a tad naive. We need to go past that. We need to plan a longer-term vision for the country and then bring all those resources, whether it is diplomacy, whether it is defence, whether it is development, to the fore and coordinate them so that we have a rational plan and a rational rollout on the ground.

*Government Orders*

Having a fragmented, uncoordinated approach has posed a problem in the past. I think we are doing a very good job to avoid that same challenge.

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Mr. Chair, I will be splitting my time with the member for Edmonton Griesbach.

Abraham Lincoln once said, “Let us have faith that right makes might, and in that faith, let us, to the end, dare to do our duty as we understand it.”

The conflict in Ukraine has been a clear case of right makes might. At the start of the Russian invasion, Ukraine was relatively weak, but since then, Ukrainians of all ethnic, religious, and linguistic backgrounds, the proud and generous Ukrainian diaspora, and the community of free, peace-loving nations have rallied together to help strengthen Ukrainian institutions and to give Ukraine the fighting capacity to resist foreign occupation and foreign-engineered disorder.

The sheer and evident rightness of the Ukrainian cause furnished it with support from every part of the globe, but Canada was first among those providing moral and practical support. Canada showed great leadership and insight during the Maidan and during the period that followed. We showed a proper appreciation for the role Canada can and needs to play in the world.

Let us be clear about Canada's role in the world. We are not a superpower, and it is not within our capacity or responsibility, at least at this stage in our history, to be the primary framers of great Metternichian bargains.

Canada has a different, but in many ways even more important, role in global affairs: as a nation with membership in the vast majority of important multilateral organizations; as a nation without major border conflicts, without a colonial history beyond our borders, and without the baggage that comes with present or past superpower status; and as a nation that has made and is making a good faith effort in building a diverse yet unified society through tolerance, freedom, democracy, the rule of law, and genuine reconciliation. As a nation with these characteristics, we are uniquely placed to be the conscience of the international community and to use our relationships and our history to challenge the rest of the world to follow the path we have chosen.

There are some, even in this place, who want Canada to remain true to its values at home but to downplay them on the world stage, to play nice with other countries to increase our favour among them in the councils of the world. I believe that this path would be a betrayal of our values and of our responsibilities. We must be the gadfly at the hindquarters of global institutions, principled and personally disinterested, always prodding our partners to do better.

This is what we have done on the Ukraine file, speaking the truth about the current Russian regime with a frankness our American and European partners are sometimes unwilling or unable to match, but in the process driving a consensus that defends international human rights and the rule of law.

There are also those who believe that Canada can speak without acting. We do not have unlimited capacity, but if we are to be a leader in the world, then we must put our money where our mouth is.

We must show that right makes might and play a role in delivering that might.

The government has spoken in the past about having a leaner military. In this time of global danger and uncertainty, the world needs more Canada, not less. We cannot be there for Ukraine and for our other allies over the long term unless we are making investments in our military today that will ensure that we have the capacity to play a role over the long term. We cannot make commitments if we are not prepared to make commitments. I hope that Wednesday's budget will see the government change course and start to invest in the defence of Canada and Canadian values.

Now, in the opposition, we will always take a responsible approach to these issues, standing four-square behind Ukraine and behind our military, supporting the government when it is doing the right thing and challenging it to do more. Let me be clear, as well, as the grandson of a Holocaust survivor and as a member of the opposition, that we will never countenance Putin's efforts to use disinformation to discredit Canadian politicians, even if they happen to be members of a different political party. In this country, we do not subject each other to genealogical purity tests. We debate ideas. This kind of thing will not work in Canada; it will, if anything, serve to deepen our resolve.

As an opposition, we ask the government to do more. Every time I have spoken about Ukraine in this House, I have made the same three points about what the government needs to do to improve.

Number one, do more for human rights inside Russia by passing Magnitsky sanctions. This was a Liberal election commitment.

Number two, strengthen military co-operation with Ukraine. This renewal is a good step, but we must return to providing RADARSAT satellite images, which is something Ukrainians want and which the government has yet to give a good reason for stopping.

Number three, we need to reinstate international initiatives on communal harmony, which were making an important difference in Ukraine.

• (2305)

Again, the renewal of this mission is a good step, but there is more that needs to be done, so let us do that together.

**Mr. Borys Wrzesnewskyj (Etobicoke Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Chair, the hon. member mentioned Magnitsky sanctions. Sanctions have been noted a number of times during this evening's debate, as have the oligarch kleptocrats Sechin and Yakunin, who are in President Putin's inner circle. Why is it that they were on the sanctions list in Europe, on the U.S. sanctions list, but at the last minute, former minister Baird removed those two names from the sanctions list? We know that a former staffer worked as a lobbyist or was hired after his term in the former minister's office. He was hired as a lobbyist by a Russian company associated with these oligarchs.

*Government Orders*

Sometimes we have this assumption in Canada that we are not affected by this global Russian hybrid war effort. Would the member like to comment on this? Are we immune to the sort of Russian interference that we are now seeing south of the border?

**Mr. Garnett Genuis:** Mr. Chair, I would be happy to comment on this, because the current government has been in place for a year and a half now and the individuals the member mentioned have yet to be added to the sanctions list. I would throw it back to the hon. member. If he is of the view that these individuals need to be on the list, I would encourage him to bring that case to members on his own front bench. I know they could do better at listening to the back benches in general, and perhaps they will this time around.

The reality is that, of course, throughout the international community, sanctions are coordinated in order to achieve the maximal impact on Russia with the least possible economic impact on the countries imposing those sanctions. Does that mean they were necessarily done perfectly? No, but this is the way in which the sanctions are done. Again, it is in a coordinated way for maximal impact on Russia.

However, none of this actually addresses what I spoke about, which was Magnitsky sanctions. This is something that all parties had committed to before the election and which the government seemed to be backing away from, at least under the last foreign affairs minister.

Maybe we will see the Liberals revisit this issue. I hope we do. Magnitsky sanctions are an important way of specifically sanctioning human rights abusers and addressing those human rights issues. This is something that is important to the Ukrainian community, because it addresses human rights inside Russia where these problems clearly are emanating from.

• (2310)

**Mr. Kerry Diotte (Edmonton Griesbach, CPC):** Mr. Chair, at this time three years ago, the world was watching in horror as Russia invaded Ukraine, staged a sham referendum in Crimea and annexed the territory a few days later. It was a shocking violation of what we understood to be a fundamental principle of our international order that borders are not to be changed by force. Vladimir Putin followed this illegal act with another assault on Ukraine in the Donbass region. This region's conflict continues to claim lives and drive people from their homes.

This issue is not an abstraction to Canadians. With 125 years of Ukrainian immigration to our country, our nation and our people are intimately connected to Ukraine. My riding of Edmonton Griesbach is home to a large part of Edmonton's Ukrainian community, and events on the other side of the world resonate deeply for the people I represent.

Two weeks ago, the Liberal government announced that it was extending Operation Unifier, Canada's military training mission to Ukraine. For nearly two years, about 200 Canadian Armed Forces members have been deployed to western Ukraine. They have provided training in explosive ordnance disposal, flight safety, logistics system modernization, military policing, and medical training. That mission would have expired on March 31, but the government's announcement to extend the mission came at the very last minute. That delay was an act of disrespect, I believe.

Ukrainians are putting their lives on the line for the freedom and independence of their country, and they need the help of Canada. I am in favour of the proposed extension of this mission, but I would like to see it expanded. I am proud to support the package of measures recently outlined by my two colleagues, the member for Thornhill and the member for Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman. They have worked tirelessly on this, and really, that is why this commitment is happening.

The Liberal government spent the past year and a half cozying up to Putin, and just recently realized he is not such a great guy after all. As part of this effort to curry favour with the Russian regime, the Liberals shamefully ordered the majority of their members to vote against my private member's bill, Bill C-306, which would have recognized the deportation of the Crimean Tatars by the U.S.S.R. as a genocide.

In her recent statement on the anniversary of Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea, Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs wrote:

Canada is deeply troubled by the politically motivated application of 'anti-terrorist' and 'anti-extremist' legislation; ongoing harassment of human rights activists, journalists and lawyers; arbitrary detentions; disappearances; and the persecution of Crimean Tatars and other minorities. We denounce the banning of the Mejlis, the self-governing body of the Crimean Tatars, and have called on Russia to reverse this illegal and immoral decision.

My private member's bill and the debate around it called attention to all of these issues. I was pleased to have earned the support of all of my opposition colleagues, but the majority of Liberals voted against it. Some went so far as to claim that the deportation of Tatars did not constitute a genocide. That is an absurd claim supported only by the Putin regime's biggest apologists, including Canada's former parliamentary secretary to the minister of foreign affairs.

The bare minimum is not enough. Ukrainians are still fighting the battle that began on the Maidan in Kiev, expanded to Crimea and then to Donbass. In the past three years Ukrainians have proven themselves to be some of the fiercest defenders of the values all of us say we support. They are fighting for their lives, their families, their hometowns, their liberty. They want to be living in a free country that respects the fundamental human rights of every man and woman. As a friend and ally, Canada has a moral duty to stand with them in their fight. Ukraine should always be able to depend on us.

• (2315)

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Mr. Chair, I thank my friend from a nearby riding in the Edmonton area for his great work on behalf of the Ukrainian community. I know this is a cause that is very close to his heart and he does a great deal of work on it.

*Government Orders*

I would ask him to comment specifically on the issue of the RADARSAT images, the satellite images that Canada was providing, that Ukrainians want, and that would significantly benefit the Ukrainian military. It is good and right that Canada is committing soldiers to this important mission, but we could be augmenting the effectiveness of our support if we simply shared these satellite images. It has yet to be clearly explained why the government pulled the sharing of these images, but it could simply step up tonight and say it is going to restore them. This would be the right thing to do and would provide added support to our allies.

I wonder if the member, who I know has a great deal of expertise on this, could share with us what he thinks is going on and recognize the importance of restoring those images.

**Mr. Kerry Diotte:** Mr. Chair, my colleague makes a great point. If there is anything we can do to support the situation in Ukraine, why should we not be doing it? He is quite correct that there has not been a good explanation for ending this practice. I would certainly urge the governing Liberals to step up to the plate and explain why we are not coming to Ukraine's defence in this regard.

**Mr. Borys Wrzesnewskyj (Etobicoke Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Chair, going back to the issue of the RADARSAT-2 satellites, those were images that were purchased. Our military actually does not have satellites of the sort that produce those images. They were purchased. They were not timely and did not have the sort of detail that Ukraine would have wanted in the current conditions.

Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine has changed, but also Ukraine's army has gone through an incredible evolution. Ukraine now has timely information on Russia's movement of troops. We have to be clear that Russia is moving its troops and Russian military equipment continually into Ukraine. It is timely and it is detailed, so that sort of information is no longer required.

On the comment by the hon. member as to doing anything we can do, should we not be doing things that are effective and necessary today, not what was necessary one or two years ago?

**Mr. Kerry Diotte:** Mr. Chair, as far as we are aware, Ukraine wants it. All of the double-talk about it maybe not being good enough or maybe it is already getting some form of it is irrelevant. We should go to the source, straight to the horse's mouth, to get the information. Ukraine is very much in favour of getting this and it wants it. Who are we to argue? The Ukrainians are on the front lines. We should provide it. It is as simple as that.

• (2320)

**Mr. Daniel Blaikie (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Chair, one of the issues for Ukraine is making sure that the western world is united in the defence of its territory. There is a new president of the United States, who has certainly remarked that he would like to fundamentally change the relationship between the United States and Russia. What does the member think is the appropriate response for Canada to make to what seems to be a backing away by the United States from its support for Ukraine in order to improve its relationship with Russia?

**Mr. Kerry Diotte:** Mr. Chair, Canada has proven that it is a big friend of Ukraine. What happens in the United States is irrelevant. We have to give everything we possibly can to Ukraine. We cannot leave it short. Ukrainians are in a battle for their lives and their

liberty and we have to step up to the plate to show that we have been friends and will continue to be friends, and give Ukraine every tool it could possibly need to beat back the aggression it is experiencing right now.

**Mr. Arif Virani (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage (Multiculturalism), Lib.):** Mr. Chair, I will be splitting my time with the member for Kitchener Centre.

I am proud to the rise in the House this evening to speak in support of Operation Unifier, which was announced last week by the Minister of National Defence and the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

I rise today on behalf of my constituents in Parkdale—High Park in support of this important mission. The constituents in my riding are engaged, informed, and compassionate people. I take pride in the fact that Parkdale—High Park is home to thousands of Ukrainian Canadians. My constituents understand that Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea and military offensive in the Donbass in eastern Ukraine is unacceptable. We as a government understand this as well. That is why the Canadian government is taking action.

Through Operation Unifier, we are providing support to Ukrainian forces through capacity-building and military training. Sharing Canadian knowledge and expertise is crucial to fully supporting Ukraine in its efforts to maintain its sovereignty, its security, and its territorial integrity against unjustified aggression at the hands of invading Russian forces in Crimea and the Donbass. Every single day, the sons, daughters, mothers, and fathers of Ukrainian Canadians are either being wounded or killed. As Ukraine's closest friend and ally, we as Canadians must prepare the Ukrainian people to properly defend themselves and reduce these casualties. That is why Canada is committing to capacity-building and military training through Operation Unifier. Through this operation, we are sending a clear message to Ukrainians here and around the world that we as a government will stand shoulder to shoulder in solidarity with Ukraine, and will continue to work to promote Ukraine's sovereignty, security, and territorial integrity. That is a message that is not only for the Ukrainian diaspora in my riding of Parkdale—High Park or around the rest of Canada, it is also a clear message of deterrence to Russian, whose actions have destabilized the region and continue to pose a security threat to our allies in Europe. Make no mistake, Russian aggression presents an existential threat to Ukraine.

Operation Unifier complements other Canadian efforts already under way to combat Russian expansionism. This past July, in 2016, at the Warsaw Summit, NATO members, including Canada, agreed to deploy military forces to the Baltic states and Poland beginning in January of this year under Operation Reassurance. These efforts are meant to deter further Russian aggression like what we have seen in Crimea and the Donbass. Together with our allies, we have stood up and demonstrated leadership in the fight against Russian aggression. The U.K. has deployed in Estonia, Germany in Lithuania, and the United States in Poland, while our Canadian brave men and women in uniform are deploying in Latvia. The nature and magnitude of this concerted NATO response has sent a clear signal to Moscow that we are not simply using rhetoric to counter Russian aggression, we are coupling our words with concrete actions.

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Our support of Ukraine is interwoven with the rich Ukrainian heritage in this country. In my role as the parliamentary secretary for multiculturalism, I am keenly aware of the rich contributions that Ukrainians have made to Canada's history and its development. The first members of the Ukrainian diaspora to settle in Ontario and western Canada came to this country 126 years ago. In that period, Ukrainian traditions have become Canadian traditions, such as wearing a vyshyvanka at the Bloor West Village Toronto Ukrainian Festival in my riding. I was also honoured to have the ability to congratulate the Ukrainian Canadian Congress on the launch of its Canada 150th program entitled youth engaging youth, which is funded by our government. This project will celebrate diversity and promote that shared heritage through youth engagement between, among others, Ukrainian Canadian youth and young people who are indigenous.

Our government has also tabled legislation in support of Canada-Ukraine free trade, an agreement that was signed by both nations in Kiev on July 11, 2016. I spoke in strong support of this agreement in this House because its benefits to our economies are clear. When that trade agreement comes into effect, it will eliminate the duties and tariffs on both sides of the economic ledger.

Canada has always been a close ally and friend to Ukraine. We were the first western nation to recognize Ukraine's independence on December 2, 1991. We will continue to stand with Ukraine as a strong global partner, especially at this critical time when Ukraine needs the support of its allies to combat Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea and continued aggression in the Donbass. Canada's Operation Unifier will provide that much-needed support.

To Ukrainian Canadians, I say, "*Duže diakuju*", for their contributions to our country. *Slava Ukraini*.

● (2325)

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Mr. Chair, I have asked this question of a number of members and I am going to ask it again, because it is important and I do not think we have received a clear answer on it.

RADARSAT satellite images were provided under the previous government and withdrawn under the current government. These are images that Ukrainian authorities tell us they want. Various explanations have been developed, such as they may not be as useful as they once were. It is certainly true that Ukraine's military technology has improved significantly, and that is a great credit to the resilience of the Ukrainian state, but all of our information is that Ukraine still wants these satellite images.

We are sending brave Canadian men and women into the situation. Why would we not provide them, as well as Ukraine, with the greatest possible support and share satellite images that we have, that they want, and which they say would make a difference?

**Mr. Arif Virani:** Mr. Chair, it is important to underscore that there is a lot of commonality on both sides of the House particularly on this issue, which is indeed one that is not partisan in terms of our steadfast support as a nation for Ukraine.

With respect to the satellite imagery, yes, we have heard a lot about that this evening during the context of tonight's debate. What I will reiterate is that it is important, when Canada stands behind

Ukraine, to stand behind it in a contemporaneous manner, in a manner that assists Ukraine with its present needs.

We have heard again and again that the utility of the satellite imagery that is referenced by my friend opposite, the satellite imagery that was once useful to Ukraine, has become reduced. It is not as timely or as critically required by Ukraine as was once the case. What we are working to do as a government is match the current needs of Ukraine with what Canada is able to provide.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC):** Mr. Chair, I would like to ask my colleague a question about weapons to which Ukraine does not have access. Canada just sent some C7s, C9s, C6s, and Javelin missile launchers to Iraq.

Why does Ukraine not have access to the same weapons as Iraq?

**Mr. Arif Virani:** Mr. Chair, I appreciate the question from the member opposite.

I just want to emphasize that when we provide assistance to Ukraine, we do so in consultation with the government of that country. When we discuss the weapons situation, defensive weapons, when we discuss satellite imagery, it is always directly with the Ukrainian government. We did the same thing with the free trade agreement. Now we are doing the same with this mission, Operation Unifier.

[*English*]

**Mr. Borys Wrzesnewskij (Etobicoke Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Chair, it was referenced earlier that we should be helping Ukraine to achieve the goals that it has set. One of its most ambitious goals is to be NATO compliant by 2020.

Yes, we are continuing with Operation Unifier, and we are continuing with other projects that began when Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine began in 2014. When we were in the opposition, we supported the government. Today, we are glad that the opposition is supporting us as we continue this vitally important project.

However, there are new projects that we have commenced, and one of those is the Defense Reform Advisory Board. The former assistant deputy minister of defence, Jill Sinclair, is our representative there. This board will be directly engaging with the president, and the chief of staff of Ukraine's military, helping them to become NATO compliant. Should this new project not be one of our priorities?

● (2330)

**Mr. Arif Virani:** Mr. Chair, I would like to thank my colleague for his outstanding advocacy on behalf of Ukraine in this chamber, which is well known to many of us, and for his leadership on the Canada-Ukraine Friendship Group.

I think the appointment of Ms. Sinclair is an important one. It is important to have a Canadian representative at that entity. It is important to shore up not only Canada's NATO involvements, but also the incorporation of Ukraine as much as possible into the NATO fold. I think that is an important development.

I would underscore that Canada has worked on many fronts with respect to advancing the cause of Ukraine, whether it is the free trade agreement with Ukraine, whether it is support through Canada 150 funding, whether it is recent conversations I, in my capacity as Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, have had with the minister of culture for Ukraine on the potential of developing a Canada-Ukraine film co-production agreement. The support of Canada is long-standing. It is steadfast. It is multi-faceted. The important development with Ms. Sinclair is an aspect of that as well.

**Mr. Raj Saini (Kitchener Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Chair, I am proud to rise today to speak in favour of our government's extension of Operation Unifier. In the face of ongoing Russian military aggression and illegal occupation, our government remains steadfast in Canada's commitment to the Ukrainian people. Our special relationship with Ukraine is bolstered by a shared vision, one in which the Ukrainian people have succeeded in their work to build a more secure, stable, and prosperous country, and one in which Ukraine is free from Russian aggression. We have been among the strongest international supporters of Ukraine's efforts to restore stability and to implement democratic and economic reforms. Canada was also one of the first countries to impose sanctions on the Russian government after its illegal invasion and annexation of Crimea in 2014. The current government has continued to uphold this tough stance on Russia when it expanded sanctions against specific Russian officials. These officials include the so-called elected representatives to the Duma from Crimea, individuals who have absolutely no business being there. Furthermore, since January 2014, the Government of Canada has announced over \$700 million in assistance to Ukraine.

This effort to support Ukraine through this important period of transition is a non-partisan commitment, and I would like to take a moment to thank the previous government for its work on this very important file. As we work to support Ukraine, military assistance will remain a key component of our country's commitment to Ukraine across development, security, democracy, and humanitarian aid.

For those who may not be familiar with Operation Unifier, I would like to take a moment to talk about what Canada's contribution to military aid in Ukraine looks like. Operation Unifier is a multinational joint support mission, which currently includes approximately 200 Canadian Armed Forces personnel. Canada's main focus is on tactical soldier training. As of December 2016, the Canadian Armed Forces has provided more than 3,200 training opportunities to UAF soldiers and officers on Operation Unifier. Many of the Canadians deployed are veterans of the war in Afghanistan and are now involved in training UAF personnel, including some coming directly from the front line in the eastern Ukrainian region of Donbass. The impact of the training efforts of these Canadian soldiers has been commendable, and I would like to take a moment to recognize and thank these soldiers who are hard at work for Canada, helping to build a better, more stable, and more secure world.

There are those who would dismiss the notion that Canada is undertaking a training role, as if that role were unimportant. I would like to draw down into one specific training element that our forces will be assisting with. Canadian forces will be training Ukrainian

### *Government Orders*

forces on explosive ordinance disposal and improvised explosive device disposal training. This might seem like a small thing to some, but it is a critically important skill. Let me provide some context. According to the 2016 annual report from the *Landmine Monitor*, Ukrainian government forces claim that they are forced to deal with the deployment of land mines and other illegal devices in Ukraine. Someone other than the Ukrainian government is deploying land mines in Ukrainian territory. Let me quote from the report:

In November 2015, an officer from the General Staff informed soldiers that separatist NSAGs were using landmines attached to fish hooks and fishing lines to snag the clothing of soldiers as they moved through wooded areas, thereby detonating nearby mines.

Numerous reports from the past few years have indicated that land mines and other illegal devices have had devastating consequences upon the civilian population in Ukraine as well. In March 2015, it was reported that over the previous year at least 42 children had been killed and 109 more were injured by mines in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions of eastern Ukraine alone. Given Canada's proud history of supporting the eradication of land mines, it is extremely fitting and important that we engage in these kinds of training activities.

• (2335)

I am proud of our government's commitment to engage on the world stage, from its commitment of \$650 million to assist with a global initiative to make up for the funding cuts to newborn and maternal health that have come from the recent global gag order to our contributions to the fifth Replenishment Conference on the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. That is why I am so proud we have chosen to extend our contribution to Operation Unifier for an additional two years.

**Hon. Peter Kent (Thornhill, CPC):** Mr. Chair, I would like to thank my hon. colleague for his collegiality on the various travels of our House standing committee on foreign affairs, especially most recently in eastern Europe, where we visited Ukraine, Latvia, Poland, and Kazakhstan.

I would like to ask him a question based on one of the many meetings and briefings we experienced.

In several interactions with representatives of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the OSCE, they were appealing, almost begging, for more funds to allow not only monitoring on both sides of the line of contact in eastern Ukraine, but to expand their operations along the Russian border to better monitor what Russia is sending into eastern Ukraine in the way of fuel, armaments, and men. Would he advise his Liberal government that perhaps it is time to step up and provide some additional funding to the OSCE to carry out these important monitoring operations?

**Mr. Raj Saini:** Mr. Chair, I would also like to thank my hon. friend for his collegiality and his mentorship on the trip. He was a voice of great intelligence, as part of his previous career as a journalist and his knowledge of the area.

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One of the things the OSCE representatives also mentioned during that trip was the difficulty they were having in that region. As I mentioned in my remarks, one of the reasons they were having difficulties was the amount of land mines there. Because of our participation in sending ordinance equipment to help with the situation in the region, especially in Donbass, Canada is stepping up in a very constructive way to provide security on the ground to ensure aid can be deployed in a reasonable manner.

• (2340)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC):** Mr. Chair, we have been discussing Operation UNIFIER for more than three hours. The government has not yet brought anything new to the table. It merely repeats what was put in place from the beginning of the mission by the Conservative government. The \$600 million or \$700 million was allocated by the former government.

On February 23, my colleagues, the Conservative opposition critics for national defence and foreign affairs, issued a statement with eight very legitimate demands about strengthening Operation UNIFIER. We have been discussing them for three hours and presenting various elements. However, the members opposite have provided no response other than their government will continue with the same mission without an additional force.

Could my colleague tell me what he thinks of the Conservative opposition's demands? Is the call to again provide RADARSAT imagery useless? I heard one member say that Ukraine is saying that it is totally useless even though we know that is not true. For example, does he agree that we should toughen our stance on the Minsk agreement because we know that there have been 3,099 violations? I want to know what he thinks of the opposition's demands.

[*English*]

**Mr. Raj Saini:** Mr. Chair, I wholeheartedly agree that we should strengthen Minsk. We had problems with the Minsk I agreement. When Minsk II emerged, especially with the trilateral contact group and with the influence of the Normandy Four, it was very durable. It is a process that I believe, and I think the Canadian government believes, will lead to a lasting peace.

The situation in Ukraine requires, initially, security and stability, which we are providing with Operation Unifier. It also requires political involvement. Our political involvement in supporting the peace process with the Minsk II agreements, with the packages of measures that have emerged, especially with the influence of the Normandy Four, are a necessary part of finding a solution in Ukraine.

**Mr. Daniel Blaikie (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Chair, I am grateful for the opportunity to rise and participate in tonight's take-note debate on Operation Unifier.

I want to start by saluting the work of the men and women in the Canadian Armed Forces, who have been participating for some time now, and by expressing my support for their continued involvement in Operation Unifier.

There has been great support within the Ukrainian community in Canada. I am fortunate to come from a part of the country where there is a large Ukrainian community that historically has made great contributions to Manitoba and to Winnipeg through the farming culture in rural Manitoba, as well as in Winnipeg's industrial economy and through the railway, particularly CN, which is strong in the community of Transcona, where I am from. This community continues to make great contributions. People continue to immigrate from Ukraine to Transcona. The contribution of Ukraine in my part of the world continues to be a real and important contribution.

There is the temptation sometimes to think that it is just because of that close historical connection that people within the Ukrainian community in Canada want to advocate for Ukraine, but it is important to note that it is not just that. It diminishes the great contribution and support that we see from that community to think that somehow it is just a sentimental one.

What is going on in Ukraine is not just something to be concerned about if one has a sentimental attachment to Ukraine. It is also about a principle. Russia, as a big superpower, thinks it can get away with simply walking into a neighbour's territory because no one is prepared to stop it. That is a principle that the Ukrainian Canadian community has been standing up to defend. It is not just a sentiment. The community's defence of that principle and its support for Ukraine are important. It is important that we ensure that we are doing everything we can to bring resources to bear in order to make that support real and effective within Ukraine for the sake of Ukraine and for the sake of all the neighbouring states along the Russian border that are also fearful that if what has already transpired in Ukraine is allowed to pass and perhaps worsen, they will be next on the Russian hit list of countries that are going to lose their independence to a large neighbour.

If there is going to be some meaningful resistance to Russia's actions within Ukraine and in the territories surrounding it, it is important that it not be just Ukraine against Russia, whether it is supported by Canada and other allies or not. It is important that it not just be Canada against Russia. What is really important is that it be a truly multilateral effort, because no one country standing up to Russia is going to get that message across. Russia needs to hear that the rest of the world is united in standing up to countries that would take advantage of their neighbours and fail to respect the territorial integrity of their neighbours and think that simply because they have the larger army, they can get away with doing whatever they want.

That is why it is so important that Canada participate fully in Operation Unifier. We are not the answer just on our own, but we are a necessary part of the only answer that can check Russian aggression in Ukraine and across the world.



*Government Orders*

That is why I am going to respectfully disagree with my colleague from Edmonton Griesbach. I do think that he is right that a change in position on the part of the United States does not mean that Canada should change its position. Maybe it is just a question of wording, but to say that the change in position on the part of the United States is not relevant is a mistake. It is relevant. It is important for Canada as the closest friend and ally of the United States to also be doing work there, to be doing our utmost on the diplomatic front with the United States to make sure that the new U.S. president's desire to have a closer relationship with Russia does not end up undermining this multilateral effort to help protect and support Ukraine.

● (2345)

It simply would be false to think that the United States does not have a significant possibility of undermining that effort if its position with respect to Ukraine changes substantially in order to court closer relationships with Russia. If that ends up happening, and I am not saying that is what will happen, but we as Canadians have to be prepared to extend our support to Ukraine even diplomatically within the United States if that is what it takes to make sure that the new administration does not let its desire to have a closer relationship with Russia get the better of it. That is an important component of the support we would offer there if it ends up being needed.

The other thing we could be doing and need to be doing alongside providing training to the Ukrainian armed forces is also to provide training within the civil administration of Ukraine to fight issues of corruption which we know are there and in some cases are undermining the efforts of the armed forces there and of the government. That is an important part. If we are going to provide resources, we need to make sure that the Ukrainian administration is able to receive those and deploy them properly. Providing the kind of training it takes to be able to root out corruption within an administration is an important part of guaranteeing the success of that operation and making sure that the resources we are sending are going to where they are needed so that Ukraine can ultimately be successful in standing up to Russia.

Another component of that is the Government of Canada has said that it will join the small arms treaty. It is important that it do that. I believe it was last June when the Liberals said they were going to do it. We are coming up on June again in not too long a time. Participating in international efforts to ensure that when small arms are moving from one country to another they end up where they are supposed to end up and not somewhere else is an important part of being able to supply resources with confidence.

Those are some of the things we would like to see the government move forward on. We think that is an essential part of making sure that the resources we are providing to Ukraine are used to their full capacity and do not end up somewhere else. When we talk about some of the difficult things we have to do sometimes to support friends in other countries, that means sometimes saying “no” to people here. We saw it with the Saudi arms deal where we know that people are producing and trading arms out of Canada. Saying “no” to them sometimes is a difficult thing to do because they make a lot of money, but if we are going to be an effective force for peace in the world, we need to make sure that we are not letting people who are producing arms in Canada sell them in ways that result in those arms

not being where they should be and getting into the hands of the wrong people. That is important enough that it bears mention in this debate.

Those are some of my thoughts that I wanted to put on the record for the sake of this take-note debate. I am happy to take a few questions.

● (2350)

**Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC):** Mr. Chair, I want to thank my colleague, the member for Elmwood—Transcona, for his intervention tonight and for laying out some of the concerns he has. I appreciate his bringing up the prospect of working with our allies in the United States and with other NATO members in trying to find some resolution.

I would ask him if he would care to comment—I know that the Ukrainian community in his riding is quite concerned—on the aggression Russia continues to promote in Crimea, the war it wages in Donbass, the destabilizing effect it is having throughout eastern Europe, including in Georgia and the Baltic States, and the concern being expressed by Poland and Germany. We also can never forget about Romania and Moldova in this whole process.

Would the member care to comment on how we work with our American allies? Congress in the United States has adopted a bipartisan motion to send lethal weapons to Ukraine to defend the territory of Ukraine's sovereignty that is right now a hot zone, due to Russian aggression, Russian-backed rebels, and Russian troops on the ground, the little green men.

Should we be matching that? The Conservatives have been calling for supplying lethal weapons to Ukraine's military, because that is the front line against Russia's aggression and its expansionist aspirations to bring back the old Russian empire. Could the member comment on that?

I know that the Ukrainian community within his riding wants to see those lethal weapons and to work with people like Senators John McCain, Lindsey Graham, and others who want to see Ukraine properly equipped to defend not just Ukraine but indeed all NATO nations.

**Mr. Daniel Blaikie:** Mr. Chair, I think it is good to see bipartisan support in the United States for Ukraine at the level of Congress and the Senate. I think it is troubling that within the White House, there is a new-found desire to look the other way, in some cases, when it comes to what Russia is doing in order to try to build a closer relationship. One worries that it may have a destabilizing effect on multilateral efforts so far, through the NATO umbrella, to support Ukraine.

We have seen already with the government how a change in attitude in the White House can change the position of the government. For instance, when the government was first elected, in its eyes, NAFTA was a good deal and there was not much that needed to be changed. A new president came in, and suddenly, through third parties and the media, it was floating the idea of conceding Canada's supply management system as a way to modify that deal. It came out of nowhere for Canadian producers who depend on the supply management system for their livelihoods. That was a bit of a shock.

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When we see something like that happen, we have to ask, on other issues where the President is beginning to change U.S. policy, where the government might land.

We see something similar when it comes the very obvious change in the path to immigration for certain refugees who no longer feel safe in the United States. The government wants to maintain, presumably to please the President of the United States, that people crossing through farmer's fields during blizzards with their families is a perfectly status quo way for people to immigrate to Canada, when it is clearly not.

We have already seen that a change in the attitude and the position of the President, even without any direct request for the Canadian government to change its point of view, can lead to a change, not just in opinion but also in the policies, in some cases, of the government.

I think it is important that we keep our eyes open on this file when we hear the President making allusions to needing to improve his own relationship with Russia.

• (2355)

**Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP):** Mr. Chair, I would like to invite my colleague from Elmwood—Transcona to expand on some of his comments about the role of civil society.

In 2012, the Ukrainian Canadian Congress testified to the foreign affairs committee of this Parliament, saying:

Canada can help foster NGO sector development, especially groups working in the areas of human rights, education, and law reform, as a vibrant civil society is one of the best guarantors of Ukraine's long-term democratic evolution.

Could my colleague talk a little more about the role of civil society in supporting a strong democracy?

**Mr. Daniel Blaikie:** Mr. Chair, Canada does have a great expertise, whether it is in the non-profit sector or government sector, in showing how that kind of work can be done effectively.

It does seem to be the case that there is a need for improvement within Ukraine to ensure that government operates as it should, that it operates properly, and that resources being shepherded by government are managed appropriately. That is going to be part of maintaining any kind of lasting stability for Ukraine.

Does Canada have a role to play in training the Ukrainian Armed Forces? Absolutely. Do we have other forms of expertise that would be critical in terms of securing Ukraine's long-term stability and future? Yes, absolutely. I think it is important to try and take that dual-pronged approach.

I thank my colleague for raising once again the advocacy that has been undertaken by the Canadian-Ukrainian community here. I think the forceful position that various Canadian governments have taken over the last number of years in supporting Ukraine deserves a lot of credit. As I said, I think it is important to do justice to the work they have done in providing support to Ukraine, that it not simply be interpreted as a kind of sentimental attachment, but that Canadians see it for what it is, which is also a very rigorous and energetic defence of a principle which application extends far beyond the borders of Ukraine.

**Mr. James Maloney (Etobicoke—Lakeshore, Lib.):** Mr. Chair, I will be sharing my time with the hon. member for Saint-Jean.

I welcome this opportunity to speak to the extension of Operation Unifier, an important component of our support for the Ukrainian people. I know this news was welcomed by the Ukrainian community across Canada, because a significant number of Canadians with close ties to Ukraine live in my riding of Etobicoke—Lakeshore, so I am especially pleased to speak to this issue today.

Before I address the mission itself, I would like to acknowledge the strong ties between our two countries, both historically and in today's context. Canada and Ukraine have enjoyed close relations. We were the first western country to recognize Ukraine's independence on December 2, 1991. The bilateral relationship is strengthened by warm people-to-people ties rooted in the 1.3 million-strong Ukrainian Canadian community.

Historic ties of friendship forged through generations of Ukrainian migration to Canada are reinforced by shared values and interests to produce a mature, balanced, and mutually beneficial partnership. The 1994 joint declaration on special partnership, renewed in 2001 and again in 2008, recognizes Canada's support for the development of Ukraine and the importance of our bilateral co-operation.

Our goal, with our assistance in Ukraine, is to improve economic opportunities for Ukrainians and a strengthened democracy. Canada is working with the Government of Ukraine and other development partners to rapidly implement the significant reforms needed for Ukraine to realize its full economic potential and build a sound public institutional and legal environment for closer integration with Europe. We have been there on electoral observation missions and we are there now to help it develop the key elements of a democratic infrastructure.

Canada has imposed sanctions against more than 270 Russian and Ukrainian individuals and entities. Since January 2014, Canada has sent more than \$700 million in much-needed assistance to Ukraine, including \$400 million in low-interest loans to help Ukraine stabilize its economy and over \$240 million in bilateral development assistance, focusing on democracy measures and sustainable economic growth.

I am proud that this government signed the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement. The Ukrainian government ratified it last week and we are awaiting passage in the Senate for this to move forward. These are all great steps in strengthening our ties. I could go on, but I am here to talk about the mission.

Since the beginning of the crisis in Ukraine in November 2013, Canada has been at the forefront of the international community's support to the Ukrainian people, as we have heard this evening. The extension of Operation Unifier will continue to involve approximately 200 Canadian Armed Forces personnel deployed in Ukraine until the end of March 2019. Since the start of training in September 2015, more than 3,200 Ukrainian armed forces members have been trained by the Canadian Armed Forces.

*Government Orders*

The Canadian Forces' primary focus is on tactical soldier training, also known as small team training, which consists of individual weapons training, marksmanship, tactical movement, explosive threat recognition, communication, survival in combat, and ethics training. The training began in the summer of 2015 and is taking place primarily at the International Peacekeeping and Security Centre in Starychi and other locations in western Ukraine. Canada has also contributed military equipment to Ukraine's armed forces.

Furthermore, the CAF is partnered with Ukraine in the military training and co-operation program, an ongoing engagement that will continue to offer a series of opportunities to enhance peace support operations, interoperability, military capacity building, and professional development. The training mission occurs under the rubric of the Multinational Joint Commission, which includes Ukraine, the United States, Canada, Lithuania, and the United Kingdom. Canada joined the joint commission in January 2015, and co-chairs, with Ukraine, the subcommittee on military policing.

I understand we are very close to signing a defence co-operation agreement with Ukraine and I am optimistic this, too, will strengthen our ties.

Before I end, I would like to pay homage to the approximately 200 Canadian soldiers headquartered in Edmonton, Alberta, who will be headed to Ukraine as part of Operation Unifier. Soldiers who are currently deployed will be returning to Canada over the coming weeks. On behalf of all Canadians, I thank them.

I am a vocal advocate of mental health and I am pleased to see that the forces have the CAF road to mental readiness program. I do not think we as Canadians can fathom some of the horrors witnessed by our men and women in uniform and the impact these have on their mental health.

● (2400)

This is a mission, a non-partisan issue that goes beyond politics. It is about doing what is right. This is about standing in solidarity with the Ukrainian people and showing them that Canada is there for them. I am proud that our government is doing this.

**Mr. Kerry Diotte (Edmonton Griesbach, CPC):** Mr. Chair, we have heard a lot of praise for all that Canada has done for Ukraine, from all sides of the House, but I am troubled by the fact that sometimes it is a little empty. I wonder, and I would love to find out from my colleague across the way, why the majority of Liberals failed to support my bill, Bill C-306, that condemned the deportation of the Crimean Tatars as genocide. I have yet to hear a good explanation for that. I would love to hear it.

● (2405)

**Mr. James Maloney:** Mr. Chair, one of the many things I have learned since I have come to this House is that we stand here often being criticized for doing things that the people who are criticizing us did before. They are criticizing us for not doing things that they did not do.

We should be standing united in this mission. With the extension of Operation Unifier, we are doing exactly what the previous government did before us. They should be applauding this step, not taking the opportunity to be critical of our actions.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Jean Rioux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Chair, Canada has always considered Ukraine to be a friend and our trust in and support for that country are unwavering.

I would like to know why the hon. member speaks with such enthusiasm and passion about Ukraine reaching its full potential.

[*English*]

**Mr. James Maloney:** Mr. Chair, I thank the member for Saint-Jean for such an important question.

For me, this is about who we are. I was born in Thunder Bay. I am sitting beside the hon. member for Thunder Bay—Rainy River. I later moved to Etobicoke—Lakeshore. Ukrainian Canadians have been my friends, my neighbours, my schoolmates. They are fellow Canadians. It is part of who we are.

Canada has always been very proud of the way that it supports our fellow Canadians, but we have always stood very proud in how we support other countries. It is for this reason that I am very proud we are taking these steps with Operation Unifier and that we are standing shoulder to shoulder, not only with Ukraine, but with Ukrainian Canadians.

**Hon. Peter Kent (Thornhill, CPC):** Mr. Chair, my hon. colleague is clear that members on both sides of this House are very passionate in their statements in support for Ukraine. We in the official opposition are relieved that the government finally, after waiting for almost a year to respond to the questions and appeals from the Government of Ukraine, has seen an extension of Operation Unifier, which, as my colleague said, is what our Conservative government initiated.

Our disappointment springs from the fact that it is only what our government initiated under a very different time, when we thought we had not one, but two agreements, the Minsk agreements, to create a ceasefire, to create a negotiated settlement, and ultimately a withdrawal of the Russian forces that are directing the so-called insurgency.

I would ask my colleague how he can justify, given the new deadly realities of the Russian surge in the last couple of months in eastern Ukraine, the resupply of armaments, weapons, materiel, and direction in not meeting the request from the Government of Ukraine for not only an extension of Operation Unifier, but an expansion for the provisions, the supply of defensive armaments—

**The Chair:** We will have to end it there. We are out of time, and I want to give the hon. member a little bit of time to respond.

The hon. member for Etobicoke—Lakeshore.

**Mr. James Maloney:** Mr. Chair, this is an example of what I was alluding to a few moments ago. The opposition stands in this House and criticizes us time and time again for failing to take steps with respect to lethal weapons. The now leader of the Progressive Conservative Party in the province of Alberta failed to do that himself, because he said that the equipment was not available. We subsequently learned that the equipment was available and that it was being disposed of by the government at the time.

*Government Orders*

Circumstances change, and we are adapting to those circumstances. I am very proud of the steps our government has taken to consult with the Government of Ukraine, with Ukrainian Canadians, and with organizations within Canada that represent that community in order to do what is needed in the current environment.

● (2410)

**Mr. Jean Rioux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Chair, I thank the hon. member for Etobicoke—Lakeshore for sharing his time with me.

[*Translation*]

Almost exactly two years ago, we stood in this House to debate Canada's support to Ukraine following Russia's attempt to redraw Europe's borders. We spoke of the importance of NATO solidarity in the face of this aggression and Canada's military contributions to the collective defence of eastern Europe. A lot has happened since then, but our support of Ukraine remains steadfast.

As the ministers of National Defence and Foreign Affairs made clear earlier this month, we will continue to advance democracy, human rights, and the rule of law in Ukraine. We will continue to provide critical military assistance in Ukraine through the end of March 2019. We will continue to promote economic stability and growth in Ukraine.

Through Operation Unifier, Canada has already trained more than 3,200 Ukrainian soldiers. More specifically, we have taught Ukrainian personnel how to use weapons and hit targets with greater accuracy and consistency. We have taught them how to communicate effectively on the battlefield, how to survive in combat, and how to make ethically sound decisions in conflict situations.

In addition to providing tactical soldier training, we have helped the Ukrainian Armed Forces develop highly specialized skills. We did this through several training programs, four of which are worthy of mention.

First, in 2016, we trained more than 140 Ukrainian combat-support specialists in modern logistics, in other words, we taught them how to ensure people, equipment, and supplies get where they are needed when they are needed.

Imagine trying to coordinate the movement of hundreds, even thousands of people in a conflict zone while ensuring that enough fuel is available for the equipment, that everyone has food, and that anything needed should they have to fight, is available. It is a tremendous undertaking and Canadian Armed Forces members are among the best at it.

In Ukraine, logistics specialists learned everything from convoy operations to vehicle-recovery procedures from Canadian experts who have first-hand experience in supporting military operations.

Second, we trained more than 120 military members on how to safely dispose of explosives and improvised explosive devices. These NATO standard procedures were taught through a series of increasingly complex scenarios.

Third, we trained and mentored nearly 800 Ukrainian soldiers in combat first aid, which can dramatically reduce the number of battlefield-related deaths.

Fourth, our military police trained more than 240 of their Ukrainian counterparts in basic investigative techniques and the use of force.

Using both classroom theory and practical exercises, participants covered all the duties and responsibilities typically assigned to a field military police platoon, from controlling traffic and handling detainees, to policing in failed and failing states.

Our women and men in uniform are helping the Ukrainian Armed Forces better defend their borders. I am proud the government has ensured that Canada will continue this critical work. As part of our whole-of-government support to our trainers and the people of Ukraine, Canada will provide up to \$7.25 million in non-lethal equipment assistance, as well.

Since the crisis began, Canada has unequivocally condemned the Russian Federation's clear violation of the territorial integrity of Ukraine. We have been clear, principled, and resolute in our response, and we will continue on that path. We will continue to stand by our Ukrainian allies as they work toward their goal of interoperability with NATO by 2020.

As we have heard tonight, the ongoing unrest in Ukraine has created instability in the region. It has raised concerns from many of our European allies. That is why, in the spirit of collective defence, we have taken measured and concrete steps to demonstrate our commitment to the defence of our allies.

● (2415)

Operation Unifier is just part of what we have done, and what we are doing, to support our allies and partners in eastern Europe. Over and above our activities in Ukraine, we are also having a direct impact in central and eastern Europe in support of our NATO allies.

**Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC):** Mr. Chair, I am so glad to have the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence here with me, as he will surely be able to answer my question.

First, I would like to thank him for his update on Operation Unifier, which was set up by our government back in the day. I would like to thank our military for completing its mission to date.

I now have a question for the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence. I am sure he will have an answer for me. How is RADARSAT-2 technology ineffective? Let us be clear: a quick Internet search tells us the satellite has a hard time distinguishing between a field of corn and a field of oats, which is understandable.

That said, it is able to detect military trains and convoys. I was wondering whether, somewhere in his briefing notes, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence might have a report for us confirming the government's claim that RADARSAT-2 is ineffective in the context of military operations.

*Government Orders*

**Mr. Jean Rioux:** Mr. Chair, I am surprised by the question because until now, when we talked about RADARSAT-2 people wanted to know why it is no longer being used.

I do not think it is an issue of capacity. It has more to do with need. First, the Government of Canada, through Global Affairs Canada, is engaged in ongoing secure discussions with the Government of Ukraine regarding Ukraine's security and defence needs. For a one-year period ending in May 2016 and as a result of a request from the Ukrainian President, Canada shared satellite imagery products with Ukrainian authorities.

Before doing so, Canada and Ukraine agreed on how the imagery would be used, namely to strengthen Ukraine's awareness of threats to its sovereignty, stability and territorial integrity. After consideration on how best to address Ukraine's evolving security assistance needs, and this is the answer to the question, it was decided that resources could be re-directed to other areas and the supply of satellite imagery ended.

Military assistance is one component of Canada's support to Ukraine across development, security, democracy, and humanitarian aid.

[*English*]

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, CPC):** Mr. Chair, never let it be said that the Liberals did not do the least they could do. They wait until the eleventh hour to sign the continuation of this mission. They are denying the RADARSAT imagery. Times have changed and now it is imperative that lethal weapons be provided.

However, I thought I heard the member opposite say that Ukraine would be fully NATO interoperable by 2020. Does that mean Ukraine will be granted accession to NATO in 2020?

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Jean Rioux:** Mr. Chair, that is an excellent question.

Indeed, what we are talking about is the fact that they are partners. We are training them at this time. We are providing training in many areas to ensure that they can have a stable, secure, and sovereign country.

**Mr. Matt DeCoursey (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Chair, I appreciated my colleague's speech, which will close this debate.

His excellent speech addressed our intervention in the region, how we are supporting Ukraine's military through Operation Unifier, which is part of a whole-of-government approach in that country. Canada is involved in a broader intervention in the eastern European region, including Operation Reassurance.

Could the parliamentary secretary perhaps talk a little more about what Canada plans to do in the central and eastern European regions?

● (2420)

**Mr. Jean Rioux:** Mr. Chair, that is another very good question.

Our aim in the region is to disincentivize Russia and President Putin. Obviously, we have Operation Unifier, but we also have Operation Reassurance. Last summer, we announced an important operation in Latvia. Four hundred and fifty-five soldiers will be deployed to the region. We will be one of the framework nations that makes decisions. We also know that we have a frigate in the region that has joined the maritime forces, as well as ad hoc monitoring through our F-18s. We are doing a number of things.

We are here to support the region and Canada's mission has intensified in that region. Let us not forget that we supported Ukraine last July by signing the Canada-Ukraine Free Trade Agreement. Our aim is to strengthen that country. We provided Ukraine with military training, but we are also there on an economic level, as well as to provide humanitarian assistance and support their democratic institutions.

**The Chair:** It being 12:22 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 53.1, the committee will rise and I will leave the chair.

(Government Business No. 12 reported)

[*English*]

**The Deputy Speaker:** Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until later this day at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 12:22 a.m.)



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