



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
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CANADA

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OFFICIAL REPORT  
(HANSARD)

**Thursday, April 19, 2018**

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**Speaker: The Honourable Geoff Regan**

## **CONTENTS**

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

# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, April 19, 2018

The House met at 10 a.m.

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*Prayer*

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## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1000)  
[English]

### INTERPARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS

**Mr. Robert Oliphant (Don Valley West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34(1) I have the honour to present to the House, in both official languages, the report of the Canada-Africa Parliamentary Association respecting its participation at the bilateral mission to the Republic of Sudan, Khartoum, and El Fasher, Republic of Sudan, January 15 to January 17, 2018.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

### COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

#### OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

**Hon. Denis Paradis (Brome—Missisquoi, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, today, as chair of the Standing Committee on Official Languages, I am presenting a report on literacy in minority language communities.

The report says that literacy should be a component of the education continuum, not only with respect to employment but also within families. Literacy is important in that regard. We need support programs that do a better job of meeting communities' needs and bilateral agreements that include binding clauses. That is the report in a nutshell.

I would like to thank Christine Holke, the clerk of the committee, Lucie Lecomte, and all the witnesses, stakeholders, and committee members.

I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the ninth report of the Standing Committee on Official Language entitled "Adult Literacy and Skills Development: An Essential Component of the Education Continuum in Official Language Minority Communities".

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

• (1005)

[English]

## PETITIONS

### PHARMACARE

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to table a petition signed by many constituents of Winnipeg North asking the government to look at having a universal pharmacare program, recognizing the importance of the Canada Health Act and adopting changes that would see prescription drugs covered as part of a national pharmacare program.

### RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

**Mrs. Kelly Block (Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to rise today to table two petitions on behalf of constituents of Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek. The first petition concerns religious freedom. The petitioners are asking that the mandate of the Office of Religious Freedom be renewed. We know that the current Liberal government has shut down that office.

### CANADA SUMMER JOBS PROGRAM

**Mrs. Kelly Block (Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the second petition contains the signatures of hundreds of constituents calling upon the Prime Minister to withdraw the values test on applications to the Canada summer jobs program. These petitioners add their names to the thousands of Canadians who have also signed this petition.

### THE ENVIRONMENT

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise to present a petition signed by residents from within Saanich—Gulf Islands, particularly from Salt Spring Island, calling upon the government to expand the moratorium on tanker traffic of crude oil tankers and those containing dilbit to make it a permanent ban on the west coast of Canada to protect B.C.'s fisheries, tourism, coastal communities, and natural ecosystems forever.

*Government Orders*

## CANADA SUMMER JOBS PROGRAM

**Mr. Kevin Waugh (Saskatoon—Grasswood, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, on behalf of citizens of Saskatoon, I wish to present this petition today. The petitioners are upset that the current Liberal government's attestation for Canada summer jobs program applicants requires them to hold the same values as the government. The petition is signed by hundreds of Saskatoon residents who object to the Liberal values test for people who apply for Canada summer jobs in our city of Saskatoon.

**Hon. Diane Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to table more petitions on that same subject. This time I have four petitions from 369 constituents.

The petitioners are calling to the government's attention that, as it is now written, the application form for the Canada summer jobs program forces employers to choose between their charter-protected freedoms and eligibility for government programming. They are calling on the government to remove the discriminatory attestation requirement from the Canada summer jobs application and to respect the charter rights of all Canadians, even if those Canadians' views differ from the political ideology of the government of the day.

This brings the total number of petitions to 862.

\* \* \*

**QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER**

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

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Mrs. Stephanie Kusie:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I rise regarding the preliminary review of the member for Brampton East by the Ethics Commissioner. As members may know, it was my letter to Mario Dion that started the inquiry into the member's actions. Once the preliminary review was public knowledge through media reports, I confirmed through social media that I had submitted the original complaint to the Ethics Commissioner.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, in June 2015, a new section was added to the Conflict of Interest Code that requires MPs to avoid publicly commenting on complaints before the individual who is the subject of the complaint has been informed. The commissioner has since informed me that I should have waited before I commented on the matter publicly.

I can assure you and the House, Mr. Speaker, that the error was totally inadvertent, because I believed that I was free to comment once the information became public. I understand now that I should have waited until receiving formal confirmation from Mr. Dion. Therefore, I want to apologize unreservedly to the Ethics Commissioner, the House, and to you yourself, Mr. Speaker.

• (1010)

**The Deputy Speaker:** I thank the hon. member for Calgary Midnapore for bringing this to the attention of the House.

**GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

[English]

**BUDGET IMPLEMENTATION ACT, 2018, NO. 1**

The House resumed from April 18 consideration of the motion that Bill C-74, An Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on February 27, 2018 and other measures, be read the second time and referred to a committee, and of the amendment.

**The Deputy Speaker:** When the House last took up debate on the motion before the House, the hon. member for Central Nova was just about to begin the five-minute period for questions and comments. We will begin with that now.

**Mr. John Nater (Perth—Wellington, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I have a very simple question for the member for Central Nova. When will the budget be balanced?

**Mr. Sean Fraser (Central Nova, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, implicit in that question is a conversation about the plan of the government to grow the economy.

We campaigned on a promise to invest in our infrastructure, among other things. One of the consequences of that plan is that, in the short term, there would be deficit financing. The difference between just running deficits randomly without a plan for the economy and what we have chosen to do is that the investments we are making are going to help grow the economy.

We need to be taking advantage of the opportunities that present themselves. When interest rates are at a historic low, and we have an opportunity to achieve the kind of economic growth we are achieving, it is a far better plan to take advantage of these circumstances than it would be to say that we are going to balance the budget at all costs. If that includes selling assets that appreciate, like sales by the General Motors Company, which in the long-term do not serve the interests of Canada, I would take every time the plan of this government to invest in our country, grow our communities, create jobs, and grow our economy.

**Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I know the member's area of Central Nova very well. I have knocked on doors throughout his riding. I know that people in Central Nova actually believe in fairness. However, what we see in this budget is the actual opposite of that. We see massive tax loopholes for Bay Street, for wealthy corporate CEOs. We are seeing the Liberal government doing the same thing the former Harper Conservatives did, which is, of course, signing tax treaties with notorious overseas tax havens so that the wealthy and privileged in Canada can take their money overseas and pay a zero tax rate.

I know that the member's constituents in Central Nova would oppose that. I think they would also be very concerned that we are putting off pharmacare, we are putting off pay equity, and we are putting off all these issues that Canadians feel very strongly about to feed what is an increasing problem of unfairness in the tax system, tax havens, and tax loopholes.

Would the member not agree that constituents believe in tax fairness in Central Nova?

*Government Orders*

**Mr. Sean Fraser:** Mr. Speaker, I cannot say how ecstatic I am to answer the question. Had the member been here yesterday, he would have heard that this was a focus of the remarks I made in the House. I said that the pursuit of ensuring that Canadians have the ability to participate fully in the economy, whether they come from money or whether they come from nothing, is a priority for our government. Ensuring that the benefits of federal government policy accrue not only to the wealthy but to the most vulnerable people in our communities is essential.

We have been trying to tackle some of the loopholes the member mentioned. I do not blame people who were taking advantage of tax measures as they have existed, but that does not mean there cannot be room for change. Our government is lowering the tax rate for small businesses but ending practices that allow the wealthiest individuals behind private corporations to profit if that does not help to grow the economy.

At the same time, we are helping individual Canadians live more fulfilling lives by indexing the Canada child benefit and by implementing the Canada workers benefit, which is going to help 45,000 low-income Nova Scotians alone.

This is a massive sea change in the way we are adopting economic policy in Canada. I could not be more proud of our government's record on supporting those who need our help, and not just the wealthy few.

**Mr. John Oliver (Oakville, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, one of the biggest benefits of budget 2016 was the Canada child benefit. It has lifted so many children out of poverty and supports families all across Canada. In my community of Oakville alone, \$48 million a year comes in for children and families under the Canada child benefit program. It helps them with sports, groceries, rent, daily living costs, and day care. It is a fundamental plank of what is supporting Canadian families right now, and it has been a great improvement.

Could the member speak about the importance of indexing that and some of the other changes that are happening to the Canada child benefit that will continue to ensure that Canadians benefit from this going into the future?

• (1015)

**Mr. Sean Fraser:** Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague is absolutely correct. The Canada child benefit is a marquee policy of this government. We stopped sending child care cheques to millionaires and put more money in the pockets of nine out of 10 Canadian families. In my riding, the median income is about \$21,000. The difference this policy is making for the people I represent cannot be overstated.

During my remarks yesterday I had the opportunity to share two examples. I have met folks who have told me that they have been able to enrol their kids in swimming lessons for the first time because of the Canada child benefit. I have had a single mother approach me and tell me that for the first time in her life, she was able to buy new outfits for her kids on the first day of school.

There is a very human impact to this policy, and I am so proud to see that we are not only supporting it but indexing it to ensure that as

the cost of living rises, the benefits will continue to accrue to Canadians.

**Mr. Paul Lefebvre (Sudbury, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak today on budget 2018. I am very proud to be in the House to speak about this budget, which provides a lot of investments to Canadians.

However, before I talk about the budget, I will talk about the overall economy. We have heard many times in the House a debate about where the economy is going, but the facts are unprecedented growth in Canada and almost the lowest unemployment rates in Canada in my lifetime. That is because of the investment we have made in Canadians and in Canadian institutions, and budget 2018 continues that investment.

Before I start on the specifics of the budget, I will say that, currently, when we compare ourselves to the G7 countries, we are in very good shape economically. When we compare ourselves to our neighbours to the south, certainly when we look at our deficit-to-GDP ratio, we are in a much better position. When we look at the deficit itself as a percentage of our GDP, we are at 0.5%. The U.S. is at 4%.

I have heard many times since November last year that the U.S. has cut taxes. At the same time, it is running record amounts of deficit. We cannot have it both ways. We have to be responsible with our investments, but at the same time responsible with our economy. That is exactly what budget 2018 does. By investing in Canadians and keeping the debt-to-GDP ratio on a downward slide, we are in one of the best fiscal positions across the world, while lifting families out of poverty and making sure that children get education.

At the same time, we are having a conversation about pharmacare, which is one of the elements of budget 2018. How do we move forward as a society and as Canadians on pharmacare? We also look at private pension security. How do we ensure that people who have invested in their pension have 100% of their pension when they get to retirement?

In my riding of Sudbury, there are unprecedented investments coming along by the private sector. Over \$3 billion will be invested in the mining sector alone in the next few years. Three mining companies will start three new mines in the area. That is thousands of jobs in our area. The challenge we are actually facing in Sudbury is to find workers to fill those jobs. This is a great place to be, but at the same time it is very challenging.

That is why one of the pillars of budget 2018 is parity, ensuring that access to jobs for females is at the same level as for males. Ensuring that we are investing in education for females, certainly in trades, is a signature piece as well in our investments. We are looking at tens of millions of dollars to ensure that females have access to trade jobs and education with respect to the jobs that need to be filled.

Another investment that budget 2018 makes with respect to females is in women in sports, to ensure that the same number of women as men have access to spaces in sports. I have a daughter who plays hockey and aspires to play at the university level. The fact that we can create opportunities for girls at the same level as boys is very important.

*Government Orders*

Thirty-five years ago, in my hometown of Kapuskasing, my sister wanted to play hockey. Because she was a girl, my dad actually went to sign her up. They took her in and said okay. A week later, they came back with his cheque and said, "Sorry, she is a girl. She can't play." She was devastated. Now, 35 years later, here we are, investing for girls to be at parity with boys in sports, and my daughter is aspiring to play university hockey.

In my riding of Sudbury, next year we will have the Esso Cup, which is the national championship for midget girls hockey. Again, when we look at where we were 35 years ago and where we are now, and the investment we are making to ensure parity so that girls have the same opportunities as boys, to me, this is a great way forward. That is how we build an inclusive society.

Two weeks ago, I was at the reserve of Wikwemikong, about a two-hour drive from the riding of Sudbury. Four thousand indigenous people live in that riding. I was with the member for Thunder Bay—Rainy River, to have a discussion with him about the needs and concerns they have. They expressed to us how happy they were that our government was moving forward. However, they had concerns about how they would be able to tap into the investments. One of the investments they were ecstatic about but, again, wanted to make sure we were moving forward with, was on languages.

• (1020)

Wikwemikong is an Ojibwa community where around 20% of the population still speaks fluent Ojibwa. Now, with this budget, we are able to continue investments in indigenous languages. Given the fact that this is such an important community and the language is so strong, it is one of the biggest exporters of indigenous languages, certainly of the Ojibwa language, across the country and across the area, because people who live there train other people to teach the language.

When we talk about reconciliation, about language and culture, those are very important investments that need to be made. This is our government making those investments, after 10 years of cuts and no investments by the previous government.

[*Translation*]

I would like to talk about the major investments we have made in official languages. Here in Canada, we have a choice: either we are bilingual or we are not. Do we have a truly bilingual country or do we have a country that is not bilingual? In the Harper era, the Conservatives slashed funding for official languages. They even padded the last Roadmap for Canada's Official Languages 2013-2018 with other expenditures, further reducing investments in official language communities across the country.

In budget 2018, we are setting a new record. Over the next five years, the government will be investing more than \$400 million to ensure our country is bilingual and to support cultural institutions in French Canada and English Quebec. We want to make sure official languages continue to thrive.

Through the budget, the new roadmap, and the action plan, we are also investing in youth as a way to invest in our communities and ensure that our young people continue to blossom culturally. Language and culture are expressed through the arts. Other very

significant investments in the arts will be made through this roadmap.

[*English*]

I have four uncles who have intellectual disabilities. Two of them have participated in the Special Olympics at the regional, provincial, and national level. This budget continues investments, after stagnant investments, to give them the opportunity to participate.

Again, these are small amounts. These are small investments that go a long way for Canadians. That is why, in this budget, we are reinvesting in Canadians.

We are going to hear, just as we did with the question posed to my colleague, "When are we going to balance the budget? When will we have zero deficit?" Conservatives want to treat Canadians like numbers. We want to treat Canadians like people, and invest in Canadians. When we compare ourselves and our fiscal situation right now, we are in a great position to continue investing in Canadians.

It is not time for austerity. It is time to continue investing: in our veterans, in our indigenous communities, and in training. To remain competitive on a world basis, we need to ensure that we have the best and the brightest in the country and around the world. That is what we are doing. We are continuing to invest.

Another big investment, a record amount of investment, is in scientific research. A few weeks ago, after the budget, the Laurentian University president wrote a column in our paper, an op-ed, saying how proud he was that finally there is investment in Canada and Canadian research, instead of ignoring Canadian research.

That gives opportunities on so many levels for Canadians to thrive in Canada and around the world. These investments also go a long way toward educating our population here. At the end of the day, when we compare ourselves to other countries, we have fairly accessible universities. It is comparatively cheap to go to university here in Canada, although it is still expensive. We have more opportunities for research at the master's level and the Ph.D. level in Canada. We are on the cusp of continuing the Canadian brand, investing and expanding around the world.

On that note, I will end my comments. There is a lot more in this budget that I would like to speak about. Maybe I will have another moment to continue that conversation.

*Government Orders*

• (1025)

**Mr. Robert Sopuck (Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour of serving on the environment committee, and the testimony we are hearing about Bill C-69, the new impact assessment act, is truly horrifying, and I use the word advisedly. My colleague across the way had a rosy comment about Canada's economy. That view is not shared by the resources sector. One in 10 Canadian jobs is provided by the resources sector, which is rapidly declining. Canada is losing investment. We have lost about \$80 billion, and the Royal Bank says that investment is fleeing Canada in real time. Chris Bloomer, the head of the Canadian Energy Pipeline Association, went so far as to say that Canada has a "toxic regulatory environment". We can let those words sink in. We see what is happening with Kinder Morgan. Again, the uncertainty is starting to increase.

With the natural resources industry being about one third of our economy, how is my colleague across the way going to deal with the investment that is fleeing the country right now? It is project after project: Petronas, energy east, and on and on. These projects are dropping by the wayside, along with thousands of jobs. Does the member even care about the workers in the energy industry?

**Mr. Paul Lefebvre:** Mr. Speaker, as I said in my speech, in my area alone, private international businesses are investing over \$3 billion in the mining sector, in the natural resources sector. They made a decision on where to invest around the world, and they decided to invest in Canada because the economic conditions in Canada make it the best place to invest. There are three mines: Vale, with an investment of around \$800 million; Glencore Xstrata, investing \$1.2 billion; and a gold mine just outside my riding, investing another billion dollars. Canada is a great place to invest, and in Sudbury we are seeing those investments take place.

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, in the previous Parliament, when the Liberal Party occupied this corner of the House, it used to be quite critical about the use of omnibus bills. In fact, we have pages of quotes from members, such as the member for Winnipeg North and the Minister of Public Safety. Now, all of a sudden, when the Liberals are in government, they feel that a giant 556-page omnibus bill, changing over 40 different statutes, is okay. I can remember that the Liberal candidate in Cowichan—Malahat—Langford in the 2015 election used to decry the use of omnibus bills to the applause of the crowd. With all the criticism that the Liberal Party used to levy against the Conservatives for this tactic, why does the member feel it is okay, now that the Liberals are in government?

**Mr. Paul Lefebvre:** Mr. Speaker, at the end of the day, this is a budget. In a budget, there are many items that we need to go into to move things forward. Investments in Canada are not just on the tax side; we need to invest on a broad spectrum, and that is what we are doing here. At the same time, one of the tenets, which I briefly mentioned, is with respect to gender equity and equal pay for equal work. Unless the member wants to set other legislation aside, this is a budget item, and this budget invests in Canadians. There are many items, I agree, but that is how we move forward to have these debates and to ensure that we are investing. We have listened to Canadians. That is why there is a lot here. We have invested in Canadians. We have listened to them, and now we are seeing the fruits of this listening and work.

**Mr. Terry Duguid (Parliamentary Secretary for Status of Women, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the hon. member's eloquence in both official languages.

I have next to me the member for Kildonan—St. Paul, and we were very pleased to see record investments in our regional development agencies. For Western Economic Diversification, there is an additional \$185 million, and \$35 million for women entrepreneurs alone. I wonder if the hon. member could comment on his regional development agency in northern Ontario, and how it is assisting in building his local economy with the additional investments.

• (1030)

**Mr. Paul Lefebvre:** Mr. Speaker, certainly FedNor plays a critical role in the economic development of northern Ontario. In the past two years, we have reinvested in FedNor to the tune of around \$10 million a year, after investment was reduced by almost 50% by the previous government. As well, in the last debate, the Conservatives actually voted against more investment in our regional development agencies. That is critical to expansion and helping businesses thrive and continue the great investments they make. These investments go a long way, and FedNor plays a critical role in reinvesting. I have heard from many constituents, and they are extremely happy with these new investments.

**Mr. Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise to speak to the budget implementation act.

A few weeks ago, I spoke to the original budget and I had different names for it. One of them was the "Honey, I sunk the kids" budget, because it sinks our children and grandchildren by adding almost \$100 billion in debt over the next several years. In fact, about five years from now, we are going to be spending more on interest payments than we do on our military.

Another name for it is the "Dude, where is my infrastructure" budget. The government, in offering so much infrastructure, it is almost like watching the *Oprah Winfrey Show*. Instead of Oprah saying, "You get a car, and you get a car, and you get a car", it is Liberal after Liberal saying, "Here is infrastructure for you, here is infrastructure for you, and here is infrastructure for you."

*Government Orders*

Unfortunately, none of it can be found. The PBO cannot even find half of what has been promised in budget 2016. Of about \$15 billion identified in 2016, only \$7.2 billion can be found. A lot of it is missing. A lot of it has lapsed. I understand that. He did note that of the \$7.2 billion that has been spent so far, it has only created a certain number of jobs. In fact, it has cost us \$700,000 per job created by the Liberals' infrastructure spending.

I have another different name for the budget. I am going to call it the "Vantablack" budget. For members who are wondering what Vantablack is, it is a chemical substance made of vertically aligned carbon nanotube arrays and is the darkest substance known to man, absorbing 99.965% of radiation in the visible spectrum. In fact, Liberals talk about openness and transparency. They say that sunlight is the world's best disinfectant. Liberals said that they will shed new light on government and ensure it is focused on the people it is meant to serve, which is Canadians. However, even a supernova could not shed enough light to get past the Vantablack in this budget. We have seen the Liberals fail again and again on transparency.

We have seen the President of the Treasury Board fail with his update to the Access to Information Act. Our office has been submitting maybe ATIPs, access to information requests, since we started here two years ago. Some of them are almost two years old. At the rate of the Treasury Board president's sloth-like pace, we could actually see these ATIPs being eligible for parliamentary pensions before they actually come to light.

There is a gentleman named Allan Cutler who helped the government operations committee write a very good report, which the President of the Treasury Board promptly threw in the garbage. It was about improving whistle-blowing protection for public servants. He submitted an ATIP regarding the UBS banking scandal, one of the largest banking scandals in the world. It involves Canadian firms and banks sending money abroad, basically laundering money and bringing it back. He received a response from the government saying that it would take 800 years to fulfill the ATIP. Members are hearing that right: 800 years.

We also have the Atwal case, where the Prime Minister trotted out the national security adviser with some cockamamie story about rogue Indian government involvement. I had to laugh. I am sure a lot of us saw the interview with the public safety minister, where the press cornered him and he ran so fast to the elevator. He ran at such a speed even the Russians were asking for a doping test.

We also see the lack of transparency with respect to shipbuilding. The PBO said the national shipbuilding strategy was about \$60 billion. We have some experts saying it is \$100 billion now. We are not sure because the government will not release the RFP to the public or even to the Parliamentary Budget Officer. To talk about the costing for this shipbuilding program, the Parliamentary Budget Officer actually had to go down to the United States and use his top clearance to access its costing for the Arleigh Burke ships to bring back and extrapolate the cost for Canada because he cannot get the costing or the access for the DND.

I want to quote from the budget. I want to thank the Liberals for only spending about \$800 on the cover, unlike the \$200,000 they spent for last year's cover. For those following at home, on page 313, it says:

Compared to FES 2017, direct program expenses are lower, reflecting lower projected expenses for consolidated Crown corporations...year-to-date results...and updated departmental outlooks.

That is fine. When we look at page 324 of the budget, we see that the actual spending between 2017-18 and 2022-23 for operating expenses is only increasing 1.8% overall.

●(1035)

Normally I am quite fine with lower spending. However, with over five years of inflation, five years of population growth, as well as billions for the national housing strategy the Liberals have announced, billions and billions for ships, billions for infrastructure, half of which I know cannot be found, and billions for indigenous plans, a lot of these are very valid plans, but there are billions and billions that are not reflected in the outlook for program expenses.

We asked the government's finance officials to explain where the money is as identified on page 313. They have updated departmental outlooks. Where is the money? They refused to respond. The Parliamentary Budget Officer asked for specifics on the spending the government is doing over the years. Where is it going to cut to get 21.8% when there are billions in spending? The government refused to publish the information. A couple of scant details were sent to the PBO and were marked as confidential. Again, it gets back to zero transparency with the government.

Here is the kicker, the real part behind the "Vantablack" budget, as they call it. It is not the 600 pages of legislation. It is not the 200-page morass of the BIA that is the explanation of the carbon tax. It is not even the issues identified on pages 313 and 324 which I just spoke about. It is what is called vote 40. That is the \$7.4-billion slush fund that is in the estimates.

The estimates process is when Parliament actually approves specific spending. The President of the Treasury Board has decided to try to reform the estimates process to make it more transparent. He is obviously going the wrong way. He is making a lot of changes which take away accountability from Parliament for the sake of transparency. This is what the Parliamentary Budget Officer shared about the main estimates:

With respect to delaying the main estimates, the Government indicates that the core impediment in aligning the budget and estimates arises from the Government's own sclerotic internal administrative processes, rather than parliamentary timelines.



*Government Orders*

The President of the Treasury Board said that these materially delay the implementation of the government programs.

The government's own administrative issues are the problems with the line in the estimates. What is the solution? It is less oversight and scrutiny. The government cannot get its act together to get its programs out the door, so it takes away the ability of members of Parliament and the public to hold the government to account.

Normally there are spending authorities put into the main and supplementary estimates. Ministers come to committee with their deputy ministers and their staff to defend their spending decisions and explain exactly what the spending is going to be used for, but this is all taken away now for \$7 billion. When we take away infrastructure from the operating expenses, it is over 10% of the government's spending and the oversight is taken away. Now \$7.4 billion will sit with the Treasury Board to dole out without explanation or oversight until it shows up in the public accounts after the next election. The government is very good at avoiding scrutiny and this is just one other step.

The Prime Minister's own cabinet and the Treasury Board oversight team have not actually vetted the \$7.4 billion in the slush fund. It makes one wonder why he thinks they are actually worthy of parliamentary approval if the cabinet has not even approved them. The alleged programs being funded through this vote have not been approved by cabinet nor have had Treasury Board oversight. If they end up actually being ineligible for funding, the money is frozen. The Liberals are assigning funds to programs that have not been approved yet on the chance that they are feasible when they could be putting that money toward needed things such as infrastructure.

The language around vote 40 is so vague one could actually drive a truck through it. There is no actual legal authority that says the money set out in vote 40 has to be used for the items identified. The government can take that money and spend it any which way it wants. The same people that brought the sponsorship scandal, the same people who thought it was a great use of taxpayer money to spend \$8 million on a hockey rink on Parliament Hill, the same people who spent \$500,000 to wrap a building in Canada 150, the same people who cannot even plan a birthday party for Canada on July 1, want \$7.4 billion for free spending without oversight.

That is a disgrace. This side of the House will not stand for it. Canadians will not stand for this attack on parliamentary principle and oversight, and I will not stand for it either.

• (1040)

**Mr. John Oliver (Oakville, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I found it interesting what my hon. colleague did not talk about in his remarks.

In my community of Oakville, I have several veterans. I have had round tables with them. We have two Legion branches, Legion 114 and Legion 486. They are very proud organizations that support their veterans. When I met with them they talked about the concerns they had about government services. The Conservatives had 10 years to make changes the veterans were asking for, and the Conservatives did nothing. Actually, they did worse than nothing. They cut budgets, closed offices, and ignored the voices of our veterans.

The budget delivers on the promise of a pension for life for veterans. It is a monthly payment for life. It is tax-free, and it

provides income replacement payable at 90%. There is also another \$67 million in the budget for further investments in veterans services.

Could my hon. colleague talk about veterans in his riding and why he does not feel they should be supported through this budget?

**Mr. Kelly McCauley:** Mr. Speaker, it is an offensive comment to say that I do not support veterans in my riding. I am actually a member of the Vancouver Island Aircrew Association, which is made up of RAF veterans, RCAF veterans, and American veterans.

Let me point out something on page 331 of the budget. Going forward, it shows \$67 million for support for Canadian veterans in 2018-19, then minus \$311 million in 2019-20, minus \$323 million in 2020-21, minus \$255 million in 2021-22, and minus \$196 million 2022-23. That is the Liberal record on that.

This shows a lack of transparency. Every time we stand in the House and point out the lack of transparency when we are talking about the slush fund, the government, instead of defending it or explaining it, gets up and tries to distract. Nothing is going to distract from the fact that the government is taking \$7.4 billion of Canadian taxpayers' money, squirrelling it away in a slush fund for the election, and it will not show up until a year after the election.

**Mr. Kevin Waugh (Saskatoon—Grasswood, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, our colleague from Edmonton West made a very passionate speech.

It was interesting that the member for Sudbury was talking about three mines in his region of Sudbury and \$3 billion. However, in the last two years alone, \$80 billion in investment has left our country. That is the Liberals' math. We have \$3 billion coming in and \$80 billion leaving, most of it from Alberta and Saskatchewan, where the Liberals are non-existent. What is going on is shameful.

The member for Edmonton West was the one who found the \$7.4-billion slush fund. I would like him to talk a little more about that slush fund that will go forward to the next election for the Liberal Party.

**Mr. Kelly McCauley:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my colleague's passion for his province of Saskatchewan and for energy workers in Alberta.

*Government Orders*

I would like to talk a bit more about the slush fund, but I want to follow up on his comment about the amount of money that is leaving Alberta, \$80 billion in investment. I get the opportunity to go to schools from time to time and speak to the students, and I talk to the principals. We like to do a mock parliament. I went to one school and asked the principal what we should talk about, maybe marijuana, rock bands, rap. He said, “No, it’s stress. It’s stress on children whose parents are losing their jobs. They’re not sure if their parents are going to stay together or if they’re going to have a roof over their heads.” These are grade 6 students.

I spoke about this in the House a year and a half ago, and this problem still exists a year and half later because of the government. It is letting Albertans down on the Trans Mountain pipeline. It is letting the people from Saskatchewan and other Canadians down on energy development. It is disgraceful. It is hurting Canadians. It is hurting Albertans. It is hurting Edmonton. We are looking forward to 2019 when we can change that.

• (1045)

[Translation]

**Mr. Peter Schiefke (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister (Youth), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise in the House today and add my voice on behalf of the 100,000 people in my community in response to budget 2018.

Presented on February 27, 2018, our government’s third budget takes bold action to support our environment, ensure fairness, and help the middle class. Most importantly, this budget takes a huge step to improve gender equality with new pay equity legislation. This measure will give Canadian women a real and fair chance of success. Every day I am truly humbled by the strength of Canadian women all across the country. They are leaders in business, in their communities, and in the environmental movement. Women are at the heart of Canadian society and push us to do better, to be better, and to expect better. I have the privilege of serving alongside many women who make me proud to be an MP. On top of that, we are even stronger because we have an equal number of women and men in cabinet, at the decision-making table.

However, my pride in the work that we have accomplished together is dampened by the magnitude and importance of the work that remains to be done. Budget 2018 lays the foundation of a promising future for all Canadians. For my constituents in Vaudreuil—Soulanges, this budget opens the door to greater success for middle-class families, greater security for our most vulnerable seniors, and a better future for young Canadians.

I am proud to say that budget 2018 provides for an additional investment of nearly \$300 million in Quebec’s health care system, which means that our government wants to support the provinces and ensure that Quebec will be better prepared and able to meet the needs of its changing population in the years to come. This investment means that, since we took office, we have increased health transfers to Quebec by \$600 million. This builds on the nearly \$100 billion in historic investments we have made in benefits for seniors, children, and workers this year alone.

The government is taking measurable and tangible actions to meet the needs of people in my community and across Canada. People in my riding are fortunate enough to enjoy many gifts from Mother

Nature, such as the summit of Rigaud Mountain, the Île-Perrot rapids, and the wooded trails of Saint-Lazare. The people of my riding of Vaudreuil—Soulanges expect and deserve a government that takes environmental risks seriously. They deserve a government that supports science and technology and that recognizes and appreciates Canada’s natural treasures.

Budget 2018 takes necessary and significant steps to do that and a lot more thanks to a historic investment of \$1.3 billion over five years to protect our beautiful natural surroundings. This investment means that wildlife, land, and ecosystems will be better protected and will be able to recover from damage already caused by climate change.

[English]

It means that our government’s management of protected areas and natural parks will be increased. The plan put forward by the budget also ensures that our conservation areas will be better managed, integrated, and coordinated in a network supported by our provincial, territorial, and indigenous partners.

Finally, it means that my two children and thousands like them across Canada will be able to see our cherished natural parks for free until their 18th birthday.

Canadians across the country and in my community are also concerned for their future and the future they will leave behind for their children. As greenhouse gas levels continue to rise, they worry about our changing climate and the real impact it has and will continue to have on our region.

• (1050)

I was proud that in budget 2018 we set aside nearly \$110 million over the next five years to implement our government’s promise to set a national price on carbon. My children and our children’s children will be thankful for the leadership of the Prime Minister and the Minister of Environment in making the protection of our air, our water, and our future a priority.

We also know that in order to protect future generations, we have to ensure young Canadians have a real and fair chance at success, those opportunities developed first from strong, supportive, and comfortable middle-class families. That is why we will be indexing the Canada child benefit to provide an additional \$5.6 billion in direct support to Canadian families that need it most, starting this July.

Each and every month families in my constituency receive \$6 million in direct investment for over 22,000 of our kids through the Canada child benefit. That investment goes toward lifting thousands out of poverty, putting food on the table, and helping our children enrol in organized sports. Now, more than ever before, our kids will grow up with the supports they need to succeed.

Based on the discussions I have had with members of my community, it is already having a significant impact. I have spoken with parents who say they can now afford proper clothes to send their kids to school. I have spoken with parents who say they are now able to buy the proper school supplies they have wanted to buy for years but could not afford it. I have spoken to directors of our day camps who have told me that six months after the initiation of the changes to the Canada child benefit, for the first time in 25 years, they now have a waiting list of children looking to get into summer camp, most for the first time.

When they eventually grow up, our government will be right there to help them get the work experience and skills they need to get good, meaningful, and well-paying jobs through a nearly \$450 million investment in the youth employment strategy. Budget 2018 also offers support for pre-apprenticeship training in partnership with the provinces, territories, and post-secondary institutions. Now, more than ever before, our young people will be ready to succeed, prosper, and lead the Canada we leave behind.

[Translation]

We are also taking significant measures to protect our heritage and culture. In Vaudreuil-Soulanges and throughout Quebec, we are proud of our history and our heritage, which deserves to be protected.

Budget 2018 supports the action plan for official languages, which will allocate more than \$400 million in new funding to community organizations and francophone and anglophone minority newspapers. It will also improve access to services in English in francophone majority communities.

These initiatives come with a \$50-million investment over five years in support of local journalism. By taking these steps today we are sending a clear message to Canadians and members of my community of Vaudreuil-Soulanges. In our Canada, everyone is welcome. We will support them. We are taking action to provide them with the best services in the language of their choice for years to come.

[English]

The budget is a clear commitment and promise to the people of Canada. It shows that this government is not simply here to make investments and to develop programs. We are here to implement real change for Canadians, change that recognizes we need to do more to promote equality, to protect our environment, and to help our middle class grow and succeed.

This budget proves that our government is listening to Canadians from coast to coast to coast. It is not simply hearing problems but it is actively working to solve them. That is change of which, as always, I am proud to be a part.

• (1055)

**Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member talked about the plan to tackle climate change. Within the budget, over 200 pages talk about carbon taxing, carbon pricing, as the Liberals like to vanilla it as. Many questions have been asked on this side of the House as to how much a carbon tax will cost the average Canadian and how much it will actually reduce emissions.

### *Government Orders*

To this point, not only have we received redacted answers for the paper questions we have asked, but we have received no answers.

We have asked the Minister of Environment directly how much it will cost Canadians. There are reports that it could cost upwards of \$2,200 a year for a family of four, \$264 a year to heat homes, and an 11¢ increase in the cost of a litre of gas.

Therefore, I am asking the hon. member this. How much will a carbon tax cost Canadians and how much will it reduce emissions? It is a pointed question, and I expect a very pointed answer.

**Mr. Peter Schiefke:** Mr. Speaker, that question is very close to my heart.

One of the reasons I presented myself as a candidate in the last election was that I felt the Harper government was not doing enough to ensure we were putting in place measures to meet the challenges posed by climate change. The reality, and I think my hon. colleague knows this very well, is that the methodology we have adopted to meet the challenges posed by climate change are ones that are supported by many Conservatives. We are using market mechanisms.

A price on carbon, which was implemented in British Columbia, worked very well in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, while also seeing a growth in the economy in British Columbia. It debunks one of the myths put forward by many of the members opposite that this will have a negative impact on the economy. In fact, it has had a very positive impact on the economy.

In regard to the question about what it will cost Canadians, the member knows full well that the money to be collected will be given right back to the provinces and territories so they can invest in areas, right back in the communities, in the most effective ways to reduce our GHGs. He knows that, and I hope he will share that with his constituents.

[Translation]

**Ms. Brigitte Sansoucy (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, like my colleague, I represent a riding in the Montérégie area, but on behalf of the people of Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, whom I represent, I could not be more disappointed in this budget.

I am disappointed because this is the third Liberal budget that tells rural communities that they can keep waiting for employment insurance reform, when six out of 10 workers do not have access to EI. I represent people who are currently going through the spring gap. Employers are calling me to say that it makes no sense. Their employees are out of money and have not received an income in weeks, but they cannot be called to work because winter is not over yet.

The temporary foreign worker program needs to be reformed. I represent a community where the agricultural industry has a significant presence and these rural communities are still being told to wait for cellular and broadband Internet infrastructure.

Why is the government still telling rural communities to keep waiting?

**Mr. Peter Schiefke:** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from Montérégie for her question.

*Government Orders*

I represent a riding that encompasses both rural and urban areas. Therefore, we always have to strike a balance. My priority is to share with my constituents information about the investments that will help families living in urban areas and explaining to them what we have done for those living in rural areas.

My hon. colleague probably already knows full well that we have invested \$500 million to put in place high-speed Internet in rural areas. This historic funding will help communities such as Pointe-Fortune, in my riding of Vaudreuil—Soulanges, which has 600 households and still no high-speed Internet access.

I share my hon. colleague's frustration because rural communities have been asking for high-speed Internet for a long time. We are in the process of keeping all these promises to help above all the people living in Canada's rural areas. I would be pleased to discuss with my hon. colleague how we can further work together.

• (1100)

[*English*]

**Hon. Judy A. Sgro (Humber River—Black Creek, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I too am happy to stand today and have an opportunity to talk about why I am pleased to see what our government's 2018 budget is all about.

When we talk about equality and growth and a strong middle class in this budget, so many of us and so many of our communities are represented.

I want to particularly talk about the infrastructure investments that are in this budget, but I need to go back to my days as a City of Toronto municipal councillor.

As part of my job as a city councillor in North York or in Toronto, I was always doing budgets. I would have to figure out at the end of year how we were going to meet the needs of our cities while not significantly raising property taxes.

The first year that I became a councillor, I was inundated with phone calls from seniors and other low-income folks in the riding, who told me they could not afford these tax increases. At that time the increases were 2.5% or 2.8%. There were so many tears and so much sadness in those phone calls that to this day I have never forgotten those conversations, and that was some years back.

I committed at that time to those folks that I would do everything in my power to not raise their property taxes, because many of them were living on a limited or fixed income and there was no way they could afford to pay the increases. There were so many increases in other areas that adding property tax increases made them feel they were being driven out of their homes. I made the commitment to them at that time that I would do everything in my power to protect them and to avoid tax increases.

That meant getting a task force together and examining budgets and looking at ways that we could trim from here or find money from there. For 11 years we were constantly trying to balance budgets while seeing what we could cut from here in order not to increase something there.

We did zero budgeting in the city for probably about six years, but sooner or later everything comes home to roost, because money is still needed to advance. There's only so much that can be cut or

saved or trimmed. There comes a point when additional funds have to be found; otherwise, roads deteriorate and the needs of the transit system cannot be met. Community centres were being neglected and the city was not in as good a shape as I would have liked to have seen it.

That was one of the reasons I decided that I was going to become a candidate at the federal level. I felt the federal government was where the money was, and if we going to be investing and building our cities, then the challenge for me would be to go to Ottawa and argue for the same things that I was arguing for at the city level, meaning investments in transit and investments in the quality of life of our citizens to make people's lives a bit better. Subsequently I did seek office, and with the blessing of my community I have had the good fortune of representing it at the federal level for 19 years or so.

The first thing I did when I arrived here was exactly what I said I was going to do. I started arguing about how I could get more money for the cities. I approached the then prime minister, Jean Chrétien, and told him about what was going on at the city level. He reminded me that cities are creatures of the provinces, not the federal government. We could not use the word "cities" here in the House. I could not talk about the City of Toronto or Hamilton or Niagara and their difficulties because they were not directly a federal responsibility.

In spite of that and my persistence, Mr. Chrétien put together a task force and asked me to chair it. He also asked me to consult with our urban centres. I think it was his way of keeping a new MP busy, but I took on that 18-month challenge that he gave me. I travelled a lot more in the city and across the country. I consulted with the urban centres about the pressures facing them. I worked with FCM, York University, Vancouver, and a lot of academics as well, and we put together a great report that talked about the need for a national urban strategy that would address their needs.

• (1105)

In addition to that, of course, we now have a gas tax, we have infrastructure programs, and we can freely talk about the challenges facing our cities across the country. Hence the reason for my enthusiasm for what we have been doing as a government in the last almost three years in investing in transit, infrastructure, and all of the things that we need the federal government to do because the cities do not have enough money and the provinces are struggling with their own challenges.

Therefore, working in partnership is what it was all about. It was about establishing a partnership between federal, provincial, and municipal governments to ensure that our country would move forward in a positive way. Being able to do that and to see it happening, frankly, was the best satisfaction I have had since I came here. With the billions that we are investing in this budget going out into cities all across the country, we are ensuring that we will have infrastructure that can compete with any other country, and it is desperately needed.

*Government Orders*

We talk about the congestion in cities. In order to relieve that congestion, we need to be investing in transit, both in small communities and in large ones. I am very fortunate in being able to say that after \$685 million was invested some years back, we have just opened the new subway that goes up Highway 7 to the city of Vaughan and has a stop at York University. It takes thousands of cars off the road and, more importantly, it reduces congestion. It also provides a better transitway for many of the students, increases the opportunity for York University to expand, and makes for a better quality of life for all of the students and academics going to the university every day.

Of course, we are now starting on the LRT across Finch Avenue, which will be a tremendous asset for the thousands of people who use the bus line to get to Humber College.

Connecting all of that costs money. There is no way around it, and it would not happen without significant investment from the federal government, which is why I am so pleased to see what we are doing with this budget in 2018, as well as in the budgets of 2017 and 2016.

Let me talk now about some of the folks who live in my riding.

All the seniors at 35 Shoreham, a seniors residence, are people who have struggled. They are low-income seniors and are all receiving the GIS that we topped up a bit more, which we continue to do almost every year. We are trying to keep it up with the cost of living, recognizing the challenges that are facing all of those seniors. Many of them suffer from poor health, are new immigrants to the country and have language issues, and are struggling.

We have also invested in research. Whether it is the genomics centre or NSERC, research is such an important thing to help us identify the answers to some of the terrible diseases that affect us. As a member of the ALS caucus, I think of Mauril Bélanger very often, and I think all of our colleagues remember the sad loss. Putting more dollars into research will help us find answers and solutions to rare diseases like ALS.

Pharmacare is our new initiative, and I hope that in the future we can bundle our efforts together to reduce the cost of drugs throughout the country. This is a new initiative that I look forward to seeing come to completion, and I know all of us in this House would like to see that happen.

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the member's speech, but I take issue with the conclusion of her speech. She referred to the pharmacare plan as a new initiative, when we all know in this House that the Liberals first promised it in 1997 when they had the advantage of a majority government, as they do now. After all the years that have passed, the broken promise back then, and all of the studies that have been done on pharmacare, most recently with the Standing Committee on Health, I hope national pharmacare does get achieved this time. Can the member make the promise that instead of more studies and consultation, we will actually get the job done?

There is evidence everywhere that this program works. It will truly benefit Canadians, so I would like to hear assurance from the member that this time, finally, we will actually get it done.

• (1110)

**Hon. Judy A. Sgro:** Mr. Speaker, I think it is something that we all want. When I say that, I mean all members of Parliament. The government would like to see us to be able to establish this program. It is not an easy program, because it affects so many people. As well, the provinces and territories must be respected and everyone must be brought together. No major initiative like this will come easily.

I wish that we had proceeded much faster, as my colleague would like to do, and I hope that the good work that the health committee has just done on pharmacare in their report is one more tool moving us forward. We have the commitment from the Prime Minister in his appointment of Dr. Eric Hoskins to head that up. It gives me hope that we will see it sooner than later.

**Mr. Kevin Waugh (Saskatoon—Grasswood, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for Humber River—Black Creek on her speech this morning and for her years in municipal government, because that is the grassroots level where one must deal with phone calls every day.

She made a reference to “come home to roost”. I have kids and I am a grandparent now, and it is going to come home to roost. The massive debt that the government has given our kids in the last two and a half years will come home to roost.

We have asked the government many times in the House when it will balance the budget. We are into decades. We are told now that it will be in the 2040s or maybe in the 2050s.

It is coming home to roost, so when will the government balance the budget?

**Hon. Judy A. Sgro:** Mr. Speaker, I have to go back a little bit. When I was in municipal politics, I was not a member of any political party. I had been asked by several parties, but I decided that I was a Liberal, because I am fiscally conservative and socially responsible. That is what I call a Liberal.

At the same time that we were doing these things municipally, the Liberals had a great track record, with seven years of surpluses. When Jean Chrétien came into office as prime minister in 1993, the country was near bankruptcy. Those are not my words, but the comments made by all of the specialists out there. We turned that around, and we ended up having seven years with surpluses. I have never seen that happen with any other government, without naming one in particular.

**Mr. Scott Duvall (Hamilton Mountain, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member mentioned seniors. In the budget, in relation to the Canada pension plan, there is new “drop in” language that replaces the “drop out” language for people with years of low earnings due to child responsibilities and people with disabilities.

*Government Orders*

Why has the government not provided actuarial modelling for the new drop-in measures? Can the member assure us that women and people with disabilities are not going to be disadvantaged with this new drop-in period?

**Hon. Judy A. Sgro:** Mr. Speaker, again this is one of the initiatives that we are putting forward in this budget with the intention of helping people and making it easier for them to access small pockets, because there are not huge amounts of money in those drop-in or dropout programs.

Another part of that is investing money to make sure that people file their income tax at the end of every year. A quite remarkable number of people do not file their income taxes because they feel they do not have any income; they then miss out on a variety of different benefits that would have been available to them. Our government is investing in making sure that people know they need to file their taxes to be able to get the benefits that are there.

• (1115)

**Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, we are talking about budget priorities and spending by the federal Liberal government.

Being elected in British Columbia and representing Nanaimo—Ladysmith, a coastal region, the Prime Minister's tease last weekend, that he was considering putting taxpayer dollars into the Kinder Morgan pipeline, was certainly a shock to voters who thought he was campaigning on a climate change initiative, not to mention his other broken promises on reviewing the Kinder Morgan pipeline process. There certainly was no mandate for that from voters. I am sure it was quite a shock to the people who believed his promises around climate change, indigenous assent, and new environmental reviews before threatening our coastline with any bitumen oil tankers.

That said, I am going to talk about the gender provisions missing from the budget implementation bill and missing from the government's budget. Women are named hundreds of times, but very little is delivered that will actually affect the lives of women on the ground right now and next year. There is no money for pay equity. There is no money for universal affordable child care.

How can the government think it is for women's equality, when it has not funded universal affordable child care and when it has not reformed unemployment insurance so all women are able to get access to parental leave? These are all serious goals. The government had lots of advice from lots of activists in the women's movement, including international organizations like Oxfam, the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, CUPE, and Canadian Labour Congress. The government has been getting the best advice out there, and I am discouraged that it has not taken it up.

On Tuesday, with two of my NDP colleagues, I issued a report card on Canada's equality day, the anniversary, 33 years after the equality provisions were introduced into the charter by the Conservative government, forced by the courts. We are still waiting. In our Tuesday analysis, we found the gender provisions of the budget and the budget implementation bill very disappointing.

Speaking to Bill C-74, one of the first pieces is the child care crisis. There is still no universal affordable child care system. The current system barely serves one in four children. My sister had to

move out of Toronto because she could not find affordable child care. She was paying more for child care than she and her husband were paying for rent. This is the same story for families across Canada.

The International Monetary Fund recommended that the Liberal government invest \$8 billion a year into a universal affordable child care program and said that it would pay for itself. It would allow working women to return to work, to earn more money, to spend more in the economy, to be taxed on their income. Countries that have taken on a bold, new, progressive program like universal affordable child care find these programs pay for themselves. That is certainly the Quebec example.

In March, the Conference Board of Canada gave similar advice, as has the Governor of the Bank of Canada. They all recommend it. There is no more credible economic advice the government could get, yet no new dollars.

My colleague, the member for Parliament for Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, has been doing good work on this in her critic role for children and families. We are going to continue to push for this most fundamental investment. This would be the first thing the government could do to help get women further ahead.

Pay equity is another big hole. These are the words of the finance minister when he made his budget speech. He said:

In this budget, the government is taking a historic and meaningful step by moving forward with proactive pay equity legislation in federally regulated sectors....What we can do is lead by example...

However, there is zero money for pay equity in the budget, not even the very simple ask of the Canadian Labour Congress and other labour partners made, which was to establish, right now, a pay equity commissioner, an office of gender equality to be able to put the infrastructure in place, the program and administrative infrastructure, so the government could make a program like pay equity run. Still there is no legislation for pay equity, although the Pierre Trudeau government promised it 42 years ago.

• (1120)

The current Liberal government promised it, under pressure from me and my colleague, the member of Parliament for Jonquière, on our very first opposition day motion in the House. We were so glad to have agreement from the government that it would implement pay equity. However, here we are. The Liberals are ragging the puck until the very end of the term. Surely if they had wanted to campaigned in the 2019 election on true feminism and truly investing in women, they would have done this most fundamental thing. There are zero dollars in the budget, and still no legislation.

*Government Orders*

Under questions in question period, the status of women minister said that the bill would not be tabled until autumn. That is not consistent with the advice it got from the consensus all-party pay equity task force. It is not consistent with advice from any NGO partners. It is a great disappointment.

We did see some movement in the budget, which I am glad to see, about federal leadership on coordination of policies for preventing on-campus rape and sexual assault. That was good news.

However, a piece that was missing, and mentioned in my gender report card, was an analysis of the New Democrats' repeated ask that the Liberals fund front-line women's organizations that were doing the bulk of the work around immediate servicing for women. They are answering the 24-hour hotline. They are giving shelter to women who are victims of domestic violence. They are helping homeless women who are in terrible economic trouble.

Again and again, we have heard these front-line groups say that they do not want program funding that has groups writing grant applications and competing with their NGO partners, hoping they might get the funding. They do not want to have to do something innovative, then having their funding expire at the end of the year and having to lay off people. Instead they want operational funding so they can keep the lights on and keep the staff they have hired. The budget might have gone some way in that direction, but we could not tease out the wording.

Since February, I have been asking the minister, in private correspondence and by getting her to make a commitment at committee, to please clarify what this funding will do. Is it operational funding for these front-line women's organizations that keep women safe and fed? There is still no clarification.

In the House on Tuesday, in response to my colleague, the member of Parliament for Victoria, when he said that in Victoria the sexual assault crisis hotline had to close because it could not get operational funding, the minister said that our report card was unkind, which was crazy language. Her budget was unclear. We have been giving her the opportunity to clarify. I really hope she has heard women's organizations. If she is going to give them operational funding, if that is being provided for in the budget, then I thank her, but we cannot tease it out. If it is still speculative, competitive only program funding, then that is a big disappointment.

Public transit is another piece that is an emerging part for rural women in particular. If there is no public transit, it makes them unsafe in British Columbia, and the Highway of Tears is a prime example of that. It also keeps women from saying yes to jobs. It is a true limiting factor. We urge the government to make deep investments in rural public transit infrastructure. It keeps women safe and keeps them better ahead economically.

We still found no measures to include equity hiring provisions in infrastructure projects. There have been great examples. In the 1990s, the NDP government in British Columbia put that as a condition on infrastructure investments. Employers have to hire 20% women and equity employees and indigenous employees. That worked very well on the island highway on Vancouver Island, where I was elected. It is such an opportunity. With the government making

unprecedented spending in infrastructure, the Liberals should be tying in those conditions. That was absent from the budget.

We are glad to see gender-based analysis legislation being committed to, but it really needs to be now. Our all-party status of women committee asked for it two years ago. It still has not happened. That would make, in a transparent way, all budget decisions come through a gender lens.

We are glad to see the status of women ministry become a full department. The NDP has been advocating for this in many election platforms. My colleague, the member of Parliament for Elmwood—Transcona, advocated for this at committee. Two and a half years later, the government has taken our advice, which we are pleased to see.

In summary, this is a lot of talk, not enough action, and not enough delivery for women on the ground. I urge the government to accelerate and make real investments in women now. The economy will be better off. We will all be better off. It will be more fair.

• (1125)

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

Mr. Speaker, I take exception to a number of issues in the member's statement. I was a provincial MLA for many years and for most of those years, we had an NDP administration in the province of Manitoba. If I can contrast that to what this government has done on gender equality and the movement toward that, it far exceeds many years of what the NDP did in government in Manitoba on pay equity.

Right from the get-go, the Prime Minister appointed a cabinet with an equal number of females and males. A gender analysis is being applied to all aspects of the budget. In addition, there are many different government initiatives, through the Minister of Finance, to encourage and provide support for women. I question the real sense of the NDP wanting to see progress. The members talk a lot about progress, but I doubt that would happen if they were ever afforded the opportunity to be in government.

The member started by saying the Liberals talked about being environmentalists, but acted in the national interest with respect of the pipeline. We have to balance economy and the environment. We have to balance one NDP premier in one province saying "yes" with an NDP premier in another province saying "no". There is a balance. We have to work with others to get things done.

Would the member acknowledge that at times we need to work with stakeholders to get things done?

*Government Orders*

**Ms. Sheila Malcolmson:** Mr. Speaker, that is the most convoluted question I have ever been asked. Absolutely, if the government were taking the advice of stakeholders, all the items I recommended, pay equity, universal child care, and the list goes on, would have been in its first budget implemented two years ago.

It is good that the Prime Minister appointed a gender balanced cabinet, but that does not change women's lives right now. It has not reformed employment insurance. It has not helped working women on the ground to have a better life.

I will give the Manitoba New Democratic government credit for being the first province in Canada to implement paid domestic violence leave. I believe it is five days paid leave. If women are victims of domestic violence, it is kind of the same as sick leave. They have time to get the family resettled, find a new home, and they will have a job to return to and be paid while they have to be absent.

Sadly, the Liberals only introduced three days unpaid leave in its labour bill last year. However, under great pressure from the women's movement and following the example of the Manitoba NDP, in this budget implementation bill, it now will be five days paid leave for domestic violence. I am very glad to see that and I applaud the government for making that move.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, following on the previous question, I have been listening to the debate on this subject for a number of days now and we are continually hearing from the NDP that we are not doing enough. Whether it is on pharmacare or gender equality, we are not doing enough. However, in the last election, the NDP committed to balancing the budget.

My question is very simple. How would the NDP accomplish balancing the budget, yet provide all the things that we are clearly not going far enough on and providing everything for which everyone is asking? Will this be the strategy we can expect to see in the next election from the new leader, Jagmeet Singh? Will he propose the same thing, that we have a balanced budget, yet arbitrarily and carte blanche give everyone everything they want?

This is unfortunately one of the realities of having not had the opportunity to government, perhaps not having a clear sight as to how to accomplish it successfully. How would NDP have done all of this and balanced the budget?

• (1130)

**Ms. Sheila Malcolmson:** Mr. Speaker, this is what the New Democrats campaigned on in the last election and what our leader, Jagmeet Singh, is also campaigning on. It has to do with the Liberal government being too deeply friendly with the 1% and its very wealthy corporate supporters. It has repeatedly failed to close tax havens and the CEO stock option loophole. Calculations show, again and again, that this could be a \$11-billion benefit to taxpayers every year. Imagine if the Liberal government had had the courage to transfer the wealth from those who have so much into social programs that would support everyone and lift everyone up. With the programs I mentioned, which everyone in the progressive movement wishes the government had invested in, if it truly were a feminist government, such as pay equity and universal child care, the economy and women would prosper.

**Ms. Julie Dzerowicz (Davenport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is an absolute pleasure for me to stand in this House on behalf of the residents of Davenport, a riding I am very proud to represent, to speak to Bill C-74.

Budget 2018 continues what we have tried to do since we were elected in late 2015 and in our first budget of 2016-17, which is continue to support Canadians, their families, our youth, and our seniors and continue to set up both Canada and Canadians for success moving forward. If I had to summarize, that is really what we are trying to do with this budget. It is a continuation of what we have already been trying to do.

I will focus my comments over the next few minutes on areas where I think budget 2018 is of particular benefit to Davenport. I will start with something that is top of mind for me right now, which is the skills and jobs of today and tomorrow.

I recently attended the Public Policy Forum, where Mark Carney was one of the honourees. He talked about a few things. He said, "Any large period of technological change mercilessly destroys jobs and livelihoods and therefore identities." He also referenced a number of surveys. He said, "More than 90 per cent of people don't think their jobs will be affected by automation, while CEOs expect the exact opposite." He also said that everyone will be going back to school and that there is a need to not only go back for lifelong learning but to look at our social welfare system with respect to how we are going to support our population moving forward.

I say all of this because in 2015, in one of the debates during the election, at J.J. Piccininni Community Centre, a 17-year-old asked me how the government was going to protect him and ensure that he has a job, because robots are taking over the jobs he wants to do. My response was that the world is changing faster than ever before, but we have a chance to actually chart our future. I want people to know that our government is seized with this issue. Last year we put a significant amount of money in budget 2017 for skills and training and put far more flexibility into our social welfare system to allow people to train and do all we can to encourage lifelong learning. Whether they want to do part-time studies, are on EI and want to do some retraining, or are in mid-career and want to completely change careers, we have put in a whole bunch of programs.



*Government Orders*

This year, in budget 2018, we have continued on this track. We have made a historic investment of nearly \$4 billion over five years to support the next generation of Canadian researchers. What we are trying to do is invest in some of the areas where there will be future jobs. How will we invest in areas that will create those future jobs and encourage some of those innovations? There is \$1.2 billion over five years for Canada's granting councils and research chairs in addition to additional dollars for laboratories, equipment, and infrastructure that researchers rely on every day. We have also put in quite a bit of money to support our colleges. I am delighted to see that they are very much at the forefront of creating some of those programs that allow Canadian workers to transition.

We have put in quite a bit of money, \$2.6 billion, for entrepreneurship. We want to make it easier for Canadians to do business and for entrepreneurs to more easily access the resources they need to innovate, scale up, create jobs, and reach customers around the world.

I will mention a couple of other things. We are spending some additional dollars, almost \$2 billion, to support women-owned businesses, which I think is wonderful, and a whole bunch of programs that are going to help companies innovate and expand right across this country and around the world. We are very proud of that.

I want to move on to the next section, which was at the top of the list in my pre-budget consultations for 2018 in Davenport. People who came out let me know that Canada cannot achieve its potential if 50% of the population is held back. As members know, we have put quite a bit of money into making sure that women have an equal opportunity to succeed in whatever areas they want moving forward. The government is putting gender at the heart of its decision-making and working to help support women and girls, reduce the gender wage gap, and increase the participation of women in the workforce, which will help with economic growth for all Canadians. I am sure members have heard this many times before, but we are very proud of it. It is high time we put some significant money into these areas.

• (1135)

We are finally introducing our gender wage gap legislation, which will be introduced this fall. I was part of that committee. We named the report "Action Now", because we knew it was a long time coming. Finally, at the federal level, we will ensure that we have pay equity nationally.

We are also putting quite a bit of money into helping women enter the trades and succeed in the trades. There is \$20 million over five years for an apprenticeship incentive grant for women. We will see how successful it is and whether we need to put in more money moving forward.

There are a whole bunch of other initiatives around women in the workforce. I mentioned the entrepreneurship program, which would encourage and support more women when starting up and trying to build their businesses.

I should mention the employment insurance parental sharing benefit. I have had a number of parents say that this is a point of pride for them. It allows up to eight additional weeks if both partners raising children decide to take parental leave. It actually allows women, who have traditionally taken more of the parental leave, to

go back into the workforce much more quickly. I am very proud of that.

The government proposes to provide \$23 million over two years, starting this year, to increase funding for multiculturalism programming administered by Heritage Canada. The budget says that the funding would support cross-country consultations on a new national anti-racism approach. It would bring together experts, community organizations, citizens, and interfaith leaders to find new ways to collaborate to combat discrimination and would dedicate increased funds to address racism and discrimination targeted toward a number of minority groups that we have identified.

I was at the local mosque a couple of weeks ago. One of the congregants came up to me and said that he was having a hard time finding a job, and he was fairly convinced that it was because of his name and not his qualifications. I told him that we have money allocated in budget 2018 for anti-racism and systemic discrimination. I committed to him that I would hold something in our riding with employers and minority groups that feel that there is some sort of systemic discrimination or bias within the system. That is something we can study together to come up with solutions. I am very proud that we have that in our budget.

I also see this as a way of promoting multiculturalism. Fifty-two per cent of Davenport riding residents were born outside of Canada. I have a huge Portuguese, Italian, Hispanic, and Brazilian population. I am very proud of that, and I think they will be very happy to know that this funding exists.

Davenport is very proud of its environmentalism and of our federal government's commitment to achieving the Paris accord targets and to fighting climate change. In this budget we have committed \$1.3 billion over five years to protect Canada's ecosystems, landscapes, and biodiversity, including species at risk. We love our nature. We are so blessed to have such a beautiful country, with lots of parks, lakes, and natural beauty. I am very proud to be part of a government that wants to protect it for today and for generations to come. We have also put some money in to make sure that we support the federal carbon pollution pricing system.

Small businesses have told me that they are elated that we are decreasing small business taxes from 11% to 9%. Seniors, in particular, have told me that they are very happy that we are serious about national pharmacare. We have created an advisory committee to look at how to implement it. We are not trying to decide whether we want to move ahead with it; we are trying to decide the best way to implement it across Canada.

I also want to mention that I am very happy with the dollars for border security and the no-fly list, the support for local journalism, the cybersecurity support, and the support for indigenous peoples.

*Government Orders*

● (1140)

**Mr. Colin Carrie (Oshawa, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I have been listening to a lot of Liberal speeches and I am trying to get my head around this, because Liberals are only talking about the extra money they are spending. They are not talking about anything that helps the Canadians who actually pay the bills.

It is very clear that the Prime Minister has this war against our traditional Canadian strengths. He made it clear this week when he reiterated in Europe that he wants to commit to phasing out our fossil fuels. He said during the election that he wants to transition away from manufacturing. He has killed capital-intense industries like mining because of his regulatory and tax policies. He is regulating our fisheries. He is refusing to negotiate to end the softwood lumber dispute. All of these things were traditionally Canada's strengths, and the Prime Minister and his policies are actually decreasing the amount of competitiveness in these industries and their ability to make money to pay for these things.

Which industries and which Canadian companies are going to be left to pay for all of these incredibly costly expenses that the Liberals are talking about?

**Ms. Julie Dzerowicz:** Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned at the beginning of my 10-minute speech, what we are very much trying to do is prepare the way for Canada and Canadians to prosper and succeed moving forward. We are strengthening Canadians and have actually reduce income taxes, which was one of our first acts in government.

We are trying to do everything we can to actually remain competitive. I mentioned the fact that for small businesses, we have reduced their tax rate from 11% to 9%, which really helps. We have also invested very heavily in a number of industries, which we call superclusters. It is a way for us to say that we think these industries are leaders not only here in Canada but can absolutely be leaders in the world. We are putting additional dollars at the federal level to leverage the dollars that are already there in order for us to be global leaders and competitors for years to come.

**Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, during the election, Liberals actually talked about working with the provinces on creating a pan-Canadian climate change framework. They said they would not use a stick to work with the provinces, that they would give them carrots. Now we find out in the budget bill that 200 pages of it has to do with a nationally imposed carbon tax. We have not been able to get information from the minister's office as to the policy rationale, including figures that would show what an average family would pay under this.

This place is dedicated toward making sure there is not taxation without representation. Does the member agree that this lack of transparency inhibits the ability of members of Parliament, including herself, from being able to accurately decide whether or not this tax is fair to the people of Canada? That information is funded by Canadian tax dollars, and I believe it should be presented to decision-makers in this place. Does the member agree with this lack of transparency?

● (1145)

**Ms. Julie Dzerowicz:** Mr. Speaker, the federal government is absolutely serious and committed to achieving our Paris Agreement targets. We made that very clear. We are going to be leaders and collaborators in fighting climate change, and it will take all of the provinces, territories, and municipalities to work with us to do that. We came together over a year ago. We signed a pan-Canadian framework. We all agreed that we wanted to achieve the Paris Agreement targets and that we all have a role to play.

Canadians expect this leadership at the national level. It is what we are trying to do. We have put some money around carbon pricing, and we are working individually with each of the provinces to achieve those targets, to be on a track, and do our part to fight climate change.

**Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague, the member of Parliament for Davenport, was on the Special Committee on Pay Equity that was initiated as a result of a New Democratic Party motion in 2016. The government, very sadly, has delayed implementation again, 42 years later, of pay equity legislation. It is not in this budget. It will come, we now hear, in the fall.

I am wondering if the member as part of the Special Committee on Pay Equity heard any witnesses who actually recommended such a long delay, because that is not what I have heard.

**Ms. Julie Dzerowicz:** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my NDP colleagues for their leadership in pushing forward pay equity legislation at the national level.

I would have wanted all of this done yesterday, but what we did hear on the committee, if I recall correctly, is this last bit of pay equity equalization that we need to do is complicated. There are categories and a lot of complexity around different pay structures within the government. We knew it would take a little time, but we want to make sure we are doing it right.

The story is not that it is taking so long to get there, but that we are finally going to get this done.

**Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am going to begin my comments on this budget implementation bill with a bit of trivia.

Who was it who said, and I am going to quote directly, “omnibus legislation as a way of avoiding debate, as a way of putting everything into a piece of legislation, whether or not it had links to it”? We all know it was the Prime Minister, who of course is also quoted as saying he would not use omnibus bills, period, full stop. Yet, here we are. This is another example of the “do as we say, not as we do” approach to governing that the Prime Minister likes to use.

I am reminded of the Prime Minister doing away with what is often referred to as boutique tax credits. I only mention that now as it is tax time. I have heard from families with active children and public transportation users who are upset at the loss of those tax measures.

*Government Orders*

We also know that while the Prime Minister was quick to eliminate those tax credits, he was quick to bring in one of his own. The tax credit I am talking about was the teachers tax credit. I am sure the measure itself was absolutely welcome to many teachers. However, many in this place might quietly question why the Prime Minister seems to be intent on supporting measures that are done by his government, whether or not they are welcome in the community or in the country. It is about whether or not it was put forward by a Liberal government or a Conservative one.

Shortly after the budget was released, I asked my constituents if this budget would do anything to help them or their families. I have a large and diverse riding. One comment in particular was quite telling, and that was that this budget is “pure fluff, borrowed money thrown everywhere to shore up their chances in the election next year. Zero in it for the average person, no plan, no vision...”

To be candid, I have yet to have a single person tell me how this budget is going to help them. I am not a pessimist. I believe that all federal governments set out to build a stronger and more prosperous Canada. That also includes helping citizens. However, I am also reminded of the comment from our Parliamentary Budget Officer who stated:

Budget 2018 provides an incomplete account of the changes to the Government's \$186.7 billion infrastructure spending plan. PBO requested the new plan but it does not exist. Roughly one-quarter of the funding allocated for infrastructure from 2016-17 to 2018-19 will lapse. Both legacy and new infrastructure programs are prone to large lapses.

This just shows that the government will say one thing during the election, that infrastructure is good, but when it comes time to actually put it in place, the government plays shell games with the numbers. This is not in the interests of Canadians. Quite frankly, when my constituents read that, when they found that their hopes for their area would not be funded because the government has not actually allocated the money, they raised legitimate concerns. As members of Parliament, we all have a duty to raise those concerns in this place.

Going through the budget bill itself, there are quite a lot of measures. I mentioned earlier that the budget has a nationally imposed carbon tax. Some 200 pages of the 534-page document are dedicated to a nationally imposed carbon tax. British Columbia already has a carbon tax. British Columbians have been paying a carbon tax for quite some time. The previous premier, Christy Clark, had actually called it, as the member for Davenport had mentioned earlier, a pan-Canadian framework on the environment to take measures.

First of all, not all provinces signed on. Some provinces signed on reluctantly, asking for an equivalency. As we know, Quebec and Ontario utilize a separate system for allocating carbon, and that is a cap-and-trade system. A cap-and-trade system allows large exemptions. We need look no further than to the European Union and the issues it had in first instituting that measure.

• (1150)

Further to that, the carbon tax in B.C. was revenue neutral. The only thing that has really changed since the government came into office in British Columbia is the carbon tax is higher and it is no longer revenue neutral. In fact, the B.C. government, which is a

minority supported by three Green members to allow surety of supply, has raised the carbon tax as of April 1. People in British Columbia are paying more at the pumps, but that money is not being returned to them.

When we view a carbon tax system, which puts a price broadly on everything, the exception being jet fuel and I will get to that in a moment, compared to a cap-and-trade system that can allow for large exemptions, particularly for those who are well connected and can lobby for those exemptions, the question is whether we have a uniform approach. The answer is no. At the finance committee, I asked the premiers of Nunavut, Northwest Territories, and Yukon, and there was a different approach in every territory. In fact, the Nunavut premier actually stated that 80% of the money that is spent on diesel fuel and energy for homes is subsidized already. His case was quite clear. A carbon tax that only increases the costs in those areas does nothing for them and the fact that if it is revenue neutral and is sent back, that is money the government has already circulated. Therefore, there is a lot to be said about the approach here.

When I asked the member for Davenport whether she agreed with her government's approach to not share information, she seemed to want to talk about taking action and leadership. In this place, I believe there is a role for a belief that we can make Canada better. However, we also need to temper that with the fact that governments will have excesses. A member from Winnipeg, in the last Parliament, used to make regular speeches about the excesses of the previous government, ones that he found to be negative. I would hope that privately he might have had a few that he had focused on that he thought maybe were good for Canada. I will say that parliamentarians should be able to get the information about this nationally imposed carbon tax, what it will cost the average family and how it will circulate and percolate in our economy, because not all taxes are created equal. Some will have very specific impacts on certain parts.

Going back to British Columbia, the cement industry there used to have just around 90% of the local market. Some people near the border of Alberta or near the border of Washington state may have used cement that is mixed from those places. As we know, cement mixing is very carbon intensive. What has ended up happening in British Columbia is that by applying this carbon tax, there has been a tremendous drop in the industry. I believe it is at 60%, and that is with a subsidy from the government.

*Government Orders*

When we ask questions about the numbers that the government is not presenting to Canadians, there is a challenge because we cannot make an informed decision. I would beg Liberal members of Parliament to talk to the finance minister and to the Prime Minister, because they made commitments on transparency, on working with governments. For example, they have singled out the Province of Saskatchewan, which is not convinced that a nationally imposed carbon tax is the way to go. Again, provinces have most of the levers of energy policy and if the provinces are not working with the federal government in a proactive way, it could lead to a lot of negative consequences.

In summary, we will be studying this bill at the finance committee. I have a lot of concerns around transparency. There are measures in here, I am sure, that some Canadians will welcome. However, if we cannot distinguish between what is good for Canada and what is not, I would argue that is not in Canada's interest. I would ask this House to not support the budget without seeing some of that transparency.

● (1155)

**Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, a few of the items that popped into mind as the member was presenting were the investments being made in Statistics Canada in order to get third party information on programs that are being implemented. I wonder whether the member would support the investments in Statistics Canada, a group that was really hacked and slashed by the previous government.

Also, there is the role we play in collaborating with provinces and territories versus the previous government's way of ruling from the top down. I wonder whether he has some thoughts about that.

**Mr. Dan Albas:** Mr. Speaker, in short, I have listened to a variety of podcasts. CANADALAND has a podcast called OPPO. There was a discussion about Statistics Canada with two journalists, both of whom were considered to be on different ranges of the political spectrum. The one thing they cited was that if we looked at Statistic Canada's website today, we would find it confusing and information could not be found. Certain information was collected to 1992, but there was no further information, so the information did not match up.

People who are paid to look into these things are having difficulties accessing it. We have the Library of Parliament. We have committees where analysts can condense this information in a way that is usable for us in our work. If journalists feel they cannot get accurate statistics on the current website run by the government, which, by the way, has some serious feedback about recent revisions under the government, those journalists feel at a loss. That is Canadians' information. It was paid for, collected, and it should be in a form that all people, including journalists, should be able to utilize.

**Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague sits on finance committee. That committee will be looking at the budget bill. What has become increasingly concerning for the opposition, which should also be concerning for all Canadians, is the fact that a \$7.4 billion slush fund in the main estimates has been given to Treasury Board, which for all intents and purposes could be used for election purposes as we get closer to 2019.

Could the hon. member comment on that Liberal election slush fund?

● (1200)

**Mr. Dan Albas:** Mr. Speaker, as a former parliamentary secretary to the President of the Treasury Board, the member has raised a good issue.

Historically, the Treasury Board was created for the war effort to allow for a more timely response to Canada's contribution to World War II. The member has raised, quite rightly, that there should be some concerns, because this is a remarkable change.

Some government members have said that in 2009, at the pit of the greatest financial crisis since the Great Depression, a smaller fund was allocated in order to get stimulus money out. That was because it was the will of Parliament and there was quarterly reporting. That was during the minority years and it enjoyed support from enough members in this place to allow it to go forward. However, it was temporary, it was targeted, and it was measured.

In this case, the Treasury Board is a group of Liberal ministers. They will have the authority to exchange funds from one fund to another without the oversight of Parliament. When Parliament's ability to vote for a specific item with a specific vote is removed, we undermine no taxation without representation. That is really what Parliament is meant to serve. By proposing this, the government is fundamentally undermining that process.

I again ask that the Liberal members speak to the President of the Treasury Board and the finance minister to disallow this ability by parliamentarians.

**Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to stand in support of the proposed budget, Bill C-74, the budget implementation act, 2018, No. 1, which really has the four areas that we have been looking at as a government, taking input from across Canada and working with all parliamentarians. Those include growth, progress, advancement, and reconciliation. It is a wide-ranging budget that covers all aspects of Canadian society and business, as well as our environmental needs.

This is the first legislation our government is tabling to implement budget 2018. Budget 2018 continues to prioritize the needs of all Canadians.

Over the last two years, Canada's economic growth has been fuelled by a stronger middle class. Canadians' hard work, combined with historic investments in people and communities, has helped to create good jobs, almost 600,000 of those jobs created since November 2015. This budget means more help for those who need it, those who then go on to reinvest in their families and businesses in the communities in which they live.

*Government Orders*

Canada has renewed its relationship with neglected researchers, scientists, and universities and colleges, with the largest commitment to fundamental research in Canadian history. We have also reignited the reconciliation process after the scrapping of the Kelowna accord in 2006, and have removed 57 boil water advisories. This is an example of what we are doing, working with our indigenous partners.

Over the last two years, the environment has been at the heart of our policy and is inseparable from our economic success. By protecting our coasts, we protect our fisheries. By protecting whales, we protect one of our great natural inhabitants that share the country with us. Our tax credits for clean energy are helping to generate clean tech jobs, the jobs of the future.

Women represent half of Canada's population, and their full and equal participation in Canada's economy is essential for our future. Removing the systemic barriers to women's full economic participation will support economic growth, strengthen the middle class, and build a fairer society that gives everyone a real and fair chance at success. The McKinsey Global Institute estimates that by taking steps to advance greater equality for women, such as reducing the gender wage gap by employing more women in technology and boosting women's participation in the workforce, Canada could add \$150 billion to its economy by 2026.

Equality in pay cannot be achieved without transparency. In the spirit of transparency, our government will provide Canadians with more information on pay practices of employers in federally regulated sectors. The government will commit \$3 million over the next five years, starting in 2018-19, to implement this pay transparency policy.

As a member of the Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Technology committee, I was proud to play a role in reviewing Bill C-25, which is an act to emphasize diversity on corporate boards, getting women around boardroom tables to make decisions on behalf of business in Canada.

Canada's economic success rests not only on the hard work of Canadians, but also on strong trade relationships we have in an increasingly globalized world. Canada is, and always has been, a trading nation. Canadians recognize that done properly, trade can be a positive force for change. The ratification of CETA, which began under the previous government, and also the resurrection of the TPP, which is now the CPTPP, reflect the determination of our government as we open markets for Canadian goods.

Our government is also focused on rural Canada. Agriculture is at the heart of our rural economies. To support Canadian farmers, we have introduced the Canadian agricultural partnership. I was pleased to sit on the agriculture committee as we reviewed and made recommendation toward this new policy. This program will provide hundreds of millions of dollars to protect farmers and bring new innovative technologies to Canadian farms, while at the same time increasing innovation and public trust.

To make use of new agricultural technologies, farmers need reliable Internet access. The government is investing \$500 million to extend high-speed Internet services to rural and remote communities across the country.

● (1205)

Budget 2018 also proposes additional funding of \$100 billion over five years for the strategic innovation fund to support low earth orbit satellites and to develop the next generation of rural broadband. These satellites will be going on a north-south route versus an east-west route, which will help our northern communities and our fly-in communities in northern Canada.

Federal government scientists enrich Canada's research environment, contributing to research focused on the public interest as well as the kind of discovery science that breeds innovation. To accomplish this goal, budget 2018 announces a reimagined National Research Council and proposes to provide \$540 million over five years. Coupled with the largest investment in fundamental research in Canadian history of \$3 billion, Canadian scientists now have the tools they need to compete with and to attract scientists around the world.

This budget also advances Canada on the path to reconciliation with indigenous, Métis, and Inuit peoples. Together, we are working hard to improve the quality of life for first nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples, as well as forging a new relationship based on recognition of rights, respect, co-operation, and partnership.

In addition to the \$11.8 billion invested in budgets 2016 and 2017, the government proposes to invest an additional \$5 billion over five years. This investment will go to ensuring indigenous children and families have an equal chance to succeed in life, to build the capacity of indigenous governments, and to accelerate self-determination, as was announced by the Prime Minister on February 14.

To date, as I mentioned, we have removed 57 boil water advisories from reserves across Canada. I am pleased to serve as a champion to the Minister of Indigenous Services, working on water on first nations.

The government also understands that reconciliation entails a new relationship between the government and Canada's indigenous peoples. That is why budget 2018 proposes to invest \$8.5 million over two years to work with first nations to understand how to make the programs more responsive to the needs of individuals and families on reserves.

Budget 2018 also continues the important work initiated in 2016 to build a greener and more sustainable Canada. To support the implementation of this historic national plan, the government has allocated \$5.7 billion over 12 years, including \$2 billion for the low-carbon economy fund to combat climate change and to advance clean technologies in Canada.

*Government Orders*

In November 2016, the government also launched a \$1.5 billion national oceans protection plan to improve marine safety and responsible shipping, to protect Canada's marine environment, as well as to offer new possibilities for indigenous and coastal communities. This is being discussed in the House a lot lately as we talk about pipelines on the west coast.

One example of how these investments can make a real difference in our communities is the energy neutral waste water treatment project at the city of Guelph. Utilizing a whole-of-government approach, both the federal and provincial governments came together with industry and invested \$1.5 million in an initiative to make our waste water plant energy neutral. We are also using research from the University of Guelph.

Our partnerships between the research community, the business community, and our governments at all levels really are advancing the clean technology agenda for Canada. Projects like this demonstrate how this type of collaboration and targeted investments build results for Canadians, results we can share across Canada, and around the world.

I encourage all members of the House to support budget 2018, our equality and growth budget.

● (1210)

**Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC):** Madam Speaker, if I may be indulged, I will have to ask the pages for a new pen for all of the zeros I had to write down during the member's speech, and the billions and billions of dollars the government will spend.

This brings up an important point. When the Prime Minister and the Liberal Party ran in the last election, their platform talked about four years of deficits. This year, in 2018, they talked about \$6 billion in deficits, so we now know it will be \$18 billion. In fact, for a generation, there is no return to a balanced budget.

With all of the billions of dollars he talked about spending, how can he go back to the people of Guelph who will have to pay for this, the children, and grandchildren of Guelph who will have to pay for the Liberal Party and the Prime Minister's uncontrolled spending?

**Mr. Lloyd Longfield:** Madam Speaker, it is not surprising to hear the question from the hon. member for Barrie—Innisfil. We have heard this question many times. We heard it during the election, and we have heard it since in all debates in the House.

There are obviously two different ways of approaching Canadians' future. One is to invest in Canada, to invest in Canadians, and to invest in research, and the other is to cut budgets to try to get economic growth, which we know did not work for the last 10 years. We now have unprecedented economic growth because of investments we are making.

We also have researchers developing solutions resulting in changes for the whole world to benefit from. Investing in Canadians and investing in our future is the way forward. It is the successful way. It is the way we have shown more growth in two years than the previous government did in 10. We are not going to be changing course back to the hack-and-slash budgets of the Harper government.

**Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP):** Madam Speaker, my colleague on the government side describes with pride the dollar investments to protect the coast. We hear about the \$1.5

billion oceans protection plan. That is a five-year spending program spread over three coasts, and it is being asked to do all kinds of things, such as protecting us from a spill of bitumen in the event of Kinder Morgan oil tanker traffic damaging B.C.'s coast and economy and solving the abandoned vessels problem.

Two weeks ago, the transport minister came to Ladysmith in my riding and announced \$64,000 to remove abandoned vessels. It is better than nothing, but honestly, given that the previous vessel removal cost \$1.2 million, \$64,000 is not much. It probably cost him that much just to travel there to make the announcement.

Could my colleague please comment on whether he agrees that this feels to us on the coast like a drop in the bucket?

● (1215)

**Mr. Lloyd Longfield:** Madam Speaker, the project the member is describing shows how the revised National Research Council will be able to help solve problems such as she is describing on the coast. Funds for the ocean, coastal and river engineering programs are being consolidated under the National Research Council technology development advancement program. We will be attracting money from provinces as well as private industry to leverage funds from the federal government. We have to work together with provinces, industry, and researchers to solve some of the major problems we have on our coast, and we are working on that. I am proud of the work we are doing.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, one of the issues I like to talk about is the Canada child benefit and the amount of money that is going into communities. It does not just apply to Winnipeg North. It applies to every riding. Literally millions of dollars are being put into support for the children of our communities.

Could my colleague and friend provide his thoughts on that?

**Mr. Lloyd Longfield:** Madam Speaker, it was staggering to see the numbers for Guelph. Some \$8.8 million per month is going into our Guelph economy and helping the families of Guelph as well as Winnipeg North. The budget will be indexing those funds starting this July, which will give us future growth for supporting families in our communities and supporting local small businesses, which now have customers coming in the door with additional funds to spend on their goods and services. It is going to help our economy as well as our families. It is a wonderful program, and I am very proud to say that we have developed a winner here.

**Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP):** Madam Speaker, as this is my first opportunity to rise in this House, I just wanted to express my deepest sympathies and condolences for the Humboldt Broncos. This has been an incredibly impactful disaster in our country, and people are feeling it.

*Government Orders*

I also want to take an opportunity to thank Port McNeill, the Port McNeill IGA, and the Port McNeill Minor Hockey Association, which fundraised \$6,000 to donate. I really appreciate, across the riding, how this has brought people together, when we think about those small communities where sports play such a fundamental role.

I also want to take this opportunity to express my deep condolences to a former member of this House, John Duncan, who used to represent a large of my part riding, who recently lost his wife, Donna Richardson Duncan. We may not have always seen eye to eye in terms of policy, but I deeply respect the hard work that every member does in this House. I know that John Duncan is well respected on the north island. I just wanted to share my deepest condolences with him and his loved ones.

Today I am here to talk about Bill C-74, which is implementation legislation for the budget. It is a little hard for me to speak here, because I feel that it is a bit of a timid budget. When I look at the riding of North Island—Powell River, and I look at the fundamental needs there that I work really hard with my staff every day to address, I wish we could see more action coming out of this. One thing I have heard from many of my constituents is that the time for studying is over; the time for action is now.

We are talking about a bill today that contains 556 pages and amends 44 separate acts. It is another omnibus bill. This always concerns me, because I think debate is a fundamentally important part of what we do here. It is also about transparency for Canadians. This bill also has a new bill inside it on carbon pricing. This should be a stand-alone bill so that we can meaningfully debate this.

There are a few positives. I really appreciate the fact that a promise that was made and betrayed is now actually coming to fruition, which is a reduction in the small business tax rate. Small businesses have had a hard time in the last several months as the government has looked at them in a way that was not friendly. I know that in my riding, I have been talking to health care professionals, doctors specifically, who were appalled by the process that happened. They felt very offended and actually dealt with patients being angry with them because of some of the things that came out of this. They asked me to let the Prime Minister know that there are not a lot of rich doctors, just a lot of hard-working doctors, in our rural communities.

I am happy to see that there are some additions for judges to address significant shortages. I also appreciate improving access to the Canada workers benefit.

I want to come back briefly to carbon pricing. We really need to have this separated out. It deserves a robust debate. This is an issue that is becoming more and more important across the country, as people are concerned about emissions and whether we are tackling them in a meaningful way. As a member from British Columbia, and with what we are seeing with Kinder Morgan, this is something that has not been addressed. People need to understand and have a fruitful discussion.

We know that polling has said that a lot of Canadians are very unsure that this will actually reduce emissions. People want to see an impact. It would be great if the government would take this step so that it could go to committee and we could have a report that goes

back to parliamentarians and back to Canadians. We want to make sure that what is happening is actually working.

The other thing I found very disappointing is that we are not seeing what we need to see, which is a more fair tax regime. The government has again not addressed the significant loopholes for wealthy CEOs and the very wealthy. Oxfam has just reported this year that about 82% of the wealth accumulated last year went to the top 1% of earners across Canada. I do not represent a lot of those people in my riding. I represent a lot of hard-working people.

We just had a senior come into our office the other day who is now having to pay back CRA, because his wife had to go into a care facility. They did all the appropriate paperwork for CRA. They talked about the forced separation. They were given a little support and relief because of that. Now CRA is saying that they have to pay it back. That is not a fair tax system. The most vulnerable people are being asked to pay back what little support they desperately needed during a very hard time in their lives.

● (1220)

Another issue is pharmacare. Across my riding, the issue of medication and the cost of medication comes up repeatedly. The Parliamentary Budget Officer was very clear about there being over \$4 billion in savings to Canadians if we could address this issue. In my riding, we have too many people who are having to make significantly hard choices about what they can cost out. It is important to recognize that when people cannot afford to take the medication they need, the expense to the taxpayer increases, because those people go in and out of hospital. It is not good for their health, it is not good for their families, and it is not good for the taxpayer.

As I said earlier, many constituents in my riding are saying that the time for studies is over. The fact that the only investment we are seeing is another study on whether we need pharmacare is ridiculous. We just need to get to action. We now have a report from the health committee that has been very clear. All parties know that this needs to happen. We do not need to study. We have studied this repeatedly. This is a long-term promise the Liberal Party has made over many years. Let us get to the action part.

I represent rural communities, and I am very proud to do so. One of the things I find disheartening about this budget is that it is not addressing a lot of the fundamental issues rural communities have. Resource industries have built a large part of the wealth of this country, and many of those communities are like those I represent: they are small, rural, and hard-working. The resource sector has a history and a present, but it also has a future. We are not seeing the investment in innovation and diversification in smaller and rural communities. We do not want to leave our small communities. We want to make sure that they are robust. We want to make sure that they are healthy, and we sometimes need the government to give them opportunities for that to happen. I will be attending, for example, the Forestry Friendly Communities celebration in Port McNeill in May, where we are going to be talking about the innovation happening in that sector. We need to see that the government actually cares about these communities.

*Government Orders*

I have the great joy of representing the 19 Wing base in Comox in my riding. One of the sad and wonderful things about representing this area is that we have a lot of veterans who move to our community. I am happy to have them there. They provide a lot of support to our community, and I respect the work they do. However, one of the sad parts is that we often have veterans who have multiple challenges. A few weeks ago, we had the Wounded Warrior Run BC running through our communities. It was amazing to see the support. One of the most important things they were doing was fundraising so that more veterans who have post-traumatic stress disorder and need support get service dogs. It is a step in the right direction that we now see in this budget a tax credit to help with those service dogs. I want to be very clear that this is an expensive investment.

Another issue for veterans in my riding is access to housing, especially if they have service dogs. Sometimes it can be very challenging for veterans to find homes that will allow them to bring a service dog with them. It is heartbreaking for me that there are a few steps in the right direction, but they are too little and too slow. Veterans have waited a long time for some support, and we definitely want to see that happen for them.

Housing is a big issue in our riding. There are communities as small as, for example, Port Hardy, with 4,000 people, that are struggling to find housing for people. They do not have a lot of affordable housing. This is not just an urban issue. It is an issue across the whole country. I encourage the government to step forward. The Liberals have made announcements about funding. The majority of it is not coming to fruition. I encourage the government to please make that money flow faster. People need homes, and they need them now.

● (1225)

**Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC):** Madam Speaker, at the beginning of the member's speech, she noted that in this budget, there is funding to hire new judges. In budget 2017, there was also funding to hire new judges. The NDP government in Alberta, by way of order in council, in October 2016, established 10 new judicial spots in Alberta to deal with the court backlog. A year and a half later, the minister has managed to fill only one of those spots, and that was just in December. It is one thing to talk about money and allocating money, but when it comes to actually appointing judges, it seems that the minister just cannot get it done, and as a result, serious criminals continue to be let out on the streets. I wonder if the member could comment on that.

**Ms. Rachel Blaney:** Madam Speaker, if we look at a lot of realities, we see that money is promised and then sometimes it does not flow as quickly as we need to see it. A lot of small communities across Canada are asking for the process to happen a little more quickly. They know that there are serious incidents that they want addressed. I know that a lot of people who are in the system themselves are feeling overwhelmed with the number of people waiting to be processed.

I hope the minister will get on top of that. I know it is very frustrating for small communities and communities across Canada to just wait and wait.

**Mr. John Oliver (Oakville, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I was very happy to hear the member for North Island—Powell River speak about national pharmacare and the reference to it in budget 2018 and

I was happy to hear support for it. I am a member of the committee, and we are very proud of the report released yesterday. I certainly believe no Canadian should be denied access to necessary prescription medicines because they cannot afford them. That is fundamental.

The committee made 18 recommendations. Two of them dealt directly with the model of how national pharmacare should be designed and 16 of them dealt with implementation challenges. What we heard from expert witnesses is that implementation of a national pharmacare program, given the nature of our Confederation of provinces and territories and federal government, is incredibly complex. I was delighted to see in the budget the creation of a national council that will study implementation of national pharmacare. Dr. Hoskins has one year and will be back next spring with a very comprehensive analysis of how best to implement national pharmacare.

Does the member not support taking more time to make sure we get this right and not lose it because we have rushed implementation?

**Ms. Rachel Blaney:** Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for the work he has done on this very important issue.

From people in my riding, I know this is something that comes up quite frequently. One of the first experiences I had was meeting with a woman who bought a van, because with her health issues she could not afford both rent and medication. She said to me that she was doing the best that she could, but she was really worried it was going to get cold.

I come from Vancouver Island in B.C. A lot of people like to joke about how warm it is where I am, but if someone is living in a van because they cannot afford rent and medication, it can get pretty damn cold. Excuse my language.

I appreciate that making sure we implement this program really well makes sense, but there are a lot of models we could look at. We could continue to study and study and study, and I want to be very clear that this is what it says. The bill does not talk a lot about implementation; it talks about the study.

We have done a lot of studies in this place. This has been a promise, and people get tired of waiting. At some point we have to say that it is not going to be perfect right away but that we are going to get to the action part of this, and we are going to make it really clear.

The member is saying a year, so we are going to wait here and see if it happens. Unfortunately, that promise has been made many times. We will watch and we will wait, and hopefully it will happen, because a lot of people are having to make terrible choices, such as living in a van.



*Government Orders*

•(1230)

**Ms. Yvonne Jones (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am very happy to stand in the House today to talk about our 2018 budget. It is a fitting budget, called “Equality + Growth: A Strong Middle Class”, which is the direction our government is leading in Canada.

This budget is the next step in the government's plan, which is investing in people, investing in communities, and investing in our economy. It has already been able to put more money in the pockets of Canadians, it has helped create more well-paying jobs, and it is giving Canadians greater confidence in their future.

Since November 2015, when we took office, Canadians have created more than 500,000 new jobs, and the unemployment rate has fallen from 7.1% to 5.9%, close to its lowest level in over four decades. The Canadian economy has been very strong, growing at a pace that is well above all the other G7 countries since mid-2016.

Measures like those that we introduced around middle-class tax cuts and a new Canadian child benefit mean that Canadian families now have more money to save, invest, and spend on their families and in their communities because we have lower taxes for the middle class and we are helping them with the high-level cost of raising a family in many regions of this country. Therefore, Canadians are feeling more optimistic about the future, and I certainly feel that in the riding that I represent.

Whether it is the ability to be able to save a little more, to buy a home for the first time, to go back to school and train for a new job, or obtain employment in regions where it has often been difficult, these are all things that people see as strength in our economy and in their communities. As the government, we are going to continue to grow that sector, to create those jobs that people want, and to ensure that people have opportunities.

New investments will support many pieces of infrastructure across Canadian communities. One of those pieces that has been critically important to many first nations, Inuit, and Métis communities in Canada has been the ability to ensure good housing on and off reserve in communities, as well as the ability to ensure that they have access to clean drinking water.

Investments we are making in this budget include committing over \$170 million over the next three years to continue on the path of improving access to clean and safe drinking water on reserve. The Minister of Indigenous Services has been very adamant on meeting this target and ensuring that long-term drinking water advisories in Canadian communities, especially indigenous communities, are eliminated.

We have also been making tremendous investments in housing. In the northern part of my riding, in the Inuit region of Nunatsiavut or in either of the first nation communities, if we were to ask today what their number one infrastructure priority was, they would say that it is housing. For the first time, every indigenous government had the ability to deliver on housing money in their own regions. Last year, for the first time, Inuit across the north received direct transfers from the Government of Canada to ensure that they were able to build and modify houses to meet their immediate needs.

This year's budget includes an additional \$600 million over the next three years to support housing on reserve for first nations communities. It includes an Inuit-led housing plan for Inuit regions such as Nunavik, Nunatsiavut, and Inuvialuit, and the government has proposed \$400 million over the next 10 years to address the needs of housing in Inuit communities. This is in addition to the \$240 million that was announced in budget 2017.

•(1235)

The government is also proposing \$500 million over the next 10 years to support the Métis nation's housing strategy. These housing strategies are important to indigenous Canadians. It is important that they have proper housing in their communities in order to make real progress in many other areas where they have concerns.

This year I was proud to be a member of Parliament in the Government of Canada, representing the province of Newfoundland and Labrador, because we saw major transfer increases to our province from the federal government. We saw increases in the Canadian health transfer and the Canadian social transfer, increases that will allow the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to meet and address some of the growing needs we have as a province, which ridings like mine are dealing with. For example, there are issues with respect to mental health and suicide. Here there are fundamental social programs that our government has continued to invest in. We have worked with indigenous communities in my riding to develop suicide strategies and to invest in those strategies, working side by side with them to eliminate and reduce suicide and addiction levels in communities.

We also work with those indigenous governments and the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador to invest more in mental health and addiction services. Last week I had the opportunity to be in Happy Valley–Goose Bay with the premier to announce that for the first time ever there will be six mental health beds opening at the hospital in Labrador and that two psychiatrists will be hired in that rural northern region where we have never had those services.

This is a government that is listening to the needs of Canadians. No matter how remote or how northern or how isolated those Canadians are, it is listening and acting to ensure that it meets the needs and addresses the issues that are important in those regions.

There were many things in this budget that my constituents and people across the country were proud of. I want to outline what some of those pieces are. I think it is important that we reiterate the investments that we are making, because these are not our investments but the investments that Canadians have asked for. We have worked with Canadians to form a vision of where they would like their country to be going. What we do as a government is in response to what they are asking.

*Government Orders*

I represent a riding that until a few years ago was basically unconnected in many ways, whether it was through Internet and broadband or through highway transportation and ferry services. As a government, we have invested in those areas. To date, we have been able to build nearly 400 kilometres of paved road through one of the most northern remote regions of the country in my riding. We have invested in some of the smallest communities to allow them to have Internet and broadband access, a basic service that many Canadians have enjoyed for many years.

We have also listened when people talked to us about the need for EI reform for those people who work in seasonal industries, the need for reform for women and parents who are taking leave to have a child, the need to extend maternity leave benefits, and the need to look at sick benefits for people who have to care for sick family members, sick children, or themselves.

We listened to northerners across Canada when they told us that the northern tax deduction had not increased in many years, and we acted to ensure that northerners are receiving tax deductions that allow them to have a better quality of life, like other Canadians.

We have invested in small craft harbours, having listened to the fishing industry, which quite often had been ignored by previous governments, ensuring they have the infrastructure in their communities to create jobs in an industry that has allowed for tremendous opportunity in the Atlantic regions of our country.

We also brought great certainty to military operations. I represent a riding that is home to 5 Wing Goose Bay. For the first time in many years, we have ensured the operational requirements of that base and its stability and longevity as part of the national infrastructure for defence in this country.

We support workers in communities that I represent, such as Wabush and Labrador West, which are heavily engaged in the mining industry.

This budget is a reflection of Canadians.

• (1240)

**Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP):** Madam Speaker, as the member knows, I have been in her riding and knocked on doors in her riding. Folks in Labrador believe in equality and fairness. I am sure she would agree with me on that.

We have a budget that profoundly continues what is one of the most unequal periods in Canadian history. In fact, two Canadian billionaires hold as much wealth as one third of the Canadian population. We are seeing more and more tax treaties signed with notorious tax havens overseas, a practice started by the Harper Conservatives and continued by the Liberals. We are seeing more wealthy Canadians and large businesses not having to pay a cent of tax because they can take their money to overseas tax havens.

There are more and more tax loopholes that the government refuses to close. As a result, the government says it does not have the resources to bring in pharmacare, pay equity, and all the other programs that would actually make a difference in people's lives. My question is quite simple. Would the member not agree with me that her constituents in Labrador would want to see a fair tax system and

a closing of these tax loopholes, and that they would be very disappointed to see none of that in the Liberal budget?

**Ms. Yvonne Jones:** Madam Speaker, it is very fair to say that the government has taken tremendous action on taxation. First, we have been able to reduce taxes for small businesses in Canada. Second, we reformed the taxation program for individual income earners across Canada to ensure that the wealthiest pay more and the lower-income and middle-income people get a break on taxation.

The other thing we have done, which we have committed to do and are continuing to do, is to ensure that we crack down on offshore tax havens. The minister has said this time and again in the House of Commons. It is the commitment of our government to do so, and we are continuing to do so.

We believe that every Canadian deserves to be treated fairly and equally when it comes to taxation. We do not believe that people should be allowed to escape paying taxes in our country. We expect them to pay, and we are going to ensure that it happens.

**Mr. Vance Badawey (Niagara Centre, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, this is a budget with heart. It is a budget that cares. It is a budget about people and about equality. How does budget 2018 attach itself, that equality throughout this nation, to each and every individual throughout our great nation?

**Ms. Yvonne Jones:** Madam Speaker, I know my colleague shares my sentiment that Canadians deserve to benefit from the wealth of their country, no matter where they live in this country. They deserve to benefit, no matter the status they hold. This government is reflecting that in the decisions we make. Whether one is urban or rural, indigenous or non-indigenous, wealthy or poor, we as a government are implementing investments, infrastructure, and programs and services that are reaching all Canadians. We are not cherry-picking one region or another. We are not sacrificing one province for the sake of another. We are fair to all Canadians, because that is what Canadians want from us. They want a government that is going to listen to their issues and act on them, and that is exactly what we are doing.

• (1245)

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Brigitte Sansoucy (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, NDP):** Madam Speaker, our colleague said that the Liberal government listened to Canadians' views on employment insurance. I think it is important to note that the government only half-listened, because sweeping reforms are needed and six out of 10 workers still do not have access to employment insurance.

Can my colleague tell us when the government will make it easier for people to get employment insurance benefits?

*Government Orders*

[English]

**Ms. Yvonne Jones:** Madam Speaker, we did make modifications to the Employment Insurance Act, allowing claimants to earn money and keep more of their employment insurance during the off-season. We also extended maternity benefits to those who needed them, and we are continuing to look at the employment insurance program.

It is safe to say that the program today is available to and being used by many Canadians across the country. Without the support of this program, there would be much jeopardy in many seasonal industries, and I think we all understand that.

[Translation]

**Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette, GPQ):** Madam Speaker, never has Quebec been so diminished in Ottawa. Bill C-74 is a 556-page budget implementation bill, and all 556 of those pages ignore Quebec. To the Minister of Finance and the Prime Minister, Quebec does not exist. Bill C-74 is for people in the GTA, the west, and the Maritimes. It is for Canada, but not Quebec. Quebec does not matter here. With Bill C-74, the government continues to rack up deficits so that it can give handouts to others, like the \$75 million given to Irving to combat the spruce budworm in the Maritimes. This is a nice handout, but what an insult to Quebec, which does not receive a cent.

In Quebec, the budworm affects an area larger than all of New Brunswick. Bill C-74 is a massive 560-page document, larger than any other tabled so far by the finance minister. Never mind that the Prime Minister had made an election promise not to introduce massive bills. Unbelievable. These 560 pages do nothing to fix the EI spring gap for our seasonal workers.

In Quebec, we believe in using our lands. We want everyone across Quebec to be able to live and earn a living, not just those in major cities. Seasonal industries are a reality in the regions, and these workers need support. The government needs to do something about the period during which these workers are not receiving employment income or employment insurance. The EI eligibility rules must be changed. This has been going on for years. Every year, seasonal workers experience the same stress as they wonder whether they will be able to make ends meet. In its budget, the government announced that seasonal workers would be able to take 30 hours of training a week and receive replacement income, but this does not fix the problem. The government needs to listen to these people's concerns and take the necessary action to fix this problem once and for all.

Bill C-74 is a 556-page manifestation of the government's schizophrenia when it comes to the environment and the fight against climate change. We have a Prime Minister who wants to maximize economic opportunities from western Canada's dirty oil in order to raise money to protect the environment. Wow. We have a Prime Minister who has decided to side with big oil and force the Trans Mountain pipeline on a province and a government that do not want it. So much for democracy. Meanwhile, this same Prime Minister was patting himself on the back at COP 21 in Paris on climate change. This has led Jeffrey Sachs of Columbia University to the conclusion that the Prime Minister and his government have lost all credibility in the fight against climate change.

Bill C-74 does not contain a single line or a single measure to support green energy, nor does it have anything for the electrification

of transportation. Yes, imposing a carbon tax means there is a baseline to ensure that one province's efforts are not cancelled out by another province's. However, another thing missing from Bill C-74 is a clear plan and firm resolve to seriously protect the environment. For example, what is the Canadian government going to do if Doug Ford is elected premier in Ontario? Mr. Ford has already promised that he will eliminate Ontario's carbon exchange system and that he will fight the federal carbon tax. The same is true in Alberta, with Jason Kenney. As everyone knows, Quebec is way ahead when it comes to the environment, but its efforts are likely being unfairly cancelled out by other provinces that refuse to join the 21st century.

Ottawa is keeping the targets from the Harper era. The environment minister has already said that the tax would apply regardless of what the provinces think, but we have our doubts. In the Trans Mountain file, the federal government chose to side with the oil industry. Just imagine, it is even prepared to fund the project. The Liberals' targets are the same as the ludicrously low targets set by Stephen Harper's Conservatives, yet the government is not even on track to meet them. That is something we need to do.

Quebec needed Bill C-74 to include provisions that would support its fight against climate change, but no such luck. Bill C-74 is the first mammoth implementation bill for this budget. It talks about the cannabis tax. As we know, Quebec, the provinces, cities, schools, and law enforcement are not ready for legalization. They are asking for just a little more time to prepare, but Ottawa is ignoring their pleas. This will cost Quebec and the municipalities quite a lot of money.

We are seeing the same thing with taxes. Ottawa has decided to occupy the entire field of taxation. That means it will get to scoop up a quarter of the tax without having to spend a penny. It is easy money. Furthermore, Ottawa is not bearing any of the costs associated with cannabis legalization. We have reason to be concerned about the conditions that will be tied to the transfer of the tax to the provinces, like the health transfers. With this government, there are always plenty of conditions. It cannot even pay its own employees, yet it wants to stick its nose into everybody's business and tell Quebec how to run its own affairs. I worry that this will happen in this case too.

● (1250)

Since Ottawa occupies the whole tax field, it has the upper hand. I can already picture the Prime Minister forcing the provinces to do his bidding if they want the money even if everyone tells him he is out of line. It would not be the first time. That is what happened with health transfers, which are lower than they should be, as I said. Apparently health care funding does not win a lot of votes, so they cannot be bothered with it. Quebecers want it, but nobody here cares. The same goes for infrastructure money.

*Government Orders*

Conditions are laid out and everything is negotiated separately, so money stays locked up here just because the government wants control over a decision it knows nothing about. I should point out that this is not what Quebec wants, and it breaks an election promise, one of so many broken promises. The budget does have a few little things, such as the Canada workers benefit, that will help Quebecers. It is not a lot, but it will help people with low incomes. Quebecers will also benefit from measures for veterans and the lower small business tax rate. These are measures we have been asking for since 2015, so we are glad to finally see them.

Of course we know that the government improvised this measure because it was roundly criticized for the tax reform it planned to introduce. It ended up backing away from the tax reform and, in fact, basically abandoned it. It kept the passive income measure, but watered it down so much that it will not be very effective.

Instead of wasting everyone's time with a tax reform that was going nowhere, why did the government not tackle tax havens? That is the most glaring inequity in the entire system. The projections vary greatly, but according to the Conference Board, the government would recover at least \$9 billion. It could use that money to balance the budget, but of course, the influential Bay Street lobby prevents it from doing so. So much for Quebec's request to fix the problem of the illegal use of tax havens. Quebec does not exist. I said at the outset that Quebec has never been so weak in Ottawa. Each and every one of Bill C-74's 560 pages reminds us this. Our needs, our concerns, and our aspirations are nowhere to be found in this massive bill.

Bill C-74 makes it crystal clear that Quebec does not count in this place. That is what I wanted to say.

[*English*]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I can assure the member that Quebec counts for a great deal.

My colleague across the way made the argument in his comments as to why it is important to have a strong national government here in Canada. Let us think about what the member was saying. He talked about the price on carbon and the impact if one province were to go ahead of another province in a progressive fashion. For the first time in many years, we finally have a Prime Minister who has a strong national vision, which is one of the reasons why we saw a national program for a price on carbon, rather than having one province doing it one way and another province doing it another way. That is in essence what the member across the way was calling for.

My ancestors came from the province of Quebec.

We want to see national programs. One of the wonderful things in this budget is the increase to the Canada child benefit program, which brings millions of dollars into every riding across the country, including the ridings of my friends across the way. It is a strong national program that contributes to the well-being of the nation as a whole, and by doing that we can see more progressive policies.

I am wondering if my colleague would agree with me that there are a number of strong national programs that can have a profoundly

positive impact on all provinces, including the province of Quebec, a province—

• (1255)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** The hon. member for Joliette.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie:** Madam Speaker, we see the government implementing national programs and policies for English Canada. We see it in the government's decision to grant all the construction contracts for new ships to the Maritimes while giving nothing to the Quebec shipyard.

My colleague opposite spoke of a national policy on climate change and the carbon tax. What this national policy tells me is that the government has decided to support an oil-based Canada. We take issue with that national policy, and I think British Columbia does too. We are no longer allowed to manage our own affairs. This is a clear example of that. The government imposes its will and serves its own financial interests by pursuing aggressive policies that are funded by Bay Street to support Calgary. That is the Canadian model.

Given all of that, how can the government's environmental and climate change policy have any credibility whatsoever? It does not, and we are not the only ones saying so, since economist Jeffrey Sachs from Columbia University also shares this opinion. The Prime Minister has lost all credibility on the international stage when it comes to climate change.

[*English*]

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I appreciated my colleague mentioning the tax haven issue, because that is certainly an issue that we in the NDP fundamentally agree needs to be dealt with. It is very important to illustrate this. We see the amount of revenue that we lose to wealthy and well-connected Canadians who are able to evade paying their fair share. Would he not agree that not only prevents us from investing in people who need the most help, the most vulnerable members of our society, but it also shifts the tax burden onto everyone else?

If the Liberal government is all about helping the middle class and those hoping to join it, would he not agree that one of the best policies would be to tackle the issue of tax evasion to make sure the most vulnerable members of our society, the middle class, and so on, are not having to shoulder that burden?

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie:** Madam Speaker, I want to thank and congratulate my colleague for his wise comments. The inequality problem, which is the elephant in the room here, primarily has to do with tax havens. Why does the government stand by as the wealthiest members of our society shirk their obligations and responsibilities? We know that this government has ties to the Bay Street lobby. The finance minister is evidence of that. He is unwilling to take action to address the tax inequities between the very powerful and the middle class.

*Government Orders*

I agree with my colleague's comments that the government boasts about doing a lot for the middle class, but the problem is that they are just talking the talk to win over voters and get re-elected. In reality, the government is complicit in the use of tax havens, which primarily benefit big banks, an industry that does not even create jobs. Unbelievable. This is unacceptable and it must change.

[English]

**Mr. Marco Mendicino (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise on this occasion to speak in support of the 2018 budget, and Bill C-74, the budget implementation bill, which will continue to advance the priorities of Canadians.

What I thought I would do this afternoon is break up my remarks into three themes. I will talk a little about where we were in 2015 when this government took office. I will talk a little about where we are today, mid-mandate. Finally, I will foreshadow where I think we are going in the future.

The budget introduced this year by the finance minister put into very sharp context and focus the many challenges that we faced coming into office. The former Conservative government had a record weak amount of growth, the weakest performance when it came to jobs and economic growth since the Great Depression, and this from a party that talks about being a champion of industry and enterprise, a champion for small business and hard-working Canadians. It was a Conservative government that promised not to ever run a deficit and ran six during the course of its 10 years in power.

Those were the challenging circumstances when the Liberals took the reins of authority and power. We did so with a commitment to actually deliver for hard-working middle-class Canadians.

Among the very first things that we did to turn things around was provide a tax cut to middle-class Canadians. It was the very first order of business that we did in December 2015, a little more than a month after taking office. This put more disposable income into the pockets of middle-class Canadians so that they could provide for their children, their relatives, their loved ones. This began the turnaround of the Canadian economy, a resilient and competitive economy, at a time when the global economy continued to face some uncertainty.

The second major thing this government introduced to spark and spur on economic growth was the Canada child benefit. This plan has been one of the bedrock principles that has helped families, young families. It is done through a means-tested approach, not a "one size fits all" approach. It looks at the needs of the family through the lens of the number of children in the family, their ages, and the overall income of the household. It is tailored to their needs to provide them with the transitional measures and supports so that they can provide for their children as they raise them to be successful and innovative, thriving young Canadians for future generations.

As a result of that, not only have we provided support for the present day, but we have lifted approximately 300,000 children out of poverty, something that every member in this House should be celebrating.

I hear my hon. colleagues heckling, which is an awful shame. It is tragic that the Conservatives do not realize that it is a positive thing to be lifting children out of poverty, and it reflects just how out of touch they continue to be. Canadians are watching very closely.

Something else that we have done since taking office is we have listened very closely to small and medium-sized businesses. They have been telling us that they need the support to remain a competitive jurisdiction in light of the uncertainty across the globe, and they want to keep taxes at a competitive rate. One of the key pledges we made in the last election was that we would reassess the small business tax rate and we would lower it. We went through an exhaustive consultation process, during which I heard from small businesses in my riding about the importance of keeping that commitment.

I am very proud to say that the 2018 federal budget will ensure that we are lowering small business taxes to 9%, which is among the most competitive in the G7, in the G20, in the OECD, so that the conditions are set for their success. This is in stark contrast to the last Conservative government that talked a big game around wanting to lower small business taxes. However, when the Conservatives had the opportunity to support lowering small business taxes in the 2018 budget, they voted against it.

● (1300)

Again, Canadians will be watching very closely. They will not just be listening to the conventional rhetoric they hear from Conservatives, that tired, recycled rhetoric, around being great champions of industry. Canadians are going to look at the Conservatives' voting record and ask their members of Parliament why they voted against this. Those members will not have a compelling answer.

Another area that we have been trying to address as Canada continues to succeed, thrive, and grow in an increasingly competitive global economy is to provide more flexibility around young families who are growing. We do that by ensuring that mothers, fathers, and parents can take the leave that is necessary when they are having children or adopting children. The flexibility that is in the 2018 budget will do that. Once again, I wonder why my Conservative colleagues do not support measures like that. If they truly are for families, why are they not supporting it? We get no answer, only silence. Let us remember their actions over words.

There are a few other areas I would like to touch on that will capture where we are today. We have made progress from where we were to where we are today. How do we know that? Over 600,000 jobs have been created since this government has taken office, a record jobs growth.

**An hon. member:** Full-time jobs?

**Mr. Marco Mendicino:** The majority are full-time jobs. I thank my hon. colleague for clarifying that. We had seen record unemployment. Statistics Canada has been taking very precise measurements around unemployment. We have seen it go through the floor.

*Government Orders*

This government has made investments, such as the Canada child benefit plan, reducing small business taxes, and creating the Canada workers benefit. The Canada workers benefit will ensure that low-income earning Canadians, those Canadians who are working hard to get a leg up to provide for their loved ones will have some additional support as well.

Very recently an issue that has hit very close to home for me and the people I represent in Eglinton—Lawrence has to do with gun violence. We have seen far too many innocent Canadians lose their lives as a result of organized crime, getting their hands on illegal guns but also guns which were purchased legally but then were commandeered through organized crime. This government is very sensitive to that issue. It is an issue which touches all Canadians.

**An hon. member:** What about the Criminal Code?

**Mr. Marco Mendicino:** I hear my—

•(1305)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Order. Members have been here for quite some time now and should know what the rules of the House are. I want to remind them that when someone has the floor, that member has the right to speak without interruption. If members have questions, comments, or want to have their views heard, then they wait for the period for questions and comment to do that.

I also want to remind the person who is making the speech not to engage with the other individuals who are making comments whether it is on his side or the opposite side of the House.

The hon. parliamentary secretary.

**Mr. Marco Mendicino:** Madam Speaker, I remain very focused on being a voice for my community, notwithstanding the heckling.

Before being interrupted, I was saying that gun violence is an issue that touches all Canadians. We have seen far too many lives lost. We have restored many of the cuts which were made by the last Conservative government to law enforcement, to our public safety apparatus. We have introduced legislation which will be supported by the investments which are outlined in budget 2018. I once again call on my Conservative colleagues to support those measures if they truly care about keeping Canadians safe.

The last area I will touch on before I conclude my remarks has to do with some of the new investments which we have made to protect Canadians' privacy. In the 2018 budget we are allocating approximately \$155 million over the next five years to protect privacy by creating a new cybersecurity centre which will strike a balance between protecting our national security and ensuring that Canadians have the choice and access to the Internet and social media which touches on every aspect of our lives.

Again, there are important, forward-thinking investments and priorities in the budget which I am calling on my Conservative colleagues and all members of the House to support. We cannot do that when we see the kinds of dilatory motions which get routinely introduced in the House to stop the business of the people from being advanced. I am glad we were able to dispense with the motion that was introduced earlier, but now is the time to think forward, to continue record jobs growth, to continue record employment—

•(1310)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** The time is up, but the member will be able to continue his remarks in the questions and comments period.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Calgary Shepard.

**Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I listened intently to the member's pontification. He mentioned the middle-income tax cut, which did nothing of the sort. The people who got the biggest tax cut were members of Parliament. They enjoy the biggest tax cut, because that happens to be in the middle bracket. That is how the tax system works. The more we earn, at tax time the more we will pay in taxes as one moves through the brackets. Therefore, those earning \$45,000 and under did not get anything. They got a higher carbon tax, higher fees, and pay more today. According to the Fraser Institute, it is \$2,200 more per family.

I hear members heckling me now, but there were three Nobel laureates sitting on its board of directors.

How can the member claim that middle-income Canadians got a tax cut when it is absolutely not true? In fact, every member of Parliament got the biggest tax cut benefit out of what the Liberals did.

**Mr. Marco Mendicino:** Madam Speaker, this is how I can claim that. We look at the hard-working people in our ridings and we see all the ones who are in the middle class getting a tax cut, which is nine million Canadians right across the country.

My hon. colleague from across the aisle cites the Fraser report. However, the flaw in that report, which has been debunked time and again by people who have read it, is that it does not take into account the Canada child benefit plan. How do we have an objective assessment of whether there is more or less financial burden on an individual or family if we do not take into account what has been one of the most significant investments in the middle class in the history of our country?

I encourage my hon. colleague to take a close look at all of the facts. If he wants to make a compelling argument, he will do so.

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP):** Madam Speaker, what becomes quite evident to any observer of Canadian politics over the last several decades is that Liberals are masters of the long promise. We can look at the example of pay equity. It was the Pierre Elliott Trudeau government that promised it back in the 1970s. We have been looking at health care, which was a Liberal promise in 1997. I specifically want to narrow down on the pharmacare promise. We had study after study, we knew the benefits, yet now we are having more consultation and another working group set up.

I simply want to hear the member's assurances that with all the broken promises the Liberals are responsible for, they will follow through on this promise and deliver something that is beneficial to so many Canadians.

**Mr. Marco Mendicino:** Madam Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague for his work on the file.

*Government Orders*

We have a public health care system that is the envy of the world. At the same time, we know that approximately one in five Canadians do not have sufficient pharmacare coverage, which is why the Prime Minister and this government created an advisory council to spark a national conversation to address this issue. He recently appointed Dr. Eric Hoskins, who is a member of a provincial parliament and someone with a lot of experience in the area of health care, to continue that conversation. Yesterday, the Standing Committee on Health issued its report, and I have started to take a look at the recommendations.

We believe consultation is an ongoing process to ensure there is adequate coverage, to ensure approvals for pharmacare coverage are streamlined, and to ensure there is a responsible evidence-based national drug formulary. We will continue that work, hopefully with the hon. colleague's support.

**Hon. Robert Nault (Kenora, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, one of the issues between the Liberals and the Conservatives is that when the Conservatives were in power, the economy was much lower as far as employment and the growth of the economy. Then when the Liberals are in power, things start to really pick up. The Conservatives say that every time the Liberals are in power, they are just lucky the economy does much better.

Maybe the member can tell us about the differences in vision between the two parties and why our strategy tends to make the economy grow much better.

• (1315)

**Mr. Marco Mendicino:** Madam Speaker, ours is a party that believes in the charter. Ours is a party that believes in hard-working middle-class Canadians who want to provide for their children and future generations. Canadians are watching the work of this government. I believe they will continue to support it, as opposed to the Conservatives who talk a big game but fail to deliver. The Conservatives talk about always wanting to balance budgets and running surpluses, but what do they do? They have a record history of running deficits. It is actions over words.

The Liberal Party enjoys the broad support of Canadians, and we will continue to do so.

**Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC):** Madam Speaker, before I get into the details of the bill, I want to mention a sentiment, which I think all members of the House will share. I hope the member for Bay of Quinte makes a speedy recovery. I know it has been in the news that he has been hospitalized. I want to express my best wishes to the members of the opposite caucus, and I hope he returns to the House. I am told he is doing quite well, but I am looking forward to seeing him back here.

As I do in many of my speeches, I have a Yiddish proverb I would like to use. I know some members expect it and the table expects it sometimes too. However, "a gentle word can even a bone", which is a good thing since I do not have any gentle words to share about the budget implementation act, and I have gone through most of it.

Almost a third of the budget document is about the carbon tax. We were always told that the carbon tax would be so simple to implement. However, when we go through this document, it seems like it is a litany of how this will punish Canadian society, how it will punish individual Canadians, and some of the exorbitant and

ridiculous reporting standards to which Canadians will have to adhere. There is very little with respect to transparency and reporting standards expected of the government. Those are two things I want to mention.

Another part is that I took the time to go through provincial budget documents. The interesting thing I found, and I will go through them, is how taken provincial governments are with balancing the budget and demonstrating either an intent and a date, a specific timeline to get there, and the procedure by which they will get there. This is very different from what we see in this budget document. There is no table, no intention, and no words to convey that message to Canadians or to members of the House of Commons that the Liberal caucus or the Liberal government intends to get to a balanced budget.

We know the deficit for this year is \$18.1 billion, which is three times larger than what the Liberals promised during the election. That is a broken promise right there. There is not a single fiscal table and there is not a single graph in the budget document, or in the BIA, that demonstrates whether they will return to a balanced budget.

The B.C. budget, at page 139, talks about a projected surplus of \$219 million.

There is the Alberta budget document, although there is a question whether we should believe the document and its intention to reach a balance. However, even the Alberta NDP know that it is a culturally Canadian asset to say that it intends to get to a balanced budget and this is how it will do it. On page 12, it indicates that through efficiencies such as controlled spending, eliminating waste, and so on, it will get to a balanced budget by 2023-24.

On page 3 of the Saskatchewan provincial budget, it makes reference to this common cultural context in Canada.

Ever since the 1990s, we have tried to balance our budget on behalf of the hard-working taxpayers of Canada, who will be expected to pay for all this. All of this borrowed money will have to be paid for either by this generation or the next, or the one that comes after it.

The Manitoba budget, on page 3, expressly states, "We are on schedule to reduce the PST during our first term, and deliver a balanced budget during our second term. It is there in white and black. It knows it is important.

In the Ontario budget, and, again, whether we can believe the Premier of Ontario and the promises she makes, on page 166, it makes an attempt. There is a table there and wording as to the fact that the government will try to balance its budget. There is some shifting around of the numbers, but even it knows it is important to say the words and to understand how the mechanics of public budgeting work, and to present it to the public and make a case for it.

The federal Liberal government does not even bother making that case in the budget implementation act or in the budget document itself.

The 2018-19 Quebec budget, section A.3, says, "A budgetary surplus of \$850 million is forecast for 2017-2018 and a balanced budget is forecast for subsequent years."

*Government Orders*

The New Brunswick budget, at page 7, says, “a return to balance by 2021-2022.”

The Nova Scotia budget is in a surplus. It says, “third consecutive balanced budget for fiscal year 2018–19 with an estimated surplus of \$29.4 million (Table 2.1).”

The Newfoundland and Labrador budget and financial plan is not balanced, but it states on the very first page, “Government remains on track to return to surplus in 2022-23.” The government there understands that it has to demonstrate to residents that it is returning to a balanced budget and it has a process by which it will do it. It is on page 1. It knows it is important.

● (1320)

In its budget, Prince Edward Island admits to a deficit of \$46 million and that a balanced budget is expected in the foreseeable future. It has a table that demonstrates expenditures and revenues of the government. People can see the graph showing that in the very near future, in 2023-2024, the budget will be balanced. The lines meet, and at some point there will be a surplus. It is there.

Every provincial government in our country has a finance minister who, in his or her budgetary documents, has been able to demonstrate or prove a balanced budget, or an intent and method by which the government will reach it.

The federal government does not. The Minister of Finance cannot seem to bring himself to say those two words and explain how he will get there. He did not do it in the budget document or the budget implementation act, and he has not done so before the finance committee. In fact, when we ask him the question, he resorts to attacks. He cannot even explain it. He does not even understand it.

On the specifics of the budget implementation act, let us admit one thing. It is an omnibus legislation. Subdivision K, Inspections, under “by whom” in regard to carbon tax will allow:

...inspect, audit or examine the records, processes, property or premises of a person that may be relevant in determining the obligations of that or any other person under this Part...

That part is the carbon tax compliance. Does this mean it will be civil servants of the Government of Canada inspecting the premises and properties of Canadians to ensure they are paying the carbon tax they are supposed to be paying? Is that the expectation, through this section of the bill in subdivision K, that Canadians can expect civil servants to come onto their property to ensure they are paying the carbon tax due? It goes on:

...enter any place in which the authorized person reasonably believes the person keeps or should keep records, carries on any activity to which this Part applies or does anything in relation to that activity...

It is a lot of legalese, but I do not see anything about there being a warrant. It just speaks of a person authorized by the minister who may at all reasonable times, for any purpose related to administration or enforcement of this part. This is a lot of compliance measures to ensure every Canadian pays the carbon tax, and how the government can ensure every bit of revenue is extracted from Canadian business and individual Canadians. That is the only reason to have such a section.

At committee, other members of Parliament have attempted to ask the Minister of Environment how much GHG emissions will be

reduced, if we pay a carbon tax and how much total revenue will be generated through the carbon tax. It is reasonable to ask the question. The Minister of Environment was unable, or unwilling, to answer the question posed by a Conservative member of Parliament.

I want to draw the attention of the House to part 4, report to Parliament, the annual report expected to be tabled on the carbon tax. That section states:

Starting in the year in which the second anniversary of the day on which this section comes into force falls and each calendar year after that, the Minister of the Environment must prepare a report on the administration of this Act and have a copy of the report tabled in each House of Parliament.

It is reasonable. I like reports to be tabled before Parliament, especially before they appear on some government website under carbon tax administration. However, should we not expect there to be some type of detail? Should Parliament not dictate to the Minister of Environment exactly what he or she will be reporting on? It should be things such as how much money has been collected by the carbon tax across all provinces and territories of Canada, how much residents have paid versus how much corporations have paid. It should also have the statistic that shows how much GHG emissions have been reduced by. That is a reasonable thing for Canadians to expect.

However, we know the Liberals do not know the answer to the question, because they have never bothered to look into it. From the very beginning, when members on this side of the House have asked questions on how the carbon tax will work or how it impact will middle-income Canadians, we have received either redacted documents or non-answers in question period and during debate. Now it continues at committee.

There is no way we can support this budget. All it will be is further punishment to the middle class and Canadians. I am opposed to the budget. I look forward to questions from the other side.

● (1325)

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I listened quite intently to my colleague's discussion about a price on carbon. I am very proud to be part of a government that recognizes we need to do something now, and we are running out of time. If we listen to the scientists, 99 out of 100 scientists tell us that we are changing the climate, that humans are doing it, and that we need to act now and do something.

I find it baffling that the Conservatives, who think they understand economics better than anybody else, do not understand putting a price on carbon can actually make a shift in the economic and business model away from pollution.

I have heard it all for several days now about the costs of it. I want to know what the member has to say about the costs of doing nothing. What will the dire consequences be? Will a single Conservative stand and admit there will be serious consequences if we do nothing?



*Government Orders*

**Mr. Tom Kmiec:** Madam Speaker, shifting behaviour of Canadians by using a carbon tax, according to the International Energy Agency and Carbon Management Canada, would require the price for carbon to go up to about \$200 a tonne. When we see so much opposition already to \$10, \$20, \$30 per carbon tonne, no wonder the Australian government, under pressure from the Australian public, abandoned it. No wonder France is considering abandoning it now.

Trevor Tombe, at the University of Calgary, estimates the carbon tax will cost every single family \$1,100 at the price point it is at now. The member is telling me this is the only way, the only solution. It is a fallacy. It is their solution; it is not the best solution.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, it is interesting to listen to the Conservatives talk about the price on carbon. A majority of Canadians are actually paying a price on carbon already, today. In fact, what we are seeing, which we never saw with Stephen Harper, is what we call national leadership. We actually have a Prime Minister who wants to see Canada deal with a price on carbon as a nation.

The Conservatives, and a few others, want to leave it the way it is. Some provinces would have it, while other provinces would not. Do the Conservatives have a natural inclination to want to see that sort of Canada, versus a Canada where there is more national leadership, where we have programs such as CPP, potentially pharmacare, and other programs that all Canadians can benefit from, including a price on carbon?

**Mr. Tom Kmiec:** Madam Speaker, as the member knows, CPP was voluntarily created by all the provinces coming together. What the member is doing instead, by supporting the budget and supporting the government, is imposing carbon taxes when the provinces do not want it.

For those provinces where the provincial government wants to do that, so much the better. The residents there can keep them accountable. However, in my province of Alberta, we do not want it. In 2019, we will remove the provincial government, and there will be a new government that will be adamantly opposed to having imposed upon it a carbon tax that residents did not ask for.

The Minister of Environment has said that a price on carbon would have to go as high as \$100 per tonne in 2020 and \$300 per tonne in 2050 to meet the 2030 GHG targets. That is the Minister of Environment of this government. When we have such opposition to it from the Canadian public now, imagine what the opposition to a carbon tax will be like at a \$300 a tonne.

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I had a question for the parliamentary secretary of justice about his comment about gun crime, but I am sure my colleague will be able to comment on it as well, and will probably do a better job than the parliamentary secretary.

The parliamentary secretary told us about the work they were trying to do on gun violence. The member probably knows that 2% of murders in our country involve legal registered guns, and 7% of gun murders involve legal guns, so clearly we need to be targeting criminals, not that very small percentage.

Could the member talk a little about how making it harder to take one's gun to the repair shop is not going to address the real causes of gun crime?

• (1330)

**Mr. Tom Kmiec:** Madam Speaker, I thank the member for the question on the gun control legislation the government has put forward.

Of course it will not change anything. Asking law-abiding firearms owners to obey more laws will yield abidance of the law. Law-abiding gun owners have been abiding by the rules and regulations set forth by the government since they were introduced. The problem is gangsters, and it does not help when judges are not appointed to hear cases. A leading gang member of the FOB gangsters in Calgary was released yesterday because of the lack of judges.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Before I go to resuming debate, I seem to be getting a little feedback on how I am selecting members to ask questions or make comments. I will bring members back to an extract from *Debates* of November 3, 2016. It is the Deputy Speaker's point of view. It says:

...the time for questions and comments is often the most valuable time for an exchange between members [and we recognize that]. In accordance with the procedures and practices, we will do our best to ensure that time is generally afforded to the members of the parties who are not associated with the member who has just spoken....

This is not to the exclusion of a member, however; it is to allow for proper debate on the issue.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for—

**Hon. Kevin Sorenson:** Madam Speaker—

**Mrs. Carol Hughes (The Assistant Deputy Speaker, NDP):** I have basically indicated it. If the member has an issue with that, he can come back to the chair and see me directly.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Saint John—Rothesay.

**Mr. Wayne Long (Saint John—Rothesay, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to stand today and speak to budget 2018, our Liberal government's move forward to restoring economic prosperity to Canada.

Let me start by saying that I am a proud member of this House and a proud member of the riding of Saint John—Rothesay in southern New Brunswick. It is a riding that has a strong industrial base, a riding that is very strongly unionized, and a riding that has a strong heritage. It was Canada's first Loyalist city.

I am a proud member of the Liberal Party. When I ran for the Liberal Party, I ran on three different things. Number one, I ran on restoring infrastructure investment and infrastructure spending in southern New Brunswick and Saint John—Rothesay. Number two, I ran on being an advocate in championing the fight against poverty and championing poverty reduction in Saint John—Rothesay. Number three, I ran to lead the charge on restoring historic assets in Saint John—Rothesay, a riding in a city that has a wonderful history as Canada's first incorporated city and Canada's Loyalist city.

*Government Orders*

Over the 10 years of the previous Harper government, we saw a continued decline of attention to Atlantic Canada, a lack of attention to spending in Atlantic Canada, and a deterioration of infrastructure spending in Atlantic Canada, particularly in my riding of Saint John—Rothesay. Now there certainly seems to be clear attention to my riding. The Conservative Party is running Facebook ads naming me and pointing out my record in Saint John—Rothesay. The Leader of the Opposition is coming to Saint John—Rothesay in a couple of weeks to speak. Let me state very clearly that the constituents of Saint John—Rothesay are going to ask the Leader of the Opposition many direct questions when he comes to my riding.

The party opposite likes to wrap itself up as being a steward of the economy, presenting itself as the best manager of the economy. Let me say that the previous government ran six straight deficits, ran deficit after deficit after deficit, and all of a sudden in its last year—

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

• (1335)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I know that we are nearing the weekend and that people would like to return home at some point, but I want to remind members again that somebody has the floor. According to the rules, members who have the floor have the right to be able to do their speech without interruption, so I would ask the official opposition members to stop heckling and stop yelling across the way so that the member can go through his speech. There will be opportunities for questions and comments, with the official opposition having the first question.

The hon. member for Saint John—Rothesay.

**Mr. Wayne Long:** Madam Speaker, this is a government that basically inherited deficit after deficit. We have turned that around. We are investing in our economy. When the Leader of the Opposition comes to Saint John—Rothesay, there will be questions asked of him. For example, which of the programs and infrastructure investments that we have seen in my riding, historic investments made over the last two years, would he cut? Would he cut the historic \$67-million investment to transform the port of Saint John, which employs thousands and is an economic stimulus for southern New Brunswick? Would he pull back the \$6-million investment for the new trade school at the New Brunswick Community College? Would he pull back the over \$10-million investment for the YSJ airport, which the Minister of Transport recently announced when he came to my riding last week, the first federal investment announced for the Saint John Airport in almost 20 years? Would he pull back the investments made into historic assets like Fort La Tour, the Martello tower, the Imperial Theatre, and the Saint John City Market? The residents of Saint John—Rothesay would like to know.

What would he do about the historic and transformational Canada child benefit, which is changing the lives of tens of thousands of people and families across our country, and is better for nine out of 10 families? Would he pull that back? I do not think so.

We are a government that believes we play a role in the lives of Canadians. We are a government that believes in investing in infrastructure, in our communities, and in historic assets in Saint John—Rothesay.

Let me clearly say that the government of the party across the way ran deficit after deficit. Then, mysteriously, in its last year in government, it balanced the budget. It threw in a little bit of an EI rainy day fund, it sold GM stocks, and it laid off workers and managers of the Phoenix system, all to balance the budget. That was not right. The Conservatives know it was not right.

We are turning our economy around. We are investing in Canadians. We are investing in children. In particular, in my riding I am thrilled to lead the fight against poverty. Unfortunately, Saint John, New Brunswick, leads the country in child poverty. One out of every three of our children lives in poverty. That number is not acceptable and needs to change, and under the leadership of the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, we are making that change. We are reducing the number of children who are living in poverty.

Through our budgets, we have invested historic amounts into housing. We are leading a national housing strategy. We have invested historic amounts into early learning and child care. We have signed bilateral agreements with the Province of New Brunswick and Premier Gallant. Most recently, we invested \$70 million into a seniors pilot program. I can go through investment after investment and project after project that our government is delivering in my riding of Saint John—Rothesay.

As a member of Parliament and the representative for Saint John—Rothesay, I am trying to make my riding better each and every day, for each and every person, by moving each and every project forward one at a time and by working hard for the wonderful citizens of Saint John—Rothesay. That is what our budget is about. That is what investing in Canadians is all about. As Liberals, we believe that we can have an impact on the lives of Canadians. We do not want to pull programs back. We believe we can invest and provide transformational programs that change people's lives.

• (1340)

When I go door to door in my riding, I find that people are genuinely appreciative of what our Liberal government is doing and what we are delivering in our budget.

Let us be transparent. I come from an industrial city, a unionized city. I come from a city that understands its role. I talk with industry people regularly. The industry wants to be a part of the solution. It does not fight carbon pricing. The industry wants to be a part of the solution.

The growth and investment in Saint John—Rothesay has been significant over the last two years. We are changing the culture of our city. We are showing the people that the federal government and strong federal representation is good and can change the lives of citizens of Saint John—Rothesay as well as citizens right across the country.

*Government Orders*

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I thank the member for voting against the government's misguided small business tax changes, at least initially. I had hoped he might have joined us in voting against this budget as well, which proceeds with the government's high tax agenda. I am sorry that will not happen. This will be a topic of conversation when our leader goes to visit the good people of Saint John—Rothesay, as the member spoke about. He is clearly very aware of our leader's travel schedule, and I congratulate him for being so aware. He is currently following it in more detail than even some members of our caucus.

Does the member think the budget should be balanced, ever? Why is the present finance minister the only finance minister in the country who has not been able to come up with a date by which he will balance the budget?

When we have asked this question before, Liberals have said that they are investing. If they are going to call it an investment, then they have to have a sense of how much, how long, and what the balance is.

It is no excuse to talk about spending when one is being asked a direct question. I want to know from the member if he thinks the budget should be balanced. If so, when should it be balanced, and when will it be balanced? Can the finance minister, like every other finance minister in the country, give us a timeline?

**Mr. Wayne Long:** Madam Speaker, I remember when a former finance minister of the party opposite was interviewed about the tax-free savings account, an account that was maximized by 3% of Canadians. The party opposite wanted to double that tax-free savings account. I have to laugh at that. When that former minister of finance was asked who was going to pay for the doubling of that account, he said the "Prime Minister's grandchildren", that we will worry about that down the road. I take no lessons from members opposite about fiscal responsibility and balance.

I was an entrepreneur. My background was sports and small business. I understand the importance of balanced budgets. I understand the need for balanced budgets. I also understand the need for investing in Canadians, the need for investing in infrastructure spending, and the need for strategic investment in different parts of the country that need that investment.

Southern New Brunswick and my riding of Saint John—Rothesay needed that investment. We did not have that investment over 10 years under the Harper government. My riding is now reaping the benefits of strategic—

• (1345)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I am sorry to interrupt the member, but we have to allow time for other questions and comments.

The hon. member for Cowichan—Malahat—Langford.

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP):** Madam Speaker, currently the member's government subsidizes the oil and gas industry to the tune of a few billion dollars a year. The government is showing a willingness to invest money into a pipeline that would export diluted bitumen, which makes an absolute mockery of our climate change efforts. The

government still has done nothing to fix tax loopholes. It still has tax-saving treaties with some notorious tax havens. It has done nothing to close the stock option deduction loopholes. These are all issues that the government in one way or another promised to take action on.

I have a simple question for the member. When are we going to see the Liberal government live up to commitments that it made to Canadians in 2015, or are we going to see more broken promises, more false hope again in 2019?

**Mr. Wayne Long:** Madam Speaker, I am always puzzled by the NDP, their stance and their strategies. We have an NDP provincial government that is pro-pipeline. We have an NDP provincial government in B.C. that is anti-pipeline. We have a party, depending on where they are, that is for or against.

We are focused on a developed national energy policy. I think we have been very consistent on that.

**Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I rise to speak to Bill C-74, the budget implementation act.

Two and a half years ago, when the government was elected, it could be said that it hit the jackpot. The Liberal government hit the jackpot because it inherited the sound fiscal management of the previous Conservative government, a government that paid down a historic \$40 billion of Canada's national debt between 2006 and 2008 during good economic times. It was a government that resulted in leading Canada towards a balanced budget, and not only a balanced budget, but a surplus budget.

The Liberals inherited the Conservative jackpot. Then, to top it off, there were a lot of external factors, such as low interest rates, low inflation, a housing bubble that has resulted in an employment boom and revenue boom, a stronger than average global economy, a U.S. economy that has taken off, and the doubling of oil prices.

Having inherited such a good situation, what has the government done to the fiscal health of this country? The answer is that it has made an absolute mess of it. In fairness to the Prime Minister, during the last election, he said that he would take the Conservative surplus and turn it into a deficit. He said he would do it for a few years, for three budgets, but, not to worry, by 2019 there would be a balanced budget.

True to the Prime Minister's word, he has delivered deficits. He delivered deficits in the first year, the second year, and this year. The deficit in the first year was more than double what he said it would be. The deficit in the second year was more than double what he said it would be. This year, the deficit is going to be three times what he said it was going to be.

What about that promise to balance the budget? According to the projections for next year, we can kiss a balanced budget goodbye. We are not going to have a balanced budget. Instead, we are going to have a massive deficit of nearly \$20 billion. Indeed, on the question of balancing the budget, there was no mention of a timeline towards a balanced budget, either in the budget or in the budget implementation bill. There was no plan for how Canada would return to a balanced budget. Indeed, there was no mention of a balanced budget at all in the budget or the budget implementation bill.

*Statements by Members*

It seems that the Prime Minister hopes that Canadians will forget that he ever promised a balanced budget. I think it is important that we put it in some context. During the last election, the Prime Minister said that he would run some deficits but that he had a four-year plan to return Canada to a balanced budget.

When is the budget going to be balanced? At the current rate, based on current Liberal fiscal policies, it is not going to be in 2019. It is not going to be in 2020 or 2029 or 2039. It is going to be in 2045. What we have is a Prime Minister who has taken what he promised to be a four-year plan to return the budget to balance, and he has turned it into a 40-year plan to balance the budget.

Imagine, if during the last election the Prime Minister had come clean with Canadians and said that a Liberal government would run deficits, but not to worry because in 40 years the budget would be balanced. How would Canadians have responded to that campaign commitment? He would have been laughed off the stage.

● (1350)

Here we are with this fiscal train wreck, with a 40-year plan to balance the budget. In addition, with all of these deficits, the sea of red ink, the government is set to add nearly half a trillion dollars to the debt over the next 20 years. While we talk about a \$20-billion deficits this year and next year and as far as the eye can see, and when we talk about half a trillion dollars in new debt, as gloomy as those figures are, they are conservative figures, because in order for those figures to be realized, next year's budget would have to not increase spending at all. Direct program spending could not go beyond a 1.5% increase. For the last three years, the government has increased direct program spending by over 6%. The idea that somehow after increasing direct program spending by 6% that it is suddenly going to be reduced to 1.5% is a fairy tale.

Moreover, the numbers in the budget are predicated on the basis that both Keystone and Trans Mountain are going to be built. Both of these projects are well behind schedule, thanks to the policies of the government. Indeed, Kinder Morgan is on life support. There is \$450 billion of new debt, \$20-billion deficits, and it is not going to be that; it is going to be far worse.

There are some very real costs associated with all of this Liberal red ink. One of those costs is debt servicing costs. Debt servicing costs are set to increase by one-third in the next five years. Debt servicing costs are scheduled to go from \$25 billion today to \$33 billion in five years, which is more than the federal government spends on any single federal department. Who is going to pay for all of this red ink, all of this borrowing, all of this spending? Why, it is the taxpayer, and there is only one taxpayer.

We have seen a government that has made life more difficult for everyday Canadians as a result of its fiscal mismanagement. We have seen the average middle-class family have their taxes go up by, on average, \$800 out of their wallet. We have seen a government that is now going to make life even more difficult for everyday Canadians, with its tax on everything, its massive carbon tax, which is disproportionately going to impact lower income and middle-class Canadians. Indeed, in the province of Ontario under the Kathleen Wynne cap-and-trade scheme, one-third of lower income earners pay one-third more of their income as a result of that tax than wealthy Ontarians. That is who is going to pay for it.

The government is not only targeting everyday middle-class Canadians with more taxes to pay for its out-of-control spending, it is also shaking down small business owners, the job creators, people who invest in local economies and create jobs, with unfair tax changes that are, among other things, going to significantly limit the ability of small businesses with respect to passive income.

● (1355)

There are some very real, serious costs as a result of the government's fiscal mismanagement. What budget 2018, in the end, means is more deficits, more debt, higher debt servicing charges, higher taxes for middle-class Canadians, and a sea of red ink. As the hon. leader of Her Majesty's loyal opposition so aptly stated, never has a government spent so much to deliver so little.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** The member will 10 minutes for questions and comments after question period.

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## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

### THE ENVIRONMENT

**Hon. MaryAnn Mihychuk (Kildonan—St. Paul, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, this week is National Soil Conservation week, and I would like to highlight Manitoba's Netley Marsh. Netley, located at the mouth of the Red River and Lake Winnipeg, is the largest coastal wetland in Canada and one of the most significant wetlands on our continent. The delta is made of numerous islands. The soil hosts vital vegetation, wildlife, and fish habitat and is a key pollution filter, working like our kidneys. Scientists have suggested that a restored marsh would reduce Lake Winnipeg's pollution level up to 5% more than all the measures already taken.

Prior to 1989, active soil remediation occurred at the marsh, and since it has stopped, the islands' soil has been washed out. The international Red River Basin Commission has been working tirelessly to repair the situation. Healthy soils mean healthy ecosystems, and it is time this riparian ecosystem was repaired.

\* \* \*

### ROCKPORT DOCK

**Mr. Gordon Brown (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I would like to congratulate the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands in my riding on its recent acquisition of the Rockport customs dock. I am pleased that the site will receive a facelift after a close to nine-year effort to acquire it from Public Safety Canada.

Almost nine years ago, a small group of citizens approached me to acquire the historic property that had been a steamship dock, and then, since 1934, a customs dock, before being closed a number of years ago. Although only 60 feet wide, it was a social hub for generations of Rockport families and their children, who gathered to swim, picnic, and enjoy the views of the beautiful Thousand Islands.

*Statements by Members*

This weekend a lease will be signed with the Friends of Rockport Customs, and fundraising will begin to repair the dock to ensure that it opens to the public again. Congratulations to the members of the Rockport Development Group: Hunter Grant, Wendy Merkle, Diane Phillips, Bob Pickens, Morris Huck, and Heather Howard for their efforts on behalf of the residents of and visitors to Rockport. I look forward to the official ribbon cutting.

\* \* \*

● (1400)

**EDDIE PARRIS**

**Hon. Mark Eyking (Sydney—Victoria, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the late Eddie Parris, a performer, politician, and family man, who passed away in Cape Breton on March 31, at the age of 75. Eddie was a true community advocate. He spent a great deal of his life as a steelworker, and spent 11 years in politics as an alderman on Sydney's city council and one year as deputy mayor.

Eddie could be recognized in his brightly coloured African tunics, leading the Inspirational Singers in song and promoting cultural diversity through his music. He often performed at schools, but he also had a chance to perform for Queen Elizabeth II. In 2016, during African Heritage Month, Eddie was honoured to be presented with the Tom Miller Human Rights Award, an award named after his close friend and colleague during his time as alderman.

Eddie's commitment to cultural diversity and music was inspiring to many, and he will be missed in Cape Breton and throughout Canada. I encourage all members of this House to carry on Eddie's legacy and to give him a round of applause.

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**NATURAL RESOURCES**

**Mr. Kennedy Stewart (Burnaby South, NDP):** Madam Speaker, the Liberal government needs to stop threatening British Columbians and admit that the Kinder Morgan pipeline is not proceeding due to the company's own failings. I have a news flash: the pipeline construction cannot begin because Kinder Morgan has not yet received final permission from the National Energy Board. One-third of the route details have not been approved, and two days ago, Kinder Morgan formally asked the National Energy Board to delay all future route hearings, meaning final approval will not come until at least 2019. Of the 157 required National Energy Board conditions, the company has ticked only half the boxes, not even filed paperwork for 50, and been rejected by the NEB on some of its efforts, including those pertaining to caribou habitat restoration. At the provincial level, Kinder Morgan requires 1,187 permits from the B.C. government, yet the company has not even filed paperwork for 600 outstanding permissions.

Instead of threatening to use the military against British Columbian coast protectors, the Liberals should just admit that this zombie project is days away from collapse.

\* \* \*

**NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK**

**Ms. Julie Dzerowicz (Davenport, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, this week is National Volunteer Week, a time to recognize Canada's 12.7 million volunteers for the tremendous impact they have had on the

lives of their fellow citizens and their respective communities. I am blessed to have a strong group of dedicated, hard-working volunteers in my riding of Davenport. I could not do my job without them. They are the ones who provide a warm hello and a much-needed helping hand at many of the events I host.

I recently held a volunteer appreciation night to express my sincere thanks to some of the amazing volunteers who give so much to their fellow residents. I would like to recognize Kamran Khurshid, Cecilia Salazar-Puz, Bharat Pushkarna, Andrea Cunha, Frank Lindsay, Sara Santos, and Antoinette Shelhot.

Volunteering is one of the highest forms of citizenship, from lending a helping hand to someone in need to serving a community or group one loves. The magic of volunteering is that it creates social and economic value for all. To all volunteers in my riding, and in ridings across Canada, I want to express my heartfelt thanks for their contributions to making communities and our country a better place.

\* \* \*

**TERROIR RURAL RETREAT**

**Hon. Diane Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I rise today to draw attention to the 2018 Terroir Rural Retreat taking place on April 24, in sunny St. Williams, Ontario. The word "terroir" represents how all environmental factors, including soil, water, and air, in combination with farming practices, impact a crop's growth. This, in turn, affects the flavour and quality of the food produced.

This year's event will feature over 150 important food industry leaders and chefs from all over Ontario showcasing Norfolk County's food and wines. Norfolk County is proud of its agriculture industry, and the Terroir Rural Retreat is an amazing opportunity to show off Norfolk County's world-class fruits, vegetables, meats, cheeses, and wines.

I thank everyone involved in bringing this wonderful event to all of Norfolk, and I want to wish them all the greatest of success.

\* \* \*

● (1405)

[Translation]

**MAPLE SYRUP-THEMED POSTAGE STAMP**

**Mr. William Amos (Pontiac, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the production and consumption of maple syrup and related activities are an important part of Pontiac's culture and economy. One might say the people of Pontiac have maple syrup in their veins. Quebec accounts for about 92% of the maple syrup produced in Canada and 71% of the maple syrup produced worldwide. Quebec maple syrup is sold in roughly 63 countries around the world.

*Statements by Members*

That being said, I recently learned that in all the years that Canada Post has been issuing stamps, it has put out just one maple syrup-themed stamp. It was a stamp featuring a sugar bush that came out in 2001. It is time to correct this situation.

[English]

I asked Pontiac constituents to help us draft a proposal to Canada Post's Stamp Advisory Committee for a new maple syrup themed stamp. Over the past month, we received paintings, poems, comic strips, photographs, and more, all showing what maple syrup means to Canada. It has been wonderful to see all the creative suggestions, and I am hoping that we are going to see a new stamp that speaks to Pontiac and Canada's syrup culture in the near future.

[Translation]

I wish one and all a happy sugaring season.

\* \* \*

[English]

**VAISAKHI**

**Mr. Randeep Sarai (Surrey Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this week millions of Sikhs around the world celebrate Vaisakhi, the day Sikhs were asked to be saint soldiers, to fight for social justice, to be there for those in need, and to eliminate discrimination. It is a monumental day in the struggle for human rights.

Canada is home to many such Sikhs who work in law enforcement, in the judiciary, and as social workers and who give back through NGOs like Guru Nanak's Free Kitchen, Surrey Memorial Hospital, and the RED FM telethon. They are known around the world to be the first with humanitarian aid, whether it be in places like Haiti, Iraq, or Bangladesh or closer to home in times of disaster, such as when fires broke out in the B.C. interior and Fort McMurray.

In Surrey, hundreds of families, gurdwaras, and local businesses will make and serve amazing meals and deserts for thousands of attendees at Surrey's Vaisakhi parade. Families will walk and pray and remind themselves that wherever they came from, regardless of the colour of their skin, their gender, or their faith, all mankind is one.

I invite members to come join me this Saturday on the birth of the Khalsa.

[Member spoke in Punjabi]

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**TAXATION**

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Canada Revenue Agency is out of control. The minister is asleep at the switch. Across the country, Canadians have been filing their taxes to pay for Liberal bad spending.

Normally when Canadians complete their taxes, they have until April 30 to pay their balance. However, the Liberal appetite for tax dollars is so great that CRA is not waiting until the deadline to start collecting. Instead, CRA is withholding payments to low-income seniors until the balance is cleared. They are seeing deductions on their monthly Trillium cheques and their senior property tax grant

payments. Most Canadians will not find out about these secret stealth deductions until after they have sent CRA a cheque for money they no longer owe. Worst of all, CRA will not return the extra money sent in. It will just apply it to next year's tax bill.

Secretly deducting before the deadline is wrong. Only a callous government desperate for cash would allow this to happen.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**VIVACIA**

**Mr. Michel Picard (Montarville, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, a cancer diagnosis hits hard. It affects the patient first, but then ripples outward to those around the patient. I am proud that my riding of Montarville, and specifically the town of Saint-Basile-le-Grand, are home to Vivacia, the first integrative cancer centre and the only one of its kind in Quebec. Vivacia, which opened its doors on February 23, 2018, provides local residents with the support they need at an incredibly challenging time.

Since its launch, the Vivacia co-operative has helped more than 65 people battling cancer by offering professional, specialized services like reflexology, psychotherapy, massage therapy, naturopathy, osteopathy, nursing care, yoga therapy, cooking classes for people living with cancer, and much more.

The people of Montarville are lucky to have access to the services offered by Vivacia. I want to recognize the professionals at the cancer centre for the vital work they are doing for our community. Long live Vivacia.

\* \* \*

[English]

**JONATHAN PITRE**

**Mr. Francis Drouin (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate and remember the life of Jonathan Pitre, who passed away on April 4 at the young age of 17. Jonathan was known to many as the "butterfly child". He lived with a condition known as EB. One can imagine living one's entire life with blisters all over one's body.

● (1410)

[Translation]

Despite his condition, Jonathan shared his life with the whole world and became an ambassador for DEBRA.

*Statements by Members*

[English]

Despite suffering every minute of his life, he somehow found a great sense of humour. At such a young age, he demonstrated humility and wisdom. He has inspired a hockey team, his community in Russell, his larger community in Ottawa, a province, and a country, and he has made ripples across the world. Jonathan wanted to create a wave big enough so that when he left it would keep going on. Well, Jonathan has unleashed a tsunami in this world.

On behalf of residents of Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, I extend our deepest condolences to his mother Tina and his family. Jonathan's story will continue to inspire us all.

\* \* \*

**CAPTAIN ROY BROWN**

**Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, this Saturday will mark the centenary of the most famous aerial combat of all time, in which Canadian pilot Captain Roy Brown shot down Manfred von Richthofen, Germany's illustrious Red Baron. In so doing, Brown ended the career of the deadliest flying ace of the war, thereby saving the lives of countless allied pilots.

In some ways, Brown and von Richthofen were mirror images: natural leaders who were handsome, intelligent, and patriotic. The dogfight lasted only a moment, but it would become the stuff of legend, a metaphor for the chivalry of aviators and the tragedy of war.

However, the legend overshadowed every other aspect of Roy Brown's remarkable life. Let me mention just one other accomplishment. Unlike virtually every other RAF flight commander, Brown never lost a pilot under his command. Indeed, his famous encounter with Richthofen took place because Brown was diving to the aid of another Canadian flyer.

Brave, understated, and thoughtful, Roy Brown was the very model of a Canadian hero.

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**PAUKTUUTIT INUIT WOMEN OF CANADA**

**Ms. Yvonne Jones (Labrador, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to acknowledge the presence of an important group of individuals who are here in Ottawa today, the board of directors for Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, including president Rebecca Kudloo and Nunatsiavut representative Charlotte Wolfrey. Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada is the national representative organization of Inuit women in our country and a key partner to our government.

These outstanding women raise awareness and address the needs of Inuit women. They advocate tirelessly for equal treatment of Inuit women across Canada and dedicate their time to creating positive social change for children, families, and communities. They are making a significant difference in the lives of Inuit in this country.

I ask all my colleagues to join me today in welcoming to the House of Commons these wonderful Inuit women and leaders across Canada.

[Translation]

**EARTH DAY**

**Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, on Sunday, April 22, we will celebrate Earth Day. In writing this statement, I thought long and hard about what it is we have to celebrate. We are running out of time to prevent the irreversible climate change that will result in climate disasters. What is there to celebrate?

Things may seem dire, but we still have time. As astrophysicist Hubert Reeves says, it is only too late when we say it is too late. There are a growing number of initiatives everywhere you look, from Montreal banning plastic bags to neighbours taking the geothermal route. Canadians are passionate about this, as we can see by the demonstrations against Kinder Morgan here in Canada, and also around the world.

There is a real desire to fight climate change, and the government needs to get on board. On Earth Day, let us remember that we can take concrete action in the fight against climate change and let us celebrate every effort being made to protect our earth.

\* \* \*

[English]

**ADAM HEROLD**

**Mr. Robert Kitchen (Souris—Moose Mountain, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, with a heavy heart, I rise today to pay tribute to my constituent Adam Herold, who, at age 16, lost his life in the tragic accident involving the Humboldt Broncos hockey team.

Adam, a young man from Montmartre, Saskatchewan, had many accomplishments during his hockey career. He played for the Weyburn Youngfellow Wings and was the top defenceman of the Kamloops International Bantam Ice Hockey Tournament in 2016. He was drafted in the second round by the Prince Albert Raiders, won the western regional championship with the Regina Pat Canadians in 2016-17, and was captain and champion of the Mac's tournament and first team league all-star with the Pat Cs.

Adam received the Chuck Herriot scholarship, an award voted on by the league's coaches and team governors and presented to a player who exemplifies sportsmanship, commitment, leadership, and dedication to the game, both on and off the ice.

To his mother, father, and family, my wife and I send our deepest condolences. To the community of Montmartre, we feel their pain and we mourn with them. Adam had a great coach in my personal friend, Darcy Haugan, and now both he and his teammates are with the greatest coach of all.

God bless.

*Oral Questions*

●(1415)

**YOM HA'ATZMAUT**

**Mr. Michael Levitt (York Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, today is Yom Ha'atzmaut, celebrating the 70th anniversary of Israel's independence. Yesterday, on Yom Hazikaron, Israelis stood silently in their workplaces and on the streets, and stopped on highways to solemnly remember the fallen Israeli soldiers and victims of terror.

Today, we proudly celebrate Israel's miraculous independence. For 70 years, Israel has been a beacon of democracy in the Middle East, and we count it today as a steadfast friend, partner, and ally.

As chair of the Canada-Israel Interparliamentary Group, I am proud to continue fostering strong ties between Canadians and Israelis. I have had the pleasure of visiting Israel countless times, and I am always left in awe by the spirit and vibrancy shown by its citizens. Even in the face of great adversity, Israel stands proud and strong. As we mark Yom Ha'atzmaut, Canada stands proud and strong with them.

*Yom Ha'atzmaut sameach.*

**ORAL QUESTIONS**

[English]

**NATURAL RESOURCES**

**Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, investment confidence in Canada is collapsing. CIBC warns that a slowdown or uncertainty regarding a pipeline is “a major factor impacting...investment” in energy. RBC warns that capital is leaving “in real time” and that people will go with it. Scotiabank is worried about Canada's resource-based economy. Businesses are concerned that the energy sector is at risk.

The Prime Minister wants to phase out the oil sands. He killed energy east, northern gateway, and the Pacific NorthWest LNG pipeline. When is the Prime Minister going to stop undermining energy investment in Canada?

**Hon. Jim Carr (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the only people who have no confidence in the Alberta economy are the Conservatives. It is a little strange, because the facts make the point. There are 50,000 new jobs. Alberta is set to lead Canada in growth in 2018. We could talk about the growth of the Canadian economy, too. We could talk about 600,000 new jobs that Canadians have created since 2015. We could talk about leading the industrialized world in economic growth. It is just too bad that this pride and optimism—

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. member for Lakeland.

**Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberals spent years attacking Canada's energy regulator, track record, and reputation at home and internationally. They have emboldened and empowered anti-Canadian energy activists. Now they do not have the credibility to sell a pipeline and to get it built. They have created this crisis.

The livelihood of hundreds of thousands of Canadians depends on oil and gas. They provide billions for the economy and for social

programs for every Canadian. They lift the standard of living in every community. When will the Prime Minister champion energy investment in Canada?

**Hon. Jim Carr (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we have the approval of several pipelines in Alberta, the support of Keystone XL, and the approval of the Trans Mountain expansion, all at the same time as a \$1.5-billion investment in the oceans protection plan to accommodate an increase in traffic of one tanker a day, with world-class spill response. We understand that we have to talk about environmental stewardship, economic growth, and indigenous partnership all at the same time.

After the next question, we will talk about their government's record.

**Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, in fact, the Liberals have not built a thing, and Canada's reputation has always been as one of the most environmentally responsible.

On top of banks and investment firms warning that capital is leaving the country, the IMF predicts that Canada's growth will slow down by next year and even fall behind the U.S. A lack of foreign direct investment and stalling the Trans Mountain expansion directly affect Canada's growth.

Energy is Canada's number one private sector investor and Canada's second-biggest export. When will the Prime Minister stop attacking the oil and gas sector, get serious, and put Canadian investment first?

●(1420)

**Hon. Jim Carr (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, during the 10 years of the Harper Conservatives' administration there was not one kilometre of pipe built to open up export markets. At the same time, they systematically ignored their constitutional responsibilities to consult with indigenous communities, and paid no attention to environmental stewardship. That is one strike, two strikes, three strikes.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**THE ECONOMY**

**Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC):** Speaking of three strikes, Mr. Speaker, take a look at this. The International Monetary Fund published a report indicating that playtime is over for the Liberal government.



*Oral Questions*

Why? First, economic growth has been more sluggish than expected. Second, Canada's economy is growing at a slower rate than that of the United States. Third, the world economy is set to grow twice as fast as Canada's economy.

[English]

One, two, three strikes and they are out.

**Hon. Kirsty Duncan (Minister of Science and Minister of Sport and Persons with Disabilities, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Canadian economy is growing faster than it has in a decade. Canada is the fastest-growing economy in the G7. Our government has created over 600,000 jobs in the last two years. The unemployment rate has dropped to nearly its lowest level since 2008. The federal debt-to-GDP ratio is firmly on a downward track. Canada continues to have the best fiscal position among G7 countries.

[Translation]

**Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, one of the main reasons that the IMF is projecting lower growth than forecast for the Canadian economy is that the energy sector, one of the central pillars of our economy, is currently in free fall under the Liberal government. The energy sector has lost \$80 billion in investments and shed 125,000 jobs. That is the reality of our country's energy economy under the Liberal government.

Why is the Prime Minister not doing anything to help our country's energy economy?

**Hon. Jim Carr (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives had 10 years to build a pipeline to ship Canada's resources to new global markets. They built zero. The Conservatives had 10 years to consult indigenous and local communities. They ignored them. The Conservatives had 10 years to end the discount on Canadian crude. They did not.

\* \* \*

#### THE ENVIRONMENT

**Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, we learned today that in January 2016, just three months after the election, the office of the Minister of Natural Resources received a phone call from Ian Anderson, president of Kinder Morgan Canada. The company wanted to warn the government that it would abandon the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion project if the approval process took too long. Canadians expect the government to stand firm in the face of such ultimatums.

Is pleasing a Texas giant more important than conducting a full environmental review?

[English]

**Hon. Jim Carr (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we understood very well that the failed process of the Harper government meant that the Federal Court of Appeal said no to the northern gateway pipeline project. It was because there was insufficient consultation.

We were faced with a decision: Do we use the failed process or do we have a much deeper consultation? That is what we did. We consulted with 118 indigenous communities. We talked to thousands of people. We believe that the process was the one that was

mandated by the Court of Appeal, consistent with our section 35 rights.

[Translation]

**Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I would remind the minister that during the 2015 election campaign, the Liberals promised to apply a new, more rigorous environmental review process to the Kinder Morgan project. I would like to reiterate that, as part of its ultimatum, the company imposed an entirely arbitrary May 31 deadline on the government. The bottom line is that the government is trying to put the cart before the horse in order to impress Kinder Morgan. That is called giving in to blackmail. Whether this Texas company likes it or not, we have rules here. A government needs to hold consultations to ensure that the rules are being followed and that the environment is protected, as the Prime Minister promised Canadians.

When is the government going to stop letting multinational corporations dictate its policies?

• (1425)

[English]

**Hon. Jim Carr (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it was a different process because it had to be. The Federal Court of Appeal said in no uncertain terms that the Harper Conservatives' process failed. We could have tried to copy them and invite more failure. That would not have been right. What we did instead was we spent four more months consulting indigenous communities.

As the member knows, these projects do not always result in unanimity. For example, political parties are not unanimous. Indigenous communities are not unanimous. There is only one government that has the responsibility—

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley.

\* \* \*

#### NATURAL RESOURCES

**Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, when watching the Kinder Morgan saga, a lot of Canadians are asking themselves, "How the heck did we get here?" Let us review.

First, Stephen Harper guts the environmental review process and ignores first nations consultation. Then the Liberals get elected, promising to do better and have a legitimate review. They betray that promise, and now we find out why. They got a call from the CEO of Kinder Morgan telling them to hurry up and rush the process.

Exactly who is in charge over there, a Texas billionaire or the Prime Minister of Canada?

**Hon. Jim Carr (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we knew that there had to be more consultation, and for good reason. We consulted in a thorough way.

*Oral Questions*

The member also knows that among those who have differing points of view would be mayors and reeves in his own riding. I have met with them, and they believe in responsible resource development and they actually support the Trans Mountain expansion, even in his riding. They understand that responsible resource development combined with environmental stewardship is where Canadians want their government to be.

**Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, no wonder the minister is looking so confused. He is looking for support in northern British Columbia for a pipeline that runs through the south of British Columbia.

The Liberals were warned by their own officials that rushing the consultation would land them in court. Guess where the Liberals are: in court with first nations. The Texas billionaire has called again with an ultimatum of May 31. When he says, “Jump”, the only question the Liberals have is, “How high?” To get this pipeline built on Kinder Morgan's terms, the Liberals have mused about calling in the army.

How many Canadians, how many elders and young people are the Liberals willing to arrest just to meet this Texas ultimatum?

**Hon. Jim Carr (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are interested in creating jobs for Canadians. We are interested in expanding our export markets, because we do not think it is a good idea but maybe the hon. member does, that 99% of our exports in oil and gas go to one country, the United States. We also think there is value in getting a better price for our product instead of the discounted one now that costs us \$15 billion a year.

We would like to hear from the hon. member and his party on their vision of the future of the energy industry in Canada.

**Mrs. Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, in the face of the Liberal government's open hostility to the energy sector, foreign investment is fleeing, and it is Canadian workers who are paying the price. This is a sector that heats our homes, puts food on the tables of thousands of families, and is at the heart of the Canadian economy.

When will the Prime Minister recognize what the energy sector contributes to our country and start supporting it instead of trying to kill it?

**Hon. Jim Carr (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, once again, members of the opposition are pushing through an open door and cannot take yes for an answer. We agree that the energy sector is important to the future of the Canadian economy. Those are not just words; we are doing it with deeds all of the time. We have confidence in the future of the Canadian economy. We have confidence in the entrepreneurship of Albertans and their capacity to innovate, which has led Canada for decades, and will continue to.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, considering that energy east was cancelled and northern gateway was vetoed, I find it hard to believe the Prime Minister when he swears that Trans Mountain will be built. He has even clearly stated that he wants to phase out Canada's energy sector.

Is this all part of a plan to destroy this vital sector?

[*English*]

**Hon. Jim Carr (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is disappointing that the members of the Conservative Party in Alberta do not have more confidence in their own province, the entrepreneurs and innovators, whose innovations were the reason we were able to extract that wealth. It makes no sense to keep that wealth in the ground. It makes sense to take that wealth and help finance the transition to a low-carbon economy.

It is very disappointing that the Alberta members on that side of the House do not have confidence in their own constituents.

• (1430)

**Mr. Colin Carrie (Oshawa, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, in Ontario, over 1,100 companies and 42,000 jobs depend on the \$4.6 billion spent by oil sands producers. Liberal policies have failed energy east, failed northern gateway, and are poised to fail Kinder Morgan.

The Prime Minister promised he would transition away from manufacturing and fossil fuels, but nobody anticipated he would do it so quickly and so heartlessly. What jobs can Ontarians transition to as the Prime Minister implements his job-killing plan?

**Hon. Jim Carr (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the energy sector is good for all of Canada in whatever region Canadians live. It is good for the people of British Columbia, Alberta, my home province of Manitoba, and Quebec.

People come from all over Canada to work in the energy sector in Alberta. When the Prime Minister and I were in Fort McMurray just two weeks ago, we talked to workers from virtually every region of the country, and they share our ambition to make sure that Canada's energy sector leads the world.

**Mr. Colin Carrie (Oshawa, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians know the energy sector is good for Canada, but the question is when is the Prime Minister going to realize that.

The oil sands benefit not only Alberta but all provinces. My province of Ontario receives approximately \$1.7 billion per year as a result of economic activity from oil and natural gas operations. Even the former Liberal ambassador to the United States, Frank McKenna, warns that Canada's lack of export diversification is dumb, and is even hampering Canada's ability to negotiate favourable terms in NAFTA.

When will the Prime Minister realize his bad Liberal policies are not just hurting Alberta but all of Canada?

**Mr. David Lametti (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government is pursuing an innovative strategy across the whole of the country, across a number of different sectors, whether it be in manufacturing, whether it be in aerospace, whether it be in artificial intelligence, and the digital economy, with 600,000 new jobs all across the country since we have taken office. Most of those jobs are full-time.

*Oral Questions*

We are doing a great job on economic diversification, which is precisely what economists are telling us to do.

\* \* \*

**THE ECONOMY**

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, wages are paid by money, so when money leaves, jobs go with it. Stats Canada data show that Canadian investment in the U.S. is up two-thirds since the Liberal government took office, and U.S. investment in Canada is down by half in that same period. Investment is fleeing Liberal tax increases and red tape.

Donald Trump says that he wants to steal Canadian money and jobs. Why is the Prime Minister helping him?

**Mr. Joël Lightbound (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our focus is to make sure that the Canadian economy remains competitive. Canada is one of the best places to invest in the world. We want to make sure it stays the same with diversification of our economy, with skilled labour, with investment in the middle class to make sure that people have the confidence to invest in their future.

The results speak for themselves. Our plan is working. It is the fastest growth in the G7 that we have presided over in the last two years. Some 600,000 jobs that have been created, most of them full-time jobs. We will make sure that Canada remains competitive for the years ahead.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the member says that he wants to make Canada the best place to invest in the world. In 2016, foreign investment in Canada fell by 42%. It could not get any lower. However, in 2017, it fell again by 27%.

When money leaves Canada, jobs go with it. The government seems determined to send both south of the border to help Donald Trump's agenda, rather than the agenda of Canadian workers. Why?

**Mr. David Lametti (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am happy to tell the members on the other side about investing in our people and our country. We have invested almost a billion dollars in innovative superclusters. There will be five, and they will create leading-edge innovation ecosystems in Canada in areas that represent growth and jobs for our economy.

We have put \$1.4 billion into a strategic innovation fund precisely to foster the kinds of investments and the kinds of economic development through technology that will make Canada a leader in the 21st century. Those are good things about investment.

\* \* \*

• (1435)

[Translation]

**INTERNATIONAL TRADE**

**Ms. Ruth Ellen Brosseau (Berthier—Maskinongé, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, our supply management system is being threatened from all sides. If it is not a Conservative member saying he wants to eliminate our supply management system, it is the Liberals chipping away at it in our trade agreements. This week, however, the threat is coming from four American senators who are calling on Canada to open our dairy market. The NDP has always been clear: we can no longer

make any concessions on the backs of Canadian farmers. The Liberals are less clear on that.

Will the Minister of Foreign Affairs send a clear message to Washington that our supply management system will not be further undermined?

**Hon. Andrew Leslie (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs (Canada-U.S. Relations), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our position on supply management—

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

[English]

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order. I know these moments of levity are encouraging, and so on, but the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs has the floor.

[Translation]

**Hon. Andrew Leslie:** Mr. Speaker, we have a strong, clear position on supply management. We have always defended supply management and dairy farmers. Protecting supply management is important to us all. We are extremely proud of our work on NAFTA. We will always defend supply management and our dairy farmers. They can be assured of our full support.

[English]

**Ms. Tracey Ramsey (Essex, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, let us talk numbers: 146,000 direct and indirect, good-paying steel and aluminum jobs, family and community-supporting jobs that we could lose as a result of American tariffs. Here is another number: 12. That is how many days Canada has before a temporary tariff exemption expires and we become a target for dumping.

We need action now to show we are serious about fighting global steel dumping in North America.

When will the finance minister increase CBSA staff on the ground, and fix our trade remedy system to ensure that Canada gets a permanent exemption?

**Hon. Andrew Leslie (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs (Canada-U.S. Relations), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we have worked with our U.S. counterparts very hard over the last couple of months to make sure that Canada is permanently exempted from these unfair and unjust tariff proposals. The Prime Minister raised this issue directly with the President, as has the minister of global affairs with Secretary Ross and Mr. Lighthizer, as have all other senior members who have headed down to Washington on numerous occasions.

We will continue to advocate for full exemption. I can assure the member that everyone is working hard to make sure that this reality becomes a fact.

*Oral Questions***INTERPROVINCIAL TRADE**

**Mr. John Nater (Perth—Wellington, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, today's Comeau decision shows, once again, that the status quo is not an option.

Canadians believe that they should be able to share high-quality Canadian beer, wine, and spirits across provincial boundaries, but pages upon pages of exemptions on alcohol and secretive working groups show that the Canadian free trade agreement has failed consumers and local businesses.

Will the Liberals commit today to allow direct-to-consumer sales of alcohol across the country?

**Mr. David Lametti (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I can assure the hon. member that from the get-go, the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development has been a leader in getting the provinces to sit down and negotiate the Canadian free trade agreement, an internal free trade agreement that will eventually, through the working group, reduce the internal tariffs on beer, spirits, and wine.

We believe in co-operative federalism. We believe that the solution to this question of freer movement of beer, wine, and spirits resides in getting all of the provinces to sit down together and come up with a solution. That is what we are doing.

**Mr. John Nater (Perth—Wellington, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the fact is the Comeau case shows that the Liberals are not really committed to internal free trade. The working group that the parliamentary secretary cites has met a number of times, but it will not reveal any details because the government says it would be injurious to federal-provincial relations. How bad are these meetings going that even releasing the names of the attendees would be injurious to federal-provincial relations?

The Attorney General herself argued against Mr. Comeau at the Supreme Court.

Will the Liberals finally stand up for local businesses and consumers, show an ounce of leadership, and free the beer?

• (1440)

**Mr. David Lametti (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I guess the question before the Supreme Court was to free or not to free. That was the question. It came up with its answer.

Our approach has been the same from the get-go. We are working with the provinces. Unlike members of the opposition, our approach respects provincial authority and provincial jurisdiction. Our minister has shown leadership in getting the provinces to sit down and put together a Canadian free trade agreement. That agreement will eventually result in the free movement of beer and spirits, but only when the working group reports and the provinces agree.

**Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, a true Canadian free trade agreement would offer an incredible economic opportunity. It would create jobs and improve consumer choice. Inter-provincial trade barriers are crippling Canadian businesses, costing our economy \$130 billion.

Instead of fighting for free trade, the Liberals are stifling growth by piling on debt and imposing an unprecedented escalator tax on beer, wine, and spirits.

Will the Prime Minister commit to renegotiating a true Canadian free trade agreement? Will he axe the tax? Will he free the beer?

**Mr. David Lametti (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, members of the Harper Conservative government had 10 years to negotiate a Canadian free trade agreement. They did absolutely nothing.

Our minister has led the provinces. We have a real true Canadian free trade agreement in place. That agreement provides a mechanism, through a working group, to provide for the freer movement of beer, spirits, and wine across Canada. That is the result we are seeking. That is the approach we have taken from the get-go.

[Translation]

**Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, that is an agreement with exceptions. What do La Chouape du Lac-Saint-Jean, Grizzly Paw, GP Brewing in Alberta, and Vimy Beer in Ottawa have in common? They brew excellent Canadian beer using local ingredients. Unfortunately, not all Canadians can buy these beers because the government failed to implement a true free trade agreement with the provinces and territories. The economic losses are estimated to be \$130 million a year.

When will the government renegotiate the agreement and finally free the beer?

**Mr. David Lametti (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, unlike the Conservative approach, ours respects provincial jurisdictions, the authority of the provinces, and establishes a system based on collaborative and co-operative federalism. That is what we are doing. Our minister showed leadership when he invited the provinces to sit down and negotiate a domestic free trade agreement. That is what we did and that is what we will continue to do.

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**CANADA REVENUE AGENCY**

**Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault (Sherbrooke, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the Conservative strategy of muzzling organizations that criticize its environmental policy lives on with the Liberals.

Charitable organizations left a meeting with the Minister of Finance this week feeling dissatisfied and disappointed, and convinced that this issue is not a priority and that the government has no intention of modernizing the rules. However, the Liberals had promised to do so during the last election, as we can see on page 34 of the Liberal platform.

Can the government explain this baffling flip-flop?

*Oral Questions**[English]*

**Ms. Kamal Khera (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Revenue, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government understands the important role that charities play in our society, and we have listened to the sector's concern. As mentioned in the minister's mandate letter, we are committed to letting charities carry out their extremely important work without the fear of political harassment.

Budget 2018 reiterates that our government will clarify the rules that respect any political activities. An expert panel was set up to study the issue and made recommendations to which we, in collaboration with the Minister of Finance, will respond in the coming months.

**Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, "We will allow charities to do their work on behalf of Canadians free from political harassment..." Who said that? Liberals said that in their 2015 Liberal platform.

They have done nothing. Anti-poverty charities have raised concerns about massive inequalities caused by Liberal policies. Environment charities have exposed the Liberal failure on climate change. These truths are embarrassing to the government.

Is that why the Harper witch hunt against charities is suddenly so convenient for the government?

• (1445)

**Ms. Kamal Khera (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Revenue, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I just stated, our government understands the important role that charities play in our society, and we have listened to the sector's concerns.

As I have mentioned, and as mentioned by my colleague and the minister's mandate letter, we are committed to letting charities carry out their extremely important work without the fear of political harassment.

Budget 2018 reiterates our government's commitment to clarifying the rules with respect to political activities. An expert panel was set up to study the issue, and it made recommendations to which, in collaboration with the Minister of Finance, we will respond in the coming months.

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**STATUS OF WOMEN**

**Ms. Gudie Hutchings (Parliamentary Secretary for Small Business and Tourism, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as a former small business owner and operator, I know how important women entrepreneurs are, not only to the economy in my riding of the Long Range Mountains, but to my province of Newfoundland and Labrador and to our entire country.

I would like to take this opportunity to ask the Minister of Small Business and Tourism what steps our government is taking to help encourage more women to be their own bosses and become successful entrepreneurs.

**Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for Long Range Mountains for her commitment and advocacy on this file.

Women represent tremendous potential for our economy. In budget 2018, we committed almost \$2 billion to the first-ever women entrepreneurship strategy. This strategy will help women grow their businesses through greater access to financing, mentorship, government procurement, and international markets.

We know that women-led businesses can grow and compete on the world's stage and create good-paying jobs here at home. This strategy will help them do exactly that, and get even further.

\* \* \*

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

**Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, today we learned that the Liberals want to set up a process to ask illegal migrants which province they would like to go to. Wow!

The Liberals know that the vast majority of illegal migrants crossing into Quebec are not refugees. They sneak into Canada or go through the United States to take advantage of the loophole.

Does the Prime Minister not understand that Canadian law requires all foreigners to respect our borders?

**Hon. Ahmed Hussen (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canada remains open and welcoming to people who need protection. However, our government is determined to maintain regular immigration.

*[English]*

We are working very closely with Quebec to make sure that we address the concerns raised by Quebec and other provinces on the issue of irregular migration. We are responsible on this file. We have invested, as part of budget 2018, \$173 million for border security operations, and \$74 million for the IRB for faster processing of refugee claims. What is scandalous is that the Harper Conservatives cut \$390 million from CBSA—

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. member for Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles.

*[Translation]*

**Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I do not think the minister has a clue about what is going on. Meanwhile, the Prime Minister treats people who want to immigrate to Canada in good faith with contempt. Those people have to undergo a long, complicated process, whereas people who enter this country illegally get the highest level of service, health care, and their choice of where they would like to settle in Canada.

To be sure, Canada is a compassionate country, but apparently the Liberals prefer to cause chaos.

*Oral Questions*

Why does the Prime Minister have so little respect for the Quebec nation and legitimate immigrants?

[English]

**Hon. Ahmed Hussen (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, that is the kind of rhetoric that will lead that party to another decade of opposition, because Canadians do not appreciate setting one group of immigrants against another.

We are taking responsibility for this issue. We are fully in control. We make sure that there is adequate responsibility and investments in border protection and in the processing of asylum claims. What that party did when it was in government was to irresponsibly cut \$390 million from CBSA. It is very rich for that member to talk about border operations when the Conservatives cut much-needed investments in CBSA.

**Hon. Michelle Rempel (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, here is what is irresponsible. The Prime Minister's hashtag "welcome to Canada" tweet caused tens of thousands of illegal border crossers to flood into Canada from the United States of America and claim asylum. We also know that there is no end in sight. Border agents are expecting upwards of 400 illegal border crossers per day this summer.

The Prime Minister has failed to manage the border. Will the Prime Minister tell Canadians if he has any plan to stop the flow of illegal border crossers?

• (1450)

**Hon. Ahmed Hussen (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are fully in control over this issue. We have an intergovernmental task force on irregular migration. We had our ninth meeting last night with different provincial representatives. We have made the necessary investments in speeding up work permits for asylum seekers so we minimize the impacts on provincial social services.

What is irresponsible is Conservatives cutting funding for CBSA and pretending that they care about the border. What is irresponsible is cutting funding for the IRB and refugee processing. What is irresponsible is having toxic relationships with provinces. We will—

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. member for Calgary Nose Hill.

**Hon. Michelle Rempel (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, what is irresponsible is to throw hundreds of millions of dollars at illegal border crossers. It was over \$200 million just to process their paperwork, millions of dollars to construct tent cities, millions of dollars to turn Olympic Stadium into a refugee camp, and all this has done is made the problem worse.

Meanwhile, the Prime Minister had the audacity to tell a veteran who served our country that he was asking for more than we could give. Why is this the Prime Minister's priority instead of stopping the flow of illegal border crossers?

**Hon. Ahmed Hussen (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the member opposite is on record as having called on us to make investments to deal with the issue of irregular migration. We have listened, and what we have done? We have invested—

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

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order. These shouts in unison are very much a distraction when we are trying to have debate and exchange of questions.

We will go back to the hon. Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship.

**Hon. Ahmed Hussen:** Mr. Speaker, the party opposite was calling on us for months to make the necessary investments on this issue. We have listened, and we have made the necessary investments: \$173 million for irregular migration, \$74 million for the IRB. We are investing in CBSA and so on. We are investing in faster processing of work permits.

Let me quote the head of the UNHCR in Canada, the expert on this issue: "Canada's border remains secure. The Government of Canada adapted to the increase with measures that reduce congestions at land"—

**The Deputy Speaker:** We have run out of time.

The hon. member for Saskatoon West.

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**HEALTH**

**Ms. Sheri Benson (Saskatoon West, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, in the face of what health experts are calling an epidemic, the federal government has cut funding to 30% of AIDS organizations, providing no explanation.

Saskatchewan's HIV rate is two-and-a-half times the national average, yet the funding of two organizations, AIDS Saskatoon and All Nations Hope, who do important work in outreach, education, and prevention, has been cut.

Instead of these short-sighted cuts, will the minister provide proper funding by restoring the missing millions from our HIV strategy?

**Mr. Bill Blair (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada and to the Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to assure the member opposite that our government is deeply committed to addressing HIV and AIDS in Canada, and we are proud to have reversed the former government's spending cuts in this area.

For example, this year our government is investing \$87 million across the country to help tackle HIV and other sexually transmitted and blood-borne diseases in Canada, and we have announced an additional \$30 million over the next five years to support Canadian-based harm reduction initiatives.

Our government will continue to work closely with all of our partners to make progress towards the global targets in order to eliminate AIDS as a public health threat by 2030.

## FOREIGN AFFAIRS

**Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, recently the Prime Minister posed for a cover photo for *Attitude*, the U.K.'s largest LGBTQ magazine, and expressed his support for international LGBTQ rights.

Today he is in London for the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, supposedly an organization founded on shared values, yet one where 36 of its 53 members still criminalize being gay, and the topic has never been on their agenda.

Did the Prime Minister make the same effort to get LGBTQ rights on the Commonwealth agenda as he did to score his own magazine cover photo?

**Mr. Matt DeCoursey (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government is a tireless advocate for the rights of the LGBTQ2 community, both at home and abroad. We raise these issues everywhere we go around the world.

We have introduced legislation here at home to protect the rights of transgender and gender-diverse Canadians. We have appointed a special adviser on LGBTQ2 issues. We are co-chairing the Equal Rights Coalition, which is advocating for the rights of the LGBTQ2 community abroad. We have prioritized LGBTQ2 refugees as part of our initiative to resettle 50,000 Syrian refugees in Canada.

We are on the record everywhere we go, standing for the rights of this vulnerable population. We continue to do that.

\* \* \*

• (1455)

## JUSTICE

**Hon. Rob Nicholson (Niagara Falls, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Justice has continuously said that she is concerned about increasing people's confidence in the criminal justice system and its efficiency.

I have to ask her a question. After the Alberta case of the notorious gang leader Nick Chan was thrown out because of delays, why is she not making the necessary appointments to make sure something like this does not happen again?

**Hon. Jody Wilson-Raybould (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I have said, our government is committed to improving the efficiencies and the effectiveness of the criminal justice system to ensure victims are supported, to ensure that offenders are taken to account, and to ensure public safety.

Delays in the criminal justice system are not new. They certainly existed in the previous government. The case of reference started to make its way through the system well in advance of our taking government. What is new is that we have taken significant steps by introducing Bill C-75, which aims to take bold action to address delays. As well, I have appointed 167 judges to the superior courts of this country.

[Translation]

**Hon. Rob Nicholson (Niagara Falls, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the minister stated that she has appointed 167 new judges. Why, then,

## Oral Questions

was she not able to do so in Alberta? In my six years as justice minister, there was never a lack of qualified individuals to appoint to the bench.

Why is she not making the necessary appointments to prevent the inexcusable release of these criminals, some even charged with murder?

[English]

**Hon. Jody Wilson-Raybould (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am always pleased to stand up here to talk about the independent process in terms of appointing meritorious candidates to superior courts across this country.

I am proud of the 167 meritorious appointments that I have made, appointments that reflect the diversity of this country. Twenty-seven of those appointments are in Alberta. I will continue to make appointments to the vacancies that currently still exist. This is something that I take incredibly seriously. We have substantive candidates who are being brought forward, and they will be considered in the same process through which every candidate is considered.

**Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the criminal organization that Nick Chan is the head of is the so-called Fresh Off the Boat gang, a gang linked to more than a dozen murders.

Today Calgary is a less safe place because Nick Chan is back out on the streets because this Minister of Justice has abdicated her responsibilities to deal with the backlog and get judges appointed.

When is the minister going to stop making excuses and take responsibility for her negligence?

**Hon. Jody Wilson-Raybould (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, again, I am committed to continuing to appoint meritorious judges to the superior courts across this country. The member opposite should know that appointing judges is not necessarily the main reason that delays exist. What we are doing is fulfilling our government's commitment to follow through to significantly address court delays by introducing bold reform by way of Bill C-75. I expect the member opposite will support these measures because they would significantly reduce the delays in the criminal justice system.

\* \* \*

## HOUSING

**Mr. John Oliver (Oakville, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in my riding of Oakville, access to temporary housing, shelters for abused women, and adult supportive housing are critical issues. Last November, the government announced Canada's first-ever national housing strategy, a 10-year \$40-billion plan to give more Canadians a place to call home. Last week, we saw the first multilateral agreement on housing in a quarter of a century signed with the provinces and territories.

### Oral Questions

Could the minister responsible for the national housing strategy explain how the housing partnership framework will help realize the government's bold vision for Canadians?

**Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like first to thank and congratulate the member for Oakville for his tremendous work in support of the housing needs of his constituents.

On April 9, we signed a historic housing partnership with provinces and territories that has recognized our combined and complementary responsibility to support the housing needs of Canadians. This is part of the national housing strategy, a 10-year \$40-billion plan that is going to bring half a million Canadians out of housing need and launch a new era for housing in Canada.

\* \* \*

### RAIL TRANSPORTATION

**Mrs. Kelly Block (Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberals' weak response to systemic problems in our rail transportation industry has already hurt Canada's agriculture, manufacturing, and natural resources industries. Now the industries are bracing for another blow. A work stoppage at CP Rail will be devastating, not only to these industries but to our economy as well.

Is the Liberal government prepared to act to protect the livelihoods of thousands of Canadians, or will the Liberals simply cross their fingers and hope for the best?

• (1500)

**Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, federal mediators are on-site. They are working very hard on the negotiations. I have spoken to the employer and both unions and I have stressed that I expect all parties to stay at the table until they get a deal. I will continue to closely monitor the situation.

\* \* \*

### INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

**Ms. Georgina Jolibois (Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, in September, the government and the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls promised that the members of the inquiry would come and hold public meetings in La Ronge, Meadow Lake, and La Loche, but they never came. When we followed up with them on their promise, they never answered our questions.

So far, the government has failed families in northern Saskatchewan. When will it come and fulfill the promise it made to first nations and Métis mothers and fathers in my riding?

**Ms. Yvonne Jones (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to ending the ongoing national tragedy of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls. That is why we were the first government to establish the independent commission.

The commission's mandate is clear. It is that families must be at the centre of its work. We are committed to ensuring that this inquiry operates in the best interests of families and those affected, ensuring that they get the answers that many have been waiting for about the

systemic and institutional failures that have led to this tragedy within our country.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

### OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

**Mr. Nick Whalen (St. John's East, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, from St. John's, Newfoundland, to Victoria, British Columbia, our two official languages are at the very heart of who we are as Canadians. After 10 years of underinvestment by the previous government, our government is taking concrete action to protect official languages, because we recognize the importance of linguistic duality and how much it contributes to the lives of Canadians.

Could the Minister of Canadian Heritage take this opportunity to explain to the House what our government is doing to protect our official languages?

**Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would of course like to thank my colleague from St. John's East for his question and also for his excellent French.

Our two official languages, as he put it so well, are at the heart of who we are, which is why we, as a government, have decided to make the largest investment in Canadian history, a historic investment, specifically \$500 million in new funds, for a total of \$2.7 billion, in our official language communities.

After 10 years of underinvestment by the Conservative government, we are very proud to be taking concrete action. We are going to strengthen our communities, improve access to services, and promote a bilingual Canada. That is why we are taking action.

\* \* \*

[English]

### VETERANS AFFAIRS

**Mrs. Cathay Wagantall (Yorkton—Melville, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, leading scientific research shows that quality service dogs significantly benefit the lives of our veterans who are struggling with PTSD. However, yesterday the government announced that it would not be providing a nationwide standard for the training of these dogs.

We already know the Prime Minister has money for everyone but our veterans. Is he now saying that a national standard for the training of their service dogs is, well, also something more than he can give?

**Hon. Seamus O'Regan (Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will not even draw attention to the fact that the party opposite voted against funding for service dogs, but I will speak to the issue directly.



*Business of the House*

Governments previous had attempted to drive a national standard for service dogs. We realized this was not getting anywhere, not fast enough for this government, so we decided to solely look at psychiatric service dogs. We will establish a standard for them. We will get that service to those who need it, our veterans, as quickly as we possibly can, just as we have delivered \$10 billion for our veterans in two years.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**JUSTICE**

**Mr. Rhéal Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, GPQ):** Mr. Speaker, we can always count on the federal government to stick its nose where it does not belong. This time, it is interfering in the work of members of the National Assembly by funding a challenge to their right to work in French. I am not making this up. The Department of Canadian Heritage is paying the Montreal Bar Association \$125,000 to challenge all of Quebec's laws because they were debated in French. That is right, \$125,000.

Does the Minister of Heritage really support the challenge she is backing financially?

• (1505)

**Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, some organizations decided to launch these proceedings, and that is their choice. I will not comment further, as this matter is presently before the courts.

**Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, GPQ):** Mr. Speaker, we are talking about funding for this file.

The Pay Equity Act, the anti-strikebreaking provisions, the Consumer Protection Act, the Educational Childcare Act, and the Environment Quality Act are all laws that we are proud of and that will be challenged thanks to the support and money of the Minister of Heritage.

How can the Minister of Heritage justify using Quebecers' money to attack the only parliament that defends their interests?

**Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I already said, some organizations decided to launch these proceedings and that is their choice. Naturally, as the matter is before the courts, I will not comment further.

\* \* \*

[English]

**THE ENVIRONMENT**

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, the warnings of climate scientists are becoming increasingly urgent and worrying. The most recent, days ago, was that the world was watching the weakening of the Gulf Stream ocean currents, with potentially catastrophic impacts. The scientists are warning that we must reduce greenhouse gases far more rapidly than our current commitments. If we fail to do so, if we blow through our carbon budget, we will pay dearly. This is a budget we cannot afford to ignore. It is incompatible with completing Kinder Morgan.

Could the government show us the numbers of how we build a pipeline and meet our climate targets?

**Mr. Jonathan Wilkinson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this government agrees that climate change is an extremely important issue. We have been working very actively to implement the pan-Canadian framework on clean growth and climate change.

The latest national inventory report from the United Nations shows that carbon pollution declined between 2015 and 2016. In fact, Canada's third biennial report, which was published in 2017, shows that Canada's emissions are projected to be 232 megatonnes lower than was projected just last year.

The Trans Mountain emissions, both upstream and direct, are incorporated into the pan-Canadian framework. When these policies and programs are fully implemented in Canada, we are very confident we will meet the targets under the Paris agreement and set even more ambitious targets as we move forward.

[Translation]

**Mr. Steven MacKinnon:** Mr. Speaker, it is with sadness that I rise in the House today because nothing causes us, on this side of the House, more anguish than a pointless exercise in creative writing.

[English]

Consequently, consultations have been held among many of us, and I suspect, Mr. Speaker, if you seek it, you will find unanimous consent to free the book by the member for Beauce.

[Translation]

Free the book, Mr. Speaker.

**Hon. Maxime Bernier:** Mr. Speaker, I think the opposition members are desperate. I would ask them to be patient and wait a few years since it was my own decision not to publish the book. One day, they will be able to read my writings.

\* \* \*

**BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE**

**Hon. Candice Bergen (Portage—Lisgar, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the government. I hope that I will get a better answer than those that were given in question period. We will see.

Can the government House leader tell us what work the government is proposing for the rest of the day and next week?

• (1510)

[English]

**Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this afternoon we will debate the Senate amendments on Bill C-25, business frameworks.

[Translation]

Monday, we will continue second reading debate of Bill C-74, on the budget.

Tuesday and Thursday shall be allotted days.

*Government Orders*

Wednesday, we will resume third reading debate of Bill C-55, on ocean protection. [English]

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## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

### CANADA BUSINESS CORPORATIONS ACT

The House proceeded to the consideration of amendments made by the Senate to Bill C-25, An Act to amend the Canada Business Corporations Act, the Canada Cooperatives Act, the Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act, and the Competition Act.

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan (for the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development)** moved the second reading of, and concurrence in, amendments made by the Senate to Bill C-25, an act to amend the Canada Business Corporations Act, the Canada Cooperatives Act, the Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act, and the Competition Act.

**Mr. David Lametti (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that this chamber has the opportunity to consider Bill C-25, an act to amend the Canada Business Corporations Act, the Canada Cooperatives Act, the Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act, and the Competition Act one final time. At this point, I think we are all aware that Bill C-25 would make a number of targeted amendments to our economic framework laws in an effort to bring them up to date for our modern economy.

The bill would modernize the director elections for publicly traded CBCA corporations, requiring individual annual elections and introducing a new majority voting mechanism for uncontested elections. It would also allow these companies to take better advantage of modern technology through the notice and access system.

The part of the bill that has received the most exposure is, of course, on the measures to promote diversity on corporate boards through new informational requirements and a comply-or-explain model for having a diversity policy put in place. The bill, moreover, would require bearer share options and warrants to be in registered form, as the shares themselves must already be, as an effort to promote transparency. It would also update the Competition Act to account for a greater variety of business structures.

The measures in Bill C-25 would allow us to embrace best practices, add clarity to the law, and minimize the regulatory burden.

[Translation]

This bill was sent to us by the other place after careful consideration in committee and debate in the Senate chamber. The other place made a certain number of amendments that clearly improve this bill. A small but important amendment was made in clause 13, specifically to subsections 106(6) and 106(6.1), to prevent a board of directors from being paralyzed after a vote to which the majority voting rule applies fails.

The majority voting requirement introduced by the bill would set out the rules that would apply in an uncontested election. That is, where candidates ran unopposed, they would have to receive a majority of votes cast “for” over all votes cast in order to be elected. Directors who failed to be re-elected because of the operation of this provision would cease acting as directors immediately after the election.

After hearing from stakeholders, it became clear that the strict application of the majority voting rule could lead to unintended consequences. The decision-making structure of a publicly traded corporation could be disrupted, as some or even all the directors could fail to be re-elected. While ensuring shareholders' wishes is a key principle of good corporate governance, this principle should not lead to a corporation being without a decision-making body. This would not only be contrary to good corporate governance but could endanger, albeit for a short period of time, the ability of a corporation to make important decisions affecting market and product strategies and the bottom line.

Our colleagues in the other place have carefully assessed this situation and the potential risks associated with it. Based on suggestions from stakeholders and corporate governance experts, they have adopted a simple but effective solution. It would guarantee corporate boards affected by a director's defeat through majority voting a respite of up to 90 days. The amendment is intended to mitigate the risk that the sudden loss of directors would result in unexpected disruptions in corporate decision-making. It would provide a specific grace period of up to 90 days in which directors could continue acting until replaced. The amendment would be largely consistent with provincial securities law and Canadian corporate practices, and it results from a consensus among stakeholders who have an interest in corporate governance.

Shareholders are entitled to vote out directors who are no longer proposing a vision or direction that is expected from them or who have not delivered according to shareholders' expectations. Bill C-25 would reinforce shareholder democracy through majority voting. This is a positive development. However, within the context of this policy objective, it must also be acknowledged that the immediate effect of voting out directors can pose challenges. For these reasons, this amendment, adopted by the other place, should be carried.

I would note that a similar amendment has been reflected in the provisions on elections to boards of co-operatives. For the same reasons I just explained, that amendment is also an improvement to the bill.

Clause 24 of the bill has also been amended by our hon. colleagues. That is section 171.1 of the CBCA. This amendment addresses a slight oversight and would enable the use of electronic communications in a broader range of circumstances.

*Government Orders*

● (1515)

*[Translation]*

Everyone agrees that in today's world, we should give people every incentive to communicate electronically. The bill makes it easier to use electronic communications with shareholders through something called notice and access. This allows shareholders to access corporate documents electronically through a link provided to them instead of having to request paper copies from the corporation. Many companies provide this service and those who invest directly in Canadian corporations are already aware of the benefits of using this service.

*[English]*

The use of “notice and access” is common, particularly in relation to publicly traded corporations, such as those traded on the Toronto and Montreal stock exchanges. There is no reason not to extend the availability of the notice and access system to every corporate document that is required to be shared with shareholders, with the exception, perhaps, of notices of shareholder meetings, in some circumstances.

Proposed subsection 172.1(1) would require directors of a publicly traded corporation to place before the shareholders, at every annual meeting, a policy on diversity among the directors and members of senior management. This provision, which has drawn large public attention, is a key feature of the bill.

The amendment proposed by the other place would allow corporations to choose the time at which they wished to send the diversity policy, either at the time of sending the notice of meeting or when sending the proxy circular. In the absence of the amendment, the policy would be required to be sent in paper form, in many situations, if sent with the notice of annual meeting. This amendment would be useful and consistent with the trend that has been observed in relation to rules established by Canadian securities commissions.

I have outlined some of the ways Bill C-25 would support our modern economy and the various improvements it has undergone in the other place. I thank the other place for its work in making those amendments.

The amendments made by Bill C-25 would be quite targeted, as they arose from issues with the clearest consensus during consultations. However, modest change should not be mistaken as being unimportant. This bill would help advance the laudable goals of ensuring transparency, clarity, and fairness, empowering shareholders while presenting the opportunity to address important issues such as diversity.

The process has been long, but I look forward to royal assent.

*[Translation]*

**Hon. Maxime Bernier (Beauce, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech on Bill C-25 and I would like him to know that the official opposition fully supports it. As we know, the House voted unanimously in favour of the bill a few months ago. The hon. member did a fine job explaining the changes, but could he clarify whether these changes also apply to both the Canada Business Corporations Act and the Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act?

● (1520)

**Mr. David Lametti:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for the question. As far as I know, the changes I just described in my speech apply to the Canada Corporations Act as well as the Canada Cooperatives Act. To my knowledge, they do not apply to other organizations, but I can confirm that for him.

**Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault (Sherbrooke, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his comments and his speech. I also thank the members in the other chamber for contributing to this debate.

My question is about how the bill has been roundly criticized for being weak. There are some very important issues surrounding corporate transparency in Canada. The Standing Committee on Finance is discussing money laundering and proceeds of crime, an issue that is often raised. Another such issue concerns beneficial ownership, or knowing who, exactly, owns a business. Unfortunately, this bill is yet another missed opportunity to address the lack of transparency in Canada's provincial and federal business registries.

Can my colleague explain why they decided to consider these transparency proposals but not to include them in Bill C-25? If they intend to do so, when?

**Mr. David Lametti:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his speech. This issue has been debated in committee. I can tell him that these issues are still being examined, as their complexity far exceeded the scope of the bill. The bill had some fairly specific goals, and the issues that my hon. colleague raised are much broader. It would be better to examine these issues separately and to address them at another time.

*[English]*

**Mrs. Brenda Shanahan (Châteauguay—Lacolle, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have not had the opportunity to follow this debate all the way through, but as a former banker, I am interested in understanding how promoting diversity on a corporate board such as a bank would help the bottom line? Is there any rationale for that?

**Mr. David Lametti:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for her diligent work on a variety of different dossiers.

The simple answer is that it is a basic economic fact that diversity on boards is not only right, just, equitable, and a good example, but it is also great for the bottom line. Companies that have more diversity do better economically.

*[Translation]*

**Hon. Maxime Bernier (Beauce, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague has spoken at great length on the amendments that the Senate made to Bill C-25. I would therefore like to talk a bit more about the general content of the bill.

*Government Orders*

It is important to state why the official opposition voted for the bill or why it has the unanimous support of the House. It is because it is intended to modernize the acts governing Canadian corporations, namely the Canada Business Corporations Act, the Canada Cooperatives Act, the Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act, and the Competition Act.

The bill seeks to reform some aspects of these acts to make the process for electing directors of certain corporations more modern and efficient. It also seeks to modernize communications between corporations and their shareholders and clarify that corporations and co-operatives are prohibited from issuing share certificates and warrants in bearer form. However, the most important part for those tuning in is that the bill will affect over 270,000 federally regulated companies, many of them small and medium-sized businesses across Canada. They will be positively affected by these changes.

As my colleague said, the amendments made to these acts stem from a study conducted by a House of Commons committee in 2010 and extensive consultations held by Industry Canada in 2014. Consequently, it was high time that the House modernized this bill.

Furthermore, financial regulators have already adapted to these amendments, and some have adopted regulations in order to comply with the future legislation.

I would like to remind my colleagues that we in the House are responsible for modernizing the legal environment that corporations operate in. That is a good thing. It is a noble and meaningful goal. However, we also need to think about the economic environment that these small and medium-sized businesses operate in. There are more than 200,000 SMEs across Canada.

That concerns me a bit more. The current economic environment is not conducive to investments. Let us be honest. The investments made by these small and medium-sized enterprises, as well as the larger companies, are what create wealth and drive the economy. More investment means more jobs. Today, because of the Liberal government's policies, investments are on the decline.

My colleague, the finance critic, said during question period that capital is leaving Canada. It is a disaster. Where is it going? It is going across the border to the United States where President Trump lowered the corporate interest rate from 35% to 21%. The U.S. is attracting capital because the Government of Canada is raising taxes and adding more regulations, which is another way of telling foreign investors not to invest in our energy economy.

The fact is that government red tape and slow moving processes have caused investments in Canada's energy industry to drop by more than \$84 billion over the past two years. Indeed, \$84 billion in investments in the Canadian energy sector were simply cancelled. Imagine the impact that has on job creation in the country.

That is not all. As everyone knows, Canada has been open to foreign investment ever since Brian Mulroney's first government in 1984. The Liberal government of the day had set up an agency to select foreign investors. When Mr. Mulroney's government took over in 1984, one of the first things it did was get rid of that agency and welcome foreign investment because it knew that investment creates wealth. Since then, Canada has made much progress thanks to foreign and domestic investment.

● (1525)

Now, however, foreign investors are stampeding for the exit. They are leaving Canada. Direct foreign investment in Canada plunged from 42% in 2016 to 27% in 2017 under a Liberal government. Why? Because the economic environment is not conducive to investment and wealth creation. Today we are glad the legal environment is good because Bill C-25 will modernize the Canada Cooperatives Act and the Canada Business Corporations Act. We agree with that.

However, we need to change the economic environment. We need to attract foreign investment. To do that, as the official opposition has been saying for months, we need less regulation and lower taxes. Crucially, the government has to stop taxing Canadians and funnelling the proceeds to big corporations in the form of subsidies and non-repayable loans.

I would add that businesses have lost confidence in Canada. Canadian business investment has declined by 5%, or \$12.7 billion, since 2015. What happened in 2015? Oh right, the Liberal government took office and proceeded to scare off foreign investment. Our business people are now reluctant to invest because of this government. This spells disaster for our country's economic future.

We will understand the impact of this drop in investments in the months and years ahead. Fewer investments mean fewer jobs. That is the sad part of all this.

I fully agree with the government on the need to modernize the legislative framework surrounding business corporations. That is a good thing and we support it. However, we do take issue with the economic environment the Liberal government has created for our country. It will spell disaster for future generations.

That being said, I have to say that we fully support all the amendments to this bill brought forward by our colleagues in the Senate. I hope the House passes this bill as soon as possible. I also hope the Minister of Finance understands the situation in which Canadian entrepreneurs are being forced to operate and can assure them of a brighter future.

● (1530)

**Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault (Sherbrooke, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I just have a quick question for my colleague, and I thank him for his work on this file.

My colleague said that his party supports the provisions in Bill C-25. With respect to strengthening diversity and gender parity on corporate boards, I am wondering if his party's position has changed. In the previous Parliament, when his party was in power, my colleague took issue with a bill aimed at improving diversity and gender parity on the boards of federal crown corporations. I am wondering whether his view or position on this matter has changed, given that he supports this bill today.

*Government Orders*

**Hon. Maxime Bernier:** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased, as are all my colleagues in the official opposition, to support this bill. As my colleague just mentioned, the bill contains provisions to foster diversity on boards of directors. It is a sound move for corporations and it is a good decision. We are quite pleased to support this bill.

**Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault (Sherbrooke, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to also rise in the House to briefly speak to Bill C-25 and the Senate amendments that were returned and on which we are called upon to comment. My colleagues have already done so, and I will not repeat what has been said.

I would like to start by mentioning that the bill has several flaws. Above all, it does not go far enough on certain issues. We are currently discussing similar issues at the Standing Committee on Finance as some of my colleagues know. We have even heard from witnesses on the transparency of Canadian businesses and corporate registries, which make it possible to identify the owners. One of the shortcomings pointed out by several reputable international organizations is Canada's lack of transparency with respect to corporate registries and corporate regulations. This was pointed out many times. We are ranked near the bottom on corporate transparency.

There is a new term in Canada known as snow washing. Some wealthy individuals use Canada to hide the real identities of their businesses' owners. Canada's corporate laws are not often revised. In fact, the last time they were was 40 years ago. Bill C-25 was the perfect opportunity to address these international recriminations about the lack of transparency around our businesses, but unfortunately the government chose not to do so. This is one of the reasons why we proposed amendments to try to rectify the situation. Our attempts were in vain, and I disagree with the government's position on this.

This bill was also an opportunity to fix a problem that comes up all the time at the Standing Committee on Finance. I could even talk about my colleague from Hull—Aylmer, who questioned a tax expert, André Lareau. This expert testified in committee as part of our review of the Proceeds of Crime (Money Laundering) and Terrorist Financing Act, which touches on what we are debating today. Prof. Lareau told the committee that Bill C-25 was a step in the right direction because it would prohibit bearer shares, which make it pretty easy to conceal shareholders' real identities. Unfortunately, Prof. Lareau said that this would not stop the existing shares from being converted into registered instruments.

My colleague even confirmed the existence of this loophole, saying that we had to look at all of the shares that are out there, not just those that will be issued after the bill receives royal assent. Unfortunately, to date, we have rarely had the opportunity to review our laws on corporations, co-operatives, and non-profit organizations. Nevertheless, we hope that the government made note of that loophole and will consider doing something about it in the near future.

In short, corporate transparency around the identity of beneficial owners remains an important issue that has not been sufficiently addressed in this bill. The government should examine that issue soon since Canada will continue to draw criticism regarding corporate transparency.

● (1535)

The government has already taken some action in that regard. It reached an agreement with the provincial ministers under which every company must enter the name of its beneficial owner in the provincial registries. That is a step forward and even though there are dissenting voices that say that this is not the way to go, there is still an apparent willingness to have a registry of beneficial owners, which our party believes is extremely important. I hope that the government intends to consider this issue soon in order to resolve the major problem of corporate transparency.

I hope that I have done the member for Windsor West proud. He has done remarkable work on this file. I hope that the rest of the debate on the transparency of corporations, co-operatives, non-profit organizations, and their boards of directors will be productive.

● (1540)

[*English*]

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, I had presented amendments during clause-by-clause consideration in an attempt to follow up on the issue of bearer bonds which the member has raised. We had very good evidence at committee from Publish What You Pay Canada on the misuse of bearer shares, that bearer shares are difficult to track, and that there is no transparency around ownership.

I invite my friend from Sherbrooke to expand on the point.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her comments. Bearer shares are indeed an important issue, and Canada is still doing quite poorly compared to the rest of the world, since the bill has not yet received royal assent. Canada's system makes it possible to easily hide the identity of who owns shares or a business. Canada must absolutely examine this issue.

A number of other countries have already taken action to prevent companies from concealing their owners' identities. Companies generally do not do this for good reasons, so we must address this issue in order to combat money laundering and organized crime. This is certainly a step in the right direction, but once again, something important is missing; this bill should be targeting existing shares, and not just shares that will be issued in the future.

[*English*]

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is the House ready for the question?

**Some hon. members:** Question.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The question is on the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

*Private Members' Business*

(Motion agreed to, amendments read the second time and concurred in)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, I suspect if you were to canvass the House, you would find unanimous consent to call it 5:30 p.m., so we can begin private members' hour.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is it the pleasure of the House to see the clock at 5:30 p.m.?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's Order Paper.

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## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

• (1545)

[Translation]

### DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY ACT

**Hon. Maxime Bernier (Beauce, CPC)** moved that Bill C-396, An Act to amend the Department of Industry Act (financial assistance), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

He said: Mr. Speaker, it is rather unfortunate that we are forced to introduce a bill to ensure greater transparency. It must be said that the Government of Canada provides financial assistance to many businesses. The purpose of the bill is to ensure that when the government says that its financial assistance is repayable, Canadian taxpayers are actually informed that they have been repaid. We do not have that information and that is the purpose of the bill. It is a very simple bill.

I stated that it is unfortunate that we have to introduce a bill because I want to go back to 2006 when I was the industry minister. The information was available. When the industry minister provided repayable assistance, taxpayers could go to the department's website and find out which companies had received financial assistance, how much they received, and the repayment terms.

We have been asking the government for a lot more transparency for many months now. Let us not forget the \$275-million repayable loan that the government gave Bombardier a few months ago. I asked the government what the terms and conditions of that loan were, and I was told that they were secret. That is unfortunate because taxpayers will not know whether that money has been repaid. What is more, although the government gave that money to a very reputable company, jobs still left Montreal. Meanwhile, members will recall that shareholders received very generous bonuses, thanks to the \$200-odd million the government gave Bombardier.

That said, these agreements are not secret. They should be made public because taxpayers have a right to know where their money is going. That is why we had to introduce a bill today to tell the government that the official opposition, with the support of the NDP, I hope, wants to know what happens with any future grants and whether the amounts are actually repaid.

I am going to give a few figures because the industry minister is really responsible for the contributions and funding given to companies. This is not a new problem. I see here that the Government of Canada gave \$57 million to Bell Helicopter. When we look at the "repayment" column on the department's website, it says that the information is confidential. No information is provided. The problem is that the loan was granted in November 2003 and we do not know what is happening with it. We found out about the loan when it was made public a few years later in 2006-07, as I said, but we do not know whether it has been repaid.

I am looking at another file, that of CMC Electronic Inc. In 1997, the government granted CMC \$23 million. Was that money ever paid back? No. I can go on because the list is long. I will name only a few. IBM Canada, a company that does very well, received \$33 million from the Minister of Industry. Was that money paid back? No, no one knows, because that is confidential. When I look at all this and add up all the companies that did not repay the money they received, I see that more than 200 companies received repayable loans and grants that just slipped through the cracks. No one has any idea what happened to the money that was given to nearly half of those 200 companies. No one knows if, in fact, the money was given as a grant or not. Unpaid repayable loans become subsidies. There is no information for 45% of these companies.

Even more alarming is that this money given to the corporations represents more than \$700 million in unpaid loans. Is this \$700 million in subsidies to big business or not? No one knows because no one has any idea about the repayment status of these "subsidies".

• (1550)

Since this is taxpayer money there is nothing confidential about it and everything should be made public. Some civil organizations are asking for this information. They have taken the matter to court to find out what happened with these grants or so-called repayable loans.

The bill is very simple. It says that when the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development gives a business a grant or a non-repayable loan, taxpayers and Canadians should be able to find out if the money is repaid or not. That is a cornerstone of democracy. That is why I am happy my NDP colleagues support this. I very rarely agree with socialists, but they are being sensible here. Like me, they can see that, in this case, the government is using its power to say things are secret when they are not secret.

I hope to have the support of my Liberal colleagues as well. During and after the election campaign, they talked a lot about transparency, open government, and accessible government. If that is really what my Liberal colleagues want to achieve, this is their opportunity to walk the talk. They can choose to take action and support this bill to signal that transparency is important in Canadian society and tell Canadians that upwards of \$700 million will be repaid.

*Private Members' Business*

It is unfair that so many small businesses, including some in Beauce, do not have the luxury of getting subsidies—excuse me, repayable loans that, between you and me, turn into subsidies when they are not repaid. Businesses in Beauce work hard, pay their taxes, and obey the law, but they do not have this luxury and cannot access any of that money. The government should treat everyone fairly and make sure the money is repaid.

I have a suggestion for my Liberal friends. When the \$700 million is repaid, if indeed those were repayable loans, they can use the money to lower the tax rate for all businesses in Canada and adopt a policy that is actually fair and will create wealth.

The bill is on the table, and I am eager to hear from my Liberal colleagues. I think they will see the light and support it.

[English]

**Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague raised the question of Bombardier. I am firm believer in making investments in Canadian businesses to ensure we create Canadian jobs to build a strong Canadian economy. However, on the question of Bombardier, it lost \$900 million, got \$1 billion from the taxpayers, and then because its CEOs seemed to have felt they did such a good job, they paid themselves some \$30 million in bonuses.

I know my friend is a hard-core fundamentalist capitalist, but would he not agree that the bonuses these CEOs were paid was taxpayer money and that, as taxpayers, we should have some right to at least claw that back or to ensure, if the company gets this kind of money, that we get the full benefit, including accountability and transparency?

[Translation]

**Hon. Maxime Bernier:** Mr. Speaker, what the NDP is saying hits close to home for me, because I am very much of the same mind. Their comments align with the Conservative principles of freedom and responsibility. I am thrilled that my colleague is saying yes to the Conservative principles of freedom and responsibility. He is absolutely right about Bombardier and about other companies that receive these loans. When Bombardier accepted the loans, its executives did indeed give themselves huge bonuses. That was taxpayer money. This is where our views coincide with those of the NDP members, because taxpayer money is important. We need to get the details of this secret agreement, but as my colleague said, the most important thing is to get taxpayers their money back.

• (1555)

[English]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as the months go by, I find the Conservatives and the NDP have a lot more in common. I do not know if that is a good thing or a bad thing. Many would suggest it is an unholy alliance.

I acknowledge that political entities of all stripes across the country, at the provincial level and at the national level, have recognized that at times there is a need for government to get involved. We have seen many success stories, jobs that would never have survived if government had not been involved. Even the introducer of the bill might be a minority within his own caucus.

Does he believe that at times government needs to get involved to ensure the longevity of some of these very important industries? I could cite examples specifically in my province of Manitoba. It seems to cross party lines, at least at the provincial level and I would like at the national level as well.

**Hon. Maxime Bernier:** Mr. Speaker, when the government is involved, we must have transparency. Everyone must know what is happening. That is the challenge we have right now with the government. The government is involved with more than \$700 million and we do not know what happens to the money when it goes to corporations. However, it is supposed to be reimbursed but it has not. The government is part of the economy. I do not question that today. If we look at the bill, I am questioning what is happening with taxpayer money.

[Translation]

**Mr. Alupa Clarke (Beauport—Limoilou, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I just want to say that the member for Beauce's private member's bill goes to the heart of the parliamentary system. In the 13th century, the capitalist bourgeoisie went to the king to demand a place in an assembly, which became the legislative assembly. Their goal was first and foremost to find out what the king was doing with the money, the bourgeoisie's money, the suppliers' money and the people's money, which had been collected by the bourgeoisie or by agents acting for the king.

It is clear that the Liberals hate reporting to Parliament, because they are trying to hide a \$7-billion slush fund in their new 2018-19 budget. I would therefore like the member to tell us a bit about his vision and about how his bill goes to the heart of the parliamentary system and accountability as practised by the capitalist bourgeoisie in the 13th century.

**Hon. Maxime Bernier:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague.

We have some very learned members in the Conservative Party who know their history, like my colleague. I am proud to be here, in the House, with all of my colleagues. It is a privilege to represent the people, and we are part of a very small club. However, we must do what is needed to honour the Canadian Constitution and constitutional standards. We are here to hold the government to account on what it is doing with taxpayer money. We are having to go so far as to introduce a bill to get answers on transparency. This goes against the parliamentary principle, and I hope that my Liberal colleagues will realize this. I thank my colleague for raising one more point in favour of this bill.

[English]

**The Deputy Speaker:** It is my duty pursuant to Standing Order 38 to inform the House that the questions to be raised this afternoon at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Vancouver East, Status of Women; the hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, Employment; the hon. member for South Okanagan—West Kootenay, Canada Revenue Agency.

*Private Members' Business*

**Ms. Mary Ng (Markham—Thornhill, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to challenge a claim made by my hon. colleague. He asserted that in the past, and repeated the claim, when he was industry minister, that he made all agreements public as well as the balance that remained to be paid for each loan and each company. That simply is not true.

I would like to refresh his memory. The Department of Industry, now Innovation, Science and Economic Development, or ISED, has never published the terms and conditions of individual funding agreements or the agreements themselves.

When the member for Beauce was minister of industry, from February 2006 to August 2007, ISED followed the Government of Canada's proactive disclosure policy for grants and contributions. Since then, nothing has changed other than our government has dramatically increased the amount of information that is currently being disclosed, something I will speak about shortly. Since 2015, there has been more openness and more transparency, not less.

•(1600)

**The Deputy Speaker:** Resuming debate, the hon. member for Timmins—James Bay.

**Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, as always, I am honoured to rise in the House to represent the people of Timmins—James Bay and to participate in debate on Bill C-396, an act to amend the Department of Industry Act with respect to loans that are given out, and to address the issue of transparency and accountability with respect to loans.

What I have learned in my many years of representing northern Ontario is that the government has an important role to play in working as a partner and ensuring that we can build a strong economic base across this country. Part of the role the government plays as a partner is making sure that if loans are being made, they are of net benefit to our regions and our country.

The issue that has been brought forward by my colleague about more transparency with respect to these loans is certainly something we should be looking at, because after a number of recent scandals, Canadians have asked themselves how these decisions could have been made.

For example, Export Development Canada loaned \$41 million to the notorious Gupta brothers to buy a jet, who then absconded with the jet and defaulted on the payments. People back home ask themselves how it could possibly be in the interests of Canada and the hard-working taxpayers of our country to loan \$41 million to a couple of brothers who were involved in all kinds of accusations of corruption in another continent to buy themselves the ultimate lifestyle trinket, that being a private jet. They would also wonder why Canadians would be surprised that they absconded with the jet.

That kind of transparency is worth having.

I would like to challenge my Conservative colleague. I do not think we have ever agreed on anything, other than the fact that this issue of transparency is important. However, under the previous Conservative government, when it came to the issue of net benefit to the Canadian people in deals with industry, it was very secretive. We saw that with the takeover of American Steel and Stelco. We saw it with the supposed net benefit to Canada when two of the greatest

mining companies in the world, Falconbridge and Inco, were allowed to be taken over by the corporate bandits Xstrata and Vale. We were told that this was to be of net benefit to Canadians, yet when we asked what the terms of the agreements were that they had to live by, we were told it was a secret.

How is it possible that we can sell off major Canadian industries with a supposed investment agreement and then, when we ask if the terms of the agreement are being lived up to, we are told it is a secret? That is not in the best interests of the Canadian taxpayer.

What my hon. colleague is putting forward with respect to the obligation for industry is vital at this time, because we see a government that talks about moving forward with “clusters”. That is its big vision: to find a supercluster or a megacluster. I do not know what it will call it in the next budget—the “super-duper oodle cluster”?

The idea that it can find three or four places in the country and turn an economy around is a ridiculous notion, because an economy is like a strong ecosystem, in that there have to be values at every level that are actually sustainable. Contrary to the Liberals' vision of the supercluster, I think one of the important roles of government investment is in regional economic development, to make sure that we have solid local economies across this country. That is done by being a partner, and traditionally we have done it through the various economic development agencies.

There have been a lot of allegations over the years of pork-barrel politics and problems with that. This is why accountability and transparency are important. It is extremely important in my region of northern Ontario, which is a resource-based economy. The principle of resource-based economies, where there are non-renewable resources, is that the revenues should benefit the region. In the case of Alberta, the revenues go back to Alberta. In the case of Newfoundland, they go back to Newfoundland. However, in the case of Ontario, the entire resource-based region sends its money to Queen's Park in southern Ontario, and then we have to go down like beggars, cap in hand, and beg for what they consider to be gifts, loans, and charity to us poor northern communities when we do not have the benefit of our resources.

•(1605)

One of the agreements that was to offset this huge disparity in the economic system which exists in Ontario with a very powerful urban core and very isolated communities was to create a regional economic development agency, and that was FedNor. FedNor's job was to reinvest money in the regions working with local partners. However, what we have seen over the last number of years is that FedNor has been atrophied. It has been cut. We have lost 30% of the staff at FedNor. FedNor had a \$1.76-million annual budget and it is down to about half that now.



*Private Members' Business*

In the latest budget, the government did not even mention FedNor. The Liberals talk about maybe moving it all into the minister's office. This is another concern because the minister, who is from Mississauga, is now taking the role of the regional development voice for every part of the country. That does not make sense, because regions of the country are dramatically different. I cannot believe that the minister from Mississauga understands the issues that people face in La Sarre and Abitibi, or understands the differences in having a local economy when there are communities that are sometimes five and six hours away from each other. That is the role of FedNor. FedNor gets this.

When the federal Liberals came into government in 2015, they shut all the broadband projects in northern Ontario that were under FedNor because they had a super-duper cluster plan, which took another two years to roll out. We lost two years of broadband development in a region that is isolated and where it is badly needed. The federal Liberals then decided they were going to have a consultation process. Another thing is that the Liberals love to talk. They had a national consultation process on rural broadband, and they found that northern Ontario had serious shortfalls in broadband. Why is this important? How do they attract business and how do they get start-up businesses if they do not have broadband?

The consultation process went on for two years and they consulted everybody. They consulted municipalities. They consulted NGOs. They consulted businesses. I am surprised they did not go door to door with surveys. They consulted everybody except the economic agency of the region, which is there for the federal government. Not only that, what is more surprising is that they consulted with the provincial economic development agency, but they ignored FedNor.

It tells me that this is the view of a government that does not understand the value of our regions and the importance of the distinct differences between rural, between northern, and between resource-based economies. They have to understand that if they are going to make economic transformations. The Liberals are now talking about their superclusters and their mega-clusters. They are now saying that they want to do regional development like that. That is not how it works. When we have communities that are spread out over such a vast region, they have to understand that they have to do it at the grassroots. They have to involve the people who know about it. We have some amazing people who do this work.

This year at the Prospectors & Developers Association convention, FedNor's booth was probably the largest single booth there—the European Union booth looked like penny ante stuff compared to FedNor—because the economic potential of the mining sector rebirth in northern Ontario is gathering international investors. FedNor is there, but FedNor's budget is so underfunded that 70% of its funds are spent before the year begins.

Imagine what we could do if we had a strong mandate for regional development, if we had the government investing in regional development, if it actually understood the importance of sectors like the mineral sector in the north and the potential for creating spinoff industries. That is how to build a sustainable economy for the long term.

We get back to the issue of transparency. The government is going to be giving out massive loans to companies like Bombardier. I have

nothing against Bombardier, but holy smokes, it lost \$900 million, borrowed \$1 billion from the taxpayer, and of the \$100 million, took a \$30-million cut for its CEOs. That to me is not credible. We should claw back every dime from those CEO bonuses because it is taxpayer money. Bombardier can play such an important role. In Thunder Bay, Bombardier has the plant for the subways and the streetcars for most of Canada. That is important work, and yet Bombardier ships 80% of the jobs to Mexico. I have a problem giving a company \$1 billion if it is going to ship 80% of the work to Mexico.

My belief is if a company gets money from the Canadian taxpayer, it invests in Canada. If it gets bonuses through the Canadian taxpayer, they go back to the Canadian taxpayer.

• (1610)

Our deal has to be that if a company is getting Canadian money, then it is not buying jets for corrupt businessmen in South Africa, or shipping the money to Mexico. It is going to create a sustainable, profitable economy for our region. That is why we need issues of accountability and transparency.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Before we go to resuming debate, I want to bring to the attention of the House that just prior to the hon. member for Timmins—James Bay, the hon. member for Markham—Thornhill had made a brief intervention. That was because of a misunderstanding at the time. I thought we were on resuming debate, and we got off on the wrong foot. The member for Markham—Thornhill was in fact posing a question, thinking we were still on questions and comments.

These things do happen from time to time. I erred in not recognizing that she was framing her comments as a question and not as part of her speech. Therefore, we will go back to the member for Markham—Thornhill on resuming debate.

**Ms. Mary Ng (Markham—Thornhill, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this government is committed to being open and transparent about how taxpayer dollars are spent so that Canadians are better able to hold Parliament and the government accountable. In fact, we have recently introduced proactive disclosure requirements for grants and contributions that enhance transparency and oversight of public resources. These requirements set a higher bar for openness and transparency with regard to financial support provided by the government. These guidelines exceed many of the requirements laid out in this bill.

*Private Members' Business*

In June 2016, as part of the open government action plan, the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat committed to increasing the transparency and usefulness of grants and contributions data. The initiative was spearheaded by a TBS-led committee of 37 participating departments, agencies, and crown corporations, known as the Committee on the Reporting of Grants and Contributions Awards. This was part of the first major renewal of the proactive disclosure requirements for grants and contributions since the policy first came into effect in 2006. As a result, starting on April 1, 2018, federal departments, agencies, and crown corporations have been following the new guidelines on the reporting of grants and contributions awards, which consist of three major themes.

First, the government will now have to disclose all grants and contributions, not just those over \$25,000, as required previously. In fact, Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada, the department targeted by this bill, has been following this practice for its grants and contributions since last January.

Second, all government grants and contributions information will be posted on the open.canada.ca platform rather than on each federal organization's website. This will give Canadians a simple, one-stop repository that will better enable them to oversee how their government is using public resources.

Third, the amount of information to be disclosed has been dramatically increased. Previously, each grant or contribution disclosure contained basic identifying information, including the value of the award, the name and location of the recipient, and limited information on the purpose of the funding. Now the government will publish a much more robust amount of information for each disclosure. This includes a more comprehensive section on the purpose of the award, the expected outcomes, and information on the recipient.

In addition, if passed, these reporting requirements would be strengthened and modernized through Bill C-58, an act to amend the Access to Information Act and the Privacy Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts, which is currently being reviewed by the Senate. Bill C-58 would create a legislated requirement for the proactive publication of grants and contributions aligned with the new guidelines I just explained.

In seeking to legislate these requirements, rather than enacting them through policy, the government is looking to enhance the accountability and transparency of federal institutions to promote an open and democratic society and enable public debate on the conduct of those institutions.

As I have just shown, the current proactive disclosure requirements and proposed legislative changes through Bill C-58 would provide Canadians with robust oversight of public resources. Importantly, this would be done, unlike with the proposed bill, without compromising the competitive position of individual firms.

Bill C-396 would require private businesses and organizations to release sensitive commercial information, potentially compromising their competitiveness and market position. This bill would effectively obligate the government to publish the commercially sensitive and confidential information of private Canadian businesses, information that could potentially be used by a competitor,

domestic or foreign, to undermine the competitive position of Canadian companies in the global innovation economy. This would be of particular concern to smaller, privately owned businesses that are not already required to publicly report things like revenues and expenditures in the same way publicly traded companies are.

The Government of Canada supports firms looking to scale up, expand into new markets, and develop technologies that support a modern, innovation economy.

•(1615)

The government's support for innovators and entrepreneurs is essential to achieving the goals set out in the innovation and skills plan to build an economy that works for everyone, an economy where Canadians have access to high-quality jobs and where Canadian businesses are well placed to compete in a rapidly evolving and competitive global marketplace.

Despite what the member opposite who has tabled this bill claims about this kind of support, the government is not in the business of corporate welfare. Rather, the government's support for innovative projects and collaborations helps Canadian firms enhance research and development activities, which benefits Canadians and Canada by generating investment, developing new technologies, and enhancing Canadian innovation capacity and expertise.

From the development of new clean technologies to the scaling up of small businesses, the government supports entrepreneurs and researchers working in various sectors of the economy who demonstrate the potential to drive forward Canada's innovation economy. The government will continue to support cutting-edge research that drives innovation and the development of new products and services for global consumers.

This is just one of the many ways the Government of Canada is working toward creating a competitive business environment that will benefit all Canadians and also attract investment. We have made significant strides in advancing this ambitious plan to strengthen the middle class, create jobs, and ensure a clean and inclusive future for all Canadians.

Just recently, we successfully announced the selection of five innovation superclusters. Small and medium-sized enterprises, large companies, academic institutions, and not-for-profit organizations will work together to advance Canada's technological capabilities.

We are also simplifying the way we support innovators with the creation of Innovation Canada to serve as a single point of contact for entrepreneurs looking to grow their businesses and as a gateway to government programs and services. The government provides a broad level of support to businesses looking to scale up, expand into new markets, and develop technologies to grow an innovation economy.

*Private Members' Business*

Governments should not be compromising sensitive commercial information that would undermine the competitiveness of those firms or Canada's attractiveness as a place to invest. The new, proactive disclosure requirements the government has put in place already strengthen the oversight of the use of public resources without creating a disincentive for businesses to get the help they need to benefit Canadians.

Bill C-396 would impede the government's efforts to better support innovation and entrepreneurship in Canada. Strong collaboration between ISED and the business community is essential to successfully drive forth the innovation and skills plan, create jobs, and improve the standard of living for all Canadians.

• (1620)

[Translation]

**Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to participate in the debate on the private member's bill introduced by the member for Beauce.

As the member for Beauport—Limoilou so aptly said, Bill C-396 goes to the very heart of the principles underlying parliaments like ours, which exist throughout the world wherever there were British colonies. We are here to ensure that the House of Commons, which represents Canadians, approves the government's spending. Our country is based on a parliamentary system.

In my opinion, corporate subsidies and transparency in government spending are not mutually exclusive. The two should go hand in hand. Nevertheless, if I had to choose between Canadians' right to know how the government is spending their money and privileged corporations' right to keep secrets, I would side with Canadians. That is what the bill introduced by the member for Beauce seeks to do by proposing that the Department of Industry Act be amended with regard to financial assistance.

[English]

I do not believe we should privilege companies in any way. We should privilege the rights of Canadian citizens to know how their government spends money.

I am reminded of the history of Canada. In the 1840s, the main question when Confederation was first debated was about responsible government. For Louis-Hippolyte Lafontaine, Robert Baldwin, and other great fathers of Confederation, the question was centred on elected parliaments or appointed governors.

Who decides the power of the purse? Who decides those decisions? Those are the same debates that the United Kingdom's parliament had when there was a difference of opinion between what the crown wanted to spend and what the commons wanted to spend. Those same debates influenced debates in the 1840s, 1850s, and 1860s in Canada, and eventually led to Confederation. The act of Confederation was passed by the mother parliament in the United Kingdom, and we got responsible government in Canada. Since then, there has been a tension between what the government wants to do and what the commons wants to do.

The previous member said “we” referring to the government. Well, in fact, only the members of the front bench are members of the government. Our job as backbenchers, regardless of where we

sit, is to hold the government accountable for its spending, because it does so both in our name and in the name of the citizens of Canada, who we represent.

There is a non-transparent reality about the Canadian corporate welfare. We, as politicians, offer a lot of justifications, and this is a problem all governments face, whether provincial or federal. We offer justifications, such as we are investing in the future or we are investing in new technology. These are all things that corporations, businesses, can do on their own. If they are asking the taxpayer to take some of the risk with them, and I sometimes hear “de-risking”, which is the finance minister's favourite term, the taxpayer is being forced to take on some of that risk.

I want to talk about some of the risk that the taxpayer has taken on in the past. A Technology Partnerships Canada repayment status report was put out November 1, 2017. It is the latest one I could find. There are corporations pre-2006 that took money from the taxpayer, and not all of them bad. Some of the investment decisions made by previous governments panned out, but we do not always know what they were. A clause reads, “Indicates that the company has not provided ITO with an authorization to disclose repayment information.”

Will I, on behalf of the taxpayers in my riding, say that I do not care if the company has not filled out a little document saying it is okay with releasing the contents of that information? I want to know the contents of that loan or whether it was a gift. It has to be one of the two.

For example, Vector Aerospace Helicopter Services Inc. was given \$3,509,249 in September 2005. It has paid back around \$1.9 million, which may be not a bad amount, but I cannot tell. However, a lot of these are simply blanked out, information is not available, so there is no way for us, as parliamentarians, to return to the House and say that the decision the government made was a good or bad one.

• (1625)

When there is a lack of information, it privileges ministers of the crown. The previous speaker and other members have said that there is all this great transparency, all these great things going on, and the information will be released eventually. If that is true, and I have serious doubts that it is true, why not vote for the bill? It will just make it legislation. It will not be a policy decision of the government of the day. We could have it as a statutory requirement. What could be better? It would be a law that we could then have civil servants live up to. If they come to a parliamentary committee, their performance could be judged on how they adhered to the law. If we are going to have more transparency, then why not?

I think the reason many members of the governing caucus are defending the vote against this private member's bill is that they know there is a lack of transparency. We need to look no further than the \$7-billion slush fund that is being set up, and the great attempt to try and bring more transparency to the House, the attempt to change the way the estimates work. For eight years this will be done and the government will create a fund and the Treasury Board Secretariat will decide where the money goes, not parliamentarians, but Treasury Board and civil servants.

*Private Members' Business*

To bring it back to the examples I gave before about potentially good investments, I want to bring up Sandvine Incorporated where \$9.5 million of taxpayer money was given to it in May 2013 and the taxpayer made back almost \$14 million. There are good examples like this where we could wonder what was different about this agreement. What worked out in this agreement that did not work out in, say, Sanofi Pasteur's \$48.5 million? Was it a loan? We cannot tell. We actually do not know how much of the money was returned to the taxpayer. Was it a good investment or was it not?

On the claims that corporate welfare works, that subsidies to corporations work, Mark Milke wrote in *The Globe and Mail* that it is "based on poor data, unsound social-science methods, and faulty economic reasoning...." Without information being released consistently, there is actually no way for parliamentarians and the Government of Canada to say yes or no. There is no way for them to look at the good cases and the litany of bad cases where government money, taxpayer money given by hard-working Canadians, is wasted to sustain companies in some cases that have no product or service that the free market wants to purchase. Why are they being sustained longer?

I could complain about Bombardier, but I am a member from Calgary, Alberta, so let me complain about corporate welfare which I think goes to some oil and gas companies. This is according to Natural Resources Canada. It is from table 1b of "Corporate Welfare Cash: 21st Century Justifications and Billion-Dollar Bills to Come", written by Mark Milke. For Suncor Energy products, there is a \$2.17-million repayable contribution, but there is no data showing how much of it was actually repaid to the taxpayer. There is reference to Shell Canada, IGPC Ethanol Inc., and Greenfield Johnstown Limited.

It is right for the taxpayer to know the terms and conditions of the loan and how much of it has been repaid. Even if the purpose is good, even if there might be a legitimate public policy purpose that is outside profitability and sustainability, maybe taxpayer dollars should go to it. Let us have that debate when we have the data. I thought we were all about evidence-based policy-making. Give us the evidence.

We are asking to pass a piece of legislation which the member for Beauce has proposed that will give us the facts and the evidence in a public manner on a quarterly basis so we can see what corporate welfare is doing. Those few cases where it does work, what was so different about them when the majority of cases turn out to be absolute disasters? Those disasters have a political cost to them, so maybe I will caution the government.

Former Nova Scotia Premier Darrell Dexter was defeated partially over grants and loans of \$300 million given to Irving Shipbuilding when it already had won \$25 billion in federal contracts. This is a quote from Liberal Premier Stephen McNeil:

Why would we be giving grants, free money, to large corporations who, in some cases, are doing very well, and try to lure them to our province, then get ourselves caught in a situation where we're really competing with other provinces in a race to the bottom?

• (1630)

I think the premier is right, so the government should give us the information. Let us pass this piece of legislation so we can be the judges of how taxpayer dollars are spent.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Alupa Clarke (Beauport—Limoilou, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to speak today. As a Conservative MP, nothing is more important to me than tradition. As tradition would have it, I would like to acknowledge all those who are watching me and those I meet at the community centres, at all the organized events in my riding, or when I go door to door. As always, I am very happy to represent my constituents in the House of Commons.

I would like to wish a good National Volunteer Week to everyone in Beauport, the people of Limoilou, Giffard, Sainte-Odile, and all around the riding. In Beauport, there are more than 2,500 volunteers. It is the Quebec City neighbourhood with the highest number of volunteers. That makes me very proud. Without volunteers, our social costs would be much higher. I commend all those who put their heart and soul into helping their neighbours and so many others.

I would quickly like to go back to some comments made by the Liberal member for Markham—Thornhill. She boasted that the Liberal government is open and transparent. I would like to remind her that our esteemed Prime Minister's trip to the Aga Khan's island was not all that transparent. The commissioner had to examine and report on this trip, in short, do an investigation, to get to the bottom of things. First of all, I think it is outrageous for a sitting prime minister to go south. He should have stayed in Canada as most Canadians do.

Furthermore, the Liberals' tax reform for small and medium-sized businesses was not all that transparent. The objective was to increase the tax rate for all small and medium-sized businesses and to create jobs in Canada, through the back door, by increasing corporate and small business taxes through changes in how dividends and other various financial vehicles are treated.

Then, there were all of the Minister of Finance's dealings. He hid some funds generated by his family firm, Morneau Shepell. We discovered that he hid these funds in a numbered company in Alberta.

Basically, we have a long list of items proving that the government is not all that open and transparent. This list also includes the amendments and changes the Liberals made to the Access to Information Act. The commissioner stated very clearly in black and white that they are going to impede access to information. On top of that, the Liberals refused to give access to information from the Prime Minister's Office, as they promised during the election campaign.

*Private Members' Business*

I would still like to talk about the bill brought forward by the member for Beauce, for whom I have a great deal of respect. He is a man of courage and principle. This bill is consistent with his principles. He does not care to see subsidies, handouts, being given to large corporations. With this bill, however, he does not oppose the idea of giving money to businesses to help them out. He said something very simple: the technology partnerships Canada program spent about \$3.3 billion. For 200 businesses, that represents \$700 million in loans and 45% of cases. The member for Beauce does not oppose those loans; he is simply asking the government to tell us whether those companies have paid back the \$700 million, which breaks down into different amounts, for example \$800,000, \$300,000, or \$2 million. If some companies have not paid back those loans, then we can simply tell Canadians that they were actually subsidies, not loans.

I want to get back to what I said during my earlier question. When I was a student at Laval University, I remember naively telling my professor that I would go to Parliament to talk about philosophy, the Constitution, and the great debates of our time. He told me that there would be debates on these types of issues, yes, but fundamentally, what was at the heart of England's 13th century parliamentary system was accountability, namely what was happening with the money.

There is a reason why we spend two months talking about the budget. It is very important. The budget is at the heart of the parliamentary system. I sometimes find it a little annoying. I wonder if we could talk about Constitutional issues, Quebec's distinct society, the courts, politics, and other issues. However, much to my chagrin, we spend most of our time talking about money. There is a valid reason for this: every one of us here represents about 100,000 people, most of whom pay taxes. All of the government's programs, initiatives, and public policies, good or bad, are dynamic and rely on public funds.

• (1635)

In England in the 13th century, bourgeois capitalists went to see the king to tell him that all his warmongering was getting a little expensive. They asked him to create a place where they could talk to him or his representative and find out what he was doing with their money. That was the precise moment in the course of human history when liberal democracy made its first appearance.

Another example of the importance of knowing what is being done with people's money is the American Revolution. This is complicated and could fill many books, but essentially, the American Revolution happened because England was not interested in taxation with representation. The Americans said they had had enough. If taxes on tea—hence, the Tea Party—were going up, they wanted to know what was being done with their money. The only way the Americans could find out what the British were doing with the money was through elected representation of the colonies in the British Parliament. However, the king, in his arrogance, and his British governing council told the colonies to keep quiet and pay their taxes to His Majesty like they were supposed to. Thus ensued the American Revolution.

Such major historical examples demonstrate how accountability is at the very heart of the parliamentary system and liberal democracy,

which guarantees the protection of individual rights and freedoms so dear to our Liberals in this place.

Now, this is what I do not understand. The opposition members, whether they belong to the NDP, the Conservative Party, or the Quebec caucus, introduce sensible and fairly simple bills. Why will the government not just admit it and thank them? Not only is it the purpose of Parliament to inform Canadians about what is being done with their money, but the government itself should know what is happening.

The government could use half of the unpaid \$700 million to more quickly implement its much-touted social housing program or pharmacare 2020. However, between \$400 million and \$700 million has not been paid back to the federal government. Thus, it is completely unacceptable and illogical for the Liberals to tell us that this is not a laudable or justifiable bill.

When I came to Parliament, I had the opportunity to work on the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates, a very complex committee. It was a bit overwhelming, but I took it very seriously and I did all the reading. That committee just keeps voting on credits for months because it approves all the spending. When I was there, the President of the Treasury Board attended our meetings three times to explain the changes he wanted to make to the main estimates. These were disastrous changes that sought to take away the power of opposition MPs to examine spending vote by vote for over two months. He wanted to cut that time down to about two weeks. It was an attempt on the part of the Liberals to gradually undermine the work and transparency of this democratic institution.

What is more, the Liberals wanted to make major changes that would cut our speaking time in the House of Commons. For heaven's sake. At the time of Confederation, our forefathers sometimes talked for six or seven hours. Now, 20 minutes is too long. For example, today, I have 10 minutes to speak. The Liberals wanted to cut our time down from 20 minutes to 10 minutes. This government never stops trying to cut the opposition's speaking time, and that is not to mention the \$7 billion that have still not been allocated.

In short, the bill introduced by the member for Beauce is a laudable bill that goes to the very heart of the principle underlying liberal democracy and the British parliamentary system, that of knowing where taxpayers' money is going.

• (1640)

[*English*]

**The Deputy Speaker:** Before we resume debate and go to the hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader, I am sure he will be disappointed to learn that there are only three and a half minutes remaining in the time provided for private members' business this afternoon. We will get started, and I will give him the usual indication when it is time to wrap up.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is somewhat disappointing, but I know I will get another chance to add some more words.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

I appreciate the fact that the member for Beauce has brought forward a private member's bill. I believe he is genuine in what he is attempting to accomplish with the bill. However, he has overlooked a great deal of things. The member from Markham, the government representative, did a fantastic job in trying to explain how the Government of Canada already exceeded what the Stephen Harper government did.

One of the things I really respect about the Prime Minister is that he has consistently said that we should look for ideas where we can improve and make things better, and we are open to doing that. There has been no shortage of ideas. All one needs to do is look at the many different initiatives the government has taken on and has been very successful.

It was not that long ago, and I have mentioned this before in the House, where I had someone show up at a local restaurant in my riding and tell me the Prime Minister had done more in a couple of years than the previous prime minister did in 10 years. As a government, we have a very aggressive and progressive attitude at trying to get things done, to work hard and achieve the best we can for Canadians in all regions of our country.

I want to add some thoughts as to why it is necessary at times for governments to engage with the private sector. If we look at the national government, or provincial governments, governments at different levels, governments of different political parties, even Progressive Conservative governments, even the Harper government, at times they have recognized there is a need to look at how we might have to protect certain industries and jobs that might be in some difficult times. It is nothing new. I believe a majority of Canadians want to ensure that the government is there to support industries if there is a need for it to do so and it can be justified.

Our government has recognized that, particularly in Canada's aerospace industry. It is an industry that is very important to my home province, to the provinces of Quebec, B.C., Ontario, and indirectly to other provinces. Literally tens of thousands jobs were absolutely critical and the Government of Canada needed to get involved. However, it is not the first time Bombardier has received government assistance. Even previous Conservative governments came forward, recognizing there was a need.

Providing that additional accountability and transparency is something our government continues to do in everything, such as when different departments are developing policy. We are seeing more of that.

I see my time has already run out for today. I will be happy to add more words when the debate comes up again.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. parliamentary secretary will have six and a half minutes remaining in his time when the House next gets back to debate on the question.

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

**ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS**

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

• (1645)

[English]

## STATUS OF WOMEN

**Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the House to discuss recognizing and declaring December 13 of each year Nanjing massacre commemorative day.

On November 30, 2017, I made a statement in the House regarding the 80th anniversary of the Nanjing massacre. During question period, I also asked if the government would proclaim December 13 as Nanjing massacre commemorative day. I received an encouraging answer from the Minister of Canadian Heritage, as she offered to work with me to achieve this goal.

I then followed up with the minister, and she informed me that the issue falls in the jurisdiction of the Minister of Foreign Affairs. I then promptly wrote to the Minister of Foreign Affairs. As she was out of the country at the time, she asked that I work with her chief of staff. Subsequently, I was advised that in fact the matter should be dealt with by the Minister of Canadian Heritage.

I then went back to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, at which point she advised that it would not be possible to have the declaration made by December 13, 2017. While it is unfortunate that this did not happen on its 80th anniversary, I hope the Minister of Canadian Heritage is still open to declaring December 13 of each year Nanjing massacre commemorative day.

This is an issue of recognizing a tragedy and the lasting impact it had on people, many of whom now call Canada their home. It is estimated that, 80 years ago, between 20,000 and 80,000 Chinese women and girls were raped, and approximately 300,000 people were killed. Over the course of World War II, an estimated 200,000 women and girls from China, Korea, Burma, Indonesia, the Philippines, and other occupied territories in Asia were tricked, kidnapped, or coerced into working in brothels to serve as "comfort women".

It is worth noting that in November 2007, members of the House unanimously passed a motion, moved by former NDP MP Olivia Chow, to recognize this act of sexual slavery; express regret at attempts by some members of the Japanese government to ignore or diminish the events that occurred; recognize the progress made by Japan and its major contributions toward international peace; affirm the Canada-Japan alliance; and for the Government of Canada to encourage the Government of Japan to abandon any statement devaluing the expression of regret from the Kono statement of 1993.

In 2001, the NDP B.C. government worked in collaboration with BC ALPHA and developed a resource guide and educational materials to ensure that the past is not forgotten. This guide has led other provinces to adapt the material for their use.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

I also want to acknowledge that in October 2017, members of Ontario's legislature unanimously passed MPP Soo Wong's motion to recognize December 13 as Nanjing Massacre Commemorative Day. In that process, she also received over 100,000 signatures in support of this declaration.

In commemorating this atrocity, communities across Canada hosted events to mark this day. I had the opportunity to attend the ceremonial tribute and exhibition of historical materials and cultural relics, along with photos of some of the Nanjing massacre survivors, at the Chinese Cultural Centre of Greater Toronto. The event was hosted by 80 organizations under the umbrella of the Nanjing Fellow Association of Canada. I also attended a film screening at the Richmond Public Library hosted by BC ALPHA.

There is no question that this is a non-partisan issue. It is an important day to mark, and I ask all members of the House to work with me to achieve this goal.

**Mr. Arif Virani (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage (Multiculturalism), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Vancouver East for her efforts in raising awareness of the tragic atrocities that took place in Nanjing during World War II.

[*Translation*]

Canada recognizes compassionate efforts and encourages all countries to move forward in a positive and constructive manner. China and Japan are two important partners to Canada in the Asia-Pacific region. We are committed to increasing our ties with the region, especially on a cultural level, to ensure the prosperity of Canadians as well as security in the region.

[*English*]

Terrible atrocities took place during the occupation of Nanjing, which were outlined by the member for Vancouver East. The majority of the victims were Chinese civilians. We fully recognize this. Women and girls suffered in particular, as they are often the most victimized group in these types of violent conflicts.

It is well known that one of our government's core priorities is its commitment to gender equality and women's rights. At the international level, we are a leader in this regard, through our championing of the promotion and protection of human rights, as well as women's and children's rights, at a wide range of multilateral fora, including as a focus of Canada's presidency of the G7 this year, which will be taking place in Charlevoix.

As with other atrocities in history, the Nanjing massacre was predicated upon the systematic dehumanization of Chinese people as non-human, as "other". It is important that discourse at every level not marginalize populations or portray them in demeaning or dehumanizing terms: Muslims as terrorists or LGBTQ2 community members as sexually deviant or morally reprehensible.

[*Translation*]

The Prime Minister has spoken publicly on a number of occasions on the importance of combatting intolerance and hate in all forms. It is important that political leaders and all communities support one another in facing this challenge, and that Canadians work together to promote mutual understanding and conquer hate.

● (1650)

In addition, protecting human rights is also a fundamental part of our vision of Canada and the world. It is in fact an important aspect of the mandate of the Minister of Canadian Heritage in conjunction with that of Global Affairs Canada. Through our efforts in this area, we are supporting diversity, inclusion, and peaceful pluralism, as well as reconciliation efforts between countries on matters such as the one raised here this evening.

[*English*]

In addition to government efforts, all Canadians have a role to play in countering hatred and fostering welcoming communities. Actions such as speaking out when we encounter racism in our communities, volunteering with one of the many organizations that support inclusion, and reporting any hate crimes that are encountered, can go a long way toward ensuring that all Canadians can grow together in peace and prosperity.

[*Translation*]

The Government of Canada recognizes the events and the steps that have been taken to commemorate this tragedy, including those taken by the Ontario legislature. However, it does not comment on commemorative days designated by provincial legislatures or other orders of government. That being said, the Government of Canada expresses its sympathies for those who have suffered and those who have lost their lives in armed conflict.

[*English*]

**Ms. Jenny Kwan:** Mr. Speaker, this is about the formal recognition of atrocities, learning from history, and paying tribute to those impacted. This is not only to commemorate the victims and survivors but to prevent such atrocities from happening again.

The Nanjing massacre is often referred to as a forgotten holocaust. It is incumbent on us to ensure that atrocities of this magnitude are not forgotten. It is my hope that the government will work with me to ensure that history is not ignored, that the Nanjing massacre is not a forgotten holocaust, and that the Canadian government recognizes December 13, and each subsequent December 13 moving forward, as Nanjing massacre commemorative day.

I am open to working with whichever minister the government deems appropriate and to engaging in whatever process the government feels would be the most effective and efficient to have every December 13 declared Nanjing massacre commemorative day.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Arif Virani:** Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to promoting peace, constructive dialogue, and international security. We are working and will keep working with our national and international partners to that end.

This government recognizes the suffering that all armed conflicts inflict on the people of the affected countries, especially civilians, girls, and women. The occupation of Nanjing is no exception.

[*English*]

We will continue our work as ardent defenders of human rights and gender rights and will encourage positive dialogue between nations to ensure a more peaceful and prosperous world.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

## EMPLOYMENT

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we are learning today that the fisheries committee will no longer be able to benefit from the able service and chairmanship of the Liberal member for Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame. Indeed, that member was the only Liberal MP who had the courage to listen to his constituents, stand up, and vote for the opposition motion that would have protected the fundamental freedoms of charitable organizations to do the good work that they do and collaborate with the government through the Canada summer jobs program without facing the kind of arbitrary discrimination proposed by the government.

Earlier I asked the government a question as to why it will not support our motion, a motion that would have said that those groups involved in non-political, non-activist work should be able to access the Canada summer jobs program regardless of their private convictions. This motion called the government's bluff, because the government told us that all it was trying to do was deal with the activities. It was not at all interested in persecuting organizations on the basis of their private convictions. It was only interested in activities.

Thus, we wrote a motion that said that groups that do not engage in activities that the government finds objectionable should not be prohibited from accessing this funding on the basis of their private convictions. However, clearly showing their hand, members of the government—all of them, except one—decided to oppose our motion, and because of that opposition, charitable organizations, as well as other organizations that would otherwise have benefited from this funding, whose work has nothing to do with controversial social or political issues, will still be denied funding this summer. Students will be denied summer jobs on the basis of their private convictions.

The member for Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame had the courage to listen to his constituents, to listen to what I know many other Liberal MPs were hearing, and actually had the courage to act on it. This is interesting, because there was one member of the NDP who had similar courage. He was initially disciplined, but thankfully the NDP thought better of it and restored him to his position on the procedure and House affairs committee.

I am calling on the government to, first of all, respect fundamental freedoms in this country in terms of their approach to the Canada summer jobs program, and second, to allow the member for Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame to do his job, to represent his constituents, and not be deprived of the opportunity to continue to serve as chair to lead on the fisheries committee.

When the government punishes one of its members for simply doing his job, doing the job that he was sent here to do, which is to listen to charitable organizations and other groups in his constituency, and when the government disciplines him for doing his job by listening to his constituents, I submit that it goes against everything the Prime Minister talked about in the last election in terms of actually listening to Canadians and in terms of free votes. That really jeopardizes the position of many MPs, who I know were quietly saying to stakeholders in their ridings in many cases that they did not like what was going on here but did not have a choice. Well, they did have a choice.

Unfortunately, the way the Prime Minister runs the government is that when a member like the member for Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame stands up, listens to his constituents, and does the right thing to support allowing groups engaged in non-political, non-activist work to access funding, he is kicked off the fisheries committee. He is no longer able to do the work that he has the experience and the knowledge to do very well.

Will the parliamentary secretary stand up and explain to us why a Liberal member should be deprived of the ability to do his job simply because he had the courage to stand up for stakeholder groups in his riding that the Prime Minister refuses to listen to?

• (1655)

**Mr. Rodger Cuzner (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, again, one of the benefits of having been in this House for over 17 years is that I have seen a lot of things come and go, like the Conservatives preaching about disciplining or taking any kind of action on a party member, a caucus member, because the member has been a little out of line.

One of my best friends in caucus now is the member for Cumberland—Colchester, who used to sit with the Conservative caucus. What he did is he stood up to Stephen Harper. We are now looking at “Stephen Harper lite” in the opposition.

When Nova Scotia was getting shortchanged by \$400 million under the Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Resources Accord, our member, our friend from Cumberland—Colchester stood, and he got heaved out of the Conservative caucus. He went back to his riding and ran as an independent. That is what he did. Then he saw the light, a red light. He came to that red light. He has been an incredible contributor not just to the people of Cumberland—Colchester but to the province of Nova Scotia, the province he stood up for, and to the greater good of Canada.

We know that the Canada summer jobs program is intended to help young Canadians. There is always that chicken and egg dilemma. Young people are faced with the fact that they cannot get a job until they have experience, and they cannot get experience until they get a job. That is the purpose of the summer jobs program, to give them that foot in the door to get that first piece on their resumé.

That party under Stephen Harper cut funding for youth jobs and cut funding for summer programs. We have gone back and invested and reinvested. In the past budget there was over \$450 million for more opportunities for young people in this country to get that summer job, to get that first job opportunity, to put on their resumé. That is what we are committed to.

It is really strange when the Conservatives stand up on this. Even the Leader of the Opposition himself, back in the Tory days, in 2013, had a total of 37 jobs in his riding. This past year, it was 93 jobs. I know we cannot make that reference to my colleague's riding because he has a new riding. My friend from Elgin—Middlesex—London talked about the way we are handling the Canada summer jobs program. I know that her riding went from 92 jobs to 201 jobs last year. That is a significant number of young Canadians who got the opportunity to have their first job, and to start building their resumé and their work career.



*Adjournment Proceedings*

•(1700)

**Mr. Garnett Genuis:** Mr. Speaker, clearly my friend across the way wants to be the parliamentary historian as well as the poet laureate here.

Let us review some actual history. There is a big difference between voting against one's own government on a budget and voting in favour of an opposition motion. The member who has been here for 17 years should understand the difference in terms of the implications for the confidence convention.

There is nothing that would have stopped the government from operating or denying confidence, if more members had been given the freedom and the respect to listen to their constituents, as the member for Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame had the courage to do. The member said that this member was out of line. It is too bad that the Liberals will be deprived of his contribution. They have shown a great deal of disrespect to someone who knows a great deal.

The Liberals think they can solve every problem with more money. The Canada summer jobs issue is about fundamental freedoms. It is about the right of organizations to provide services, regardless of their private convictions, without being asked to check a box. Frankly, if an employer asked those questions, it would violate human rights codes in most provinces.

It is not about money. It is about fundamental freedoms. When will the government start showing respect for the fundamental freedoms of Canadian organizations, start listening to their own members, and stop running roughshod over organizations that do important charitable work in this country?

**Mr. Rodger Cuzner:** Mr. Speaker, on the issue of the freedom of conscience and religion as raised by my colleague, the changes that we made do not in any way impinge on the opportunity for faith-based organizations to make application. We do not in any way exclude them. This is about ensuring funding does not go to those who actively work against and undermine the rights of Canadians, including women and other under-represented groups.

As in previous years, churches, religious groups, and faith-based organizations were encouraged and welcomed to apply. The application rates this year pretty much mirror last year. I know in my own riding, having gone over the list, the number of faith-based groups that received funding last year is in line with what we are seeing this year.

I am looking forward to working with those groups, and helping them provide the services and those opportunities for the young Canadians who need that opportunity.

CANADA REVENUE AGENCY

**Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, in my original question, I asked the Minister of National Revenue about a Canadian company, Turquoise Hill Resources, that operated a very large, very profitable mine in Mongolia. The company is based in Vancouver and listed on the Toronto Stock Exchange.

A report from the Centre for Research on Multinational Corporations explained how Turquoise Hill Resources used a so-called mailbox company set up in Luxembourg to avoid paying

about \$690 million in Canadian taxes over a period of six years. The same report also suggested that Turquoise Hill Resources avoided paying hundreds of millions of dollars of taxes in Mongolia, but I want to concentrate on the Canadian side of the story here.

Coincidentally, there was a long opinion piece in *The Globe and Mail* today about this very report, written by a tax lawyer who wanted to ensure people did not frame this as tax dodging or tax cheating, but simply a story of a Canadian company doing what was legal, or, as the Supreme Court ruled, “taxpayers have the right to order their affairs to minimize tax payable.”

This is not a one-off case, and I am certainly not suggesting it is illegal. Turquoise Hill Resources acted within Canadian laws to lower its tax exposure. It even got a tax ruling from the Canada Revenue Agency that assured the company its scheme was fully approved.

This is the crux of the problem, and this is what concerns me. It is an example of how Canadian tax laws allow companies and individuals to legally avoid paying billions of dollars in taxes and why we should act to limit that practice.

We can certainly debate about what a fair amount of taxes would be, but when a Canadian company pays nothing or next to nothing in Canadian taxes on profits it makes in this country but ships offshore to a mailbox, something is clearly wrong with our tax laws.

This is a big problem for Canada. Some analysts have calculated that offshore tax havens funnel \$10 billion to \$15 billion every year in tax revenue to countries with very low tax rates. It is a major part of Canada's lost tax revenue, which has been estimated by the Conference Board of Canada to be as much as \$47 billion every year.

The Government of Canada should be looking seriously at ways to remedy this huge problem.

I was recently talking to a major Canadian money manager and tax expert, and he brought up the subject of tax havens as a serious problem. He suggested a straightforward solution. Write tax treaties so companies must pay a minimum amount of tax at a reasonable rate if they are reporting foreign income. Therefore, the government could set a reasonable rate, say at 20%, still well below Canadian rates, so if a Canadian company reported \$2 billion of income in Luxembourg and Luxembourg levied taxes at 4%, that company would pay 16% in Canada. There are likely other ways to tackle this, but we really have to do something.

•(1705)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, when members of the opposition raise issues of this nature, they often get into the specifics and name particular companies. It is important to note that there are confidentiality provisions in the Income Tax Act that actually prevent us from discussing the circumstances of individual taxpayers or corporations.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

Having said that, I have been a parliamentarian for 25-plus years, and one of the things I have always experienced is the justifiable expectation Canadians have that there be a sense of fairness in taxation. There is frustration when we get the perception of tax inequities that are there today. I would encourage my friend to recognize that we have some problems today that have been in place for many years. However, we have a Prime Minister who has been taking the issue of taxation head on, virtually from day one, in terms of our middle class, those aspiring to be part of it, and those who need a helping hand, and ways we can ensure tax fairness.

For example, one of the first initiatives we saw was the special tax on Canada's 1%. I am sure that even my New Democratic friends will acknowledge that we need to put more taxes on Canada's wealthiest 1%. We have already done that. It was one of the first initiatives. We then looked at lowering taxes for Canada's middle class. We also looked at those who are aspiring to be part of the middle class and the working poor. We brought in programs that would put more disposable income in their pockets, such as with the enhancement of the Canada child benefit program.

The NDP talks about tax evaders. Like members on the NDP benches, Liberal members are also offended by those tax evaders. We also want to see a higher sense of accountability from corporations or individuals. I will not be specific and list those names, but I can say that in general, it offends us when individuals go out of their way to avoid paying their fair share. They are tax evaders. As a government, we have seen the Prime Minister working with the Minister of Finance and the Minister of National Revenue, who is responsible for CRA, to actually invest significant dollars. I believe this year alone it is over \$150 million. In the last three years, it has been close to \$1 billion to go after people who are trying to not pay their fair share of taxes. We have had a government that virtually from day one has been trying to improve the system.

For many of the initiatives my friend across the way might want to see the government act on, we are going as quickly as I believe we can. In certain areas, we need to look at what other countries are doing, because we need a collaborative approach. It is a worldwide problem, which means that we need to work with other governments around the world in certain situations.

• (1710)

**Mr. Richard Cannings:** Mr. Speaker, the parliamentary secretary talks about tax fairness, but what the government has been doing is

spending \$1 billion going after the little fish, going after small corporations and small businesses and individuals across Canada and getting very little in return, when they could be going after the big fish. They could be going after CEO stock option loopholes that would net maybe \$800 million every year in tax revenues.

In terms of tax havens, what have they done? They are signing new tax treaties with the Cook Islands and Grenada. Tax treaties are ostensibly drafted and signed for legitimate reasons. They are set up so that Canadian companies that actually do work in another country are not taxed twice. If a Canadian company actually made \$2 billion in profits for work it did in Luxembourg, it should pay those taxes in Luxembourg. However, that is not what is happening.

I am using this example just because it is an egregious example that is in the news. Turquoise Hill is a mailbox in Luxembourg. Luxembourg made millions of dollars in tax revenues simply by recognizing that mailbox. This is not what tax treaties were meant to accomplish. In fact, the use of mailbox companies to gain illegitimate access to tax-treaty benefits is considered by the OECD as treaty abuse, and it has to stop.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, I would argue that in many ways these tax treaties that the member refers to enable the CRA to be able to withdraw more information, indirectly if not directly. We need that information to ensure that there is less tax avoidance.

The member is wrong on the assertion that this government is going after the little guy. This government is going after individuals and corporations that are going out of their way to avoid paying their fair share of taxes. That is what the close to one billion dollars is, and it might be over one billion with this recent addition of \$180 million. This government is aggressively pursuing individuals and corporations, not just little guys. We are talking about huge sums of money.

There is a commitment from the Prime Minister to continue working with the Minister of National Revenue and the Minister of Finance to ensure that we have a fairer taxation system, and that is something that we will continue to strive for.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Pursuant to an order made January 31, this House stands adjourned until Monday, April 23, at 11 a.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 5:15 p.m.)





# CONTENTS

Thursday, April 19, 2018

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### Interparliamentary Delegations

Mr. Oliphant ..... 18539

### Committees of the House

#### Official Languages

Mr. Paradis ..... 18539

### Petitions

#### Pharmacare

Mr. Lamoureux ..... 18539

#### Religious Freedom

Mrs. Block ..... 18539

#### Canada Summer Jobs Program

Mrs. Block ..... 18539

#### The Environment

Ms. May (Saanich—Gulf Islands) ..... 18539

#### Canada Summer Jobs Program

Mr. Waugh ..... 18540

Ms. Finley ..... 18540

### Questions on the Order Paper

Mr. Lamoureux ..... 18540

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

### Budget Implementation Act, 2018, No. 1

Bill C-74. Second reading ..... 18540

Mr. Nater ..... 18540

Mr. Fraser (Central Nova) ..... 18540

Mr. Julian ..... 18540

Mr. Oliver ..... 18541

Mr. Lefebvre ..... 18541

Mr. Sopuck ..... 18543

Mr. MacGregor ..... 18543

Mr. Duguid ..... 18543

Mr. McCauley ..... 18543

Mr. Oliver ..... 18545

Mr. Waugh ..... 18545

Mr. Schiefke ..... 18546

Mr. Brassard ..... 18547

Ms. Sansoucy ..... 18547

Ms. Sgro ..... 18548

Mr. MacGregor ..... 18549

Mr. Waugh ..... 18549

Mr. Duvall ..... 18549

Ms. Malcolmson ..... 18550

Mr. Lamoureux ..... 18551

Mr. Gerretsen ..... 18552

Ms. Dzerowicz ..... 18552

Mr. Carrie ..... 18554

Mr. Albas ..... 18554

Ms. Malcolmson ..... 18554

Mr. Albas ..... 18554

Mr. Longfield ..... 18556

Mr. Brassard ..... 18556

Mr. Longfield ..... 18556

Mr. Brassard ..... 18558

Ms. Malcolmson ..... 18558

Mr. Lamoureux ..... 18558

Ms. Blaney (North Island—Powell River) ..... 18558

Mr. Cooper ..... 18560

Mr. Oliver ..... 18560

Ms. Jones ..... 18561

Mr. Julian ..... 18562

Mr. Badawey ..... 18562

Ms. Sansoucy ..... 18562

Mr. Ste-Marie ..... 18563

Mr. Lamoureux ..... 18564

Mr. MacGregor ..... 18564

Mr. Mendicino ..... 18565

Mr. Kmiec ..... 18566

Mr. MacGregor ..... 18566

Mr. Nault ..... 18567

Mr. Kmiec ..... 18567

Mr. Gerretsen ..... 18568

Mr. Lamoureux ..... 18569

Mr. Genuis ..... 18569

Mr. Long ..... 18569

Mr. Genuis ..... 18571

Mr. MacGregor ..... 18571

Mr. Cooper ..... 18571

## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

### The Environment

Ms. Mihychuk ..... 18572

### Rockport Dock

Mr. Brown ..... 18572

### Eddie Parris

Mr. Eyking ..... 18573

### Natural Resources

Mr. Stewart ..... 18573

### National Volunteer Week

Ms. Dzerowicz ..... 18573

### Terroir Rural Retreat

Ms. Finley ..... 18573

### Maple Syrup-Themed Postage Stamp

Mr. Amos ..... 18573

### Vaisakhi

Mr. Sarai ..... 18574

### Taxation

Mrs. Gallant ..... 18574

### Vivacia

Mr. Picard ..... 18574

<b>Jonathan Pitre</b>	
Mr. Drouin .....	18574
<b>Captain Roy Brown</b>	
Mr. Reid .....	18575
<b>Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada</b>	
Ms. Jones .....	18575
<b>Earth Day</b>	
Mr. Boulerice .....	18575
<b>Adam Herold</b>	
Mr. Kitchen .....	18575
<b>Yom Ha'atzmaut</b>	
Mr. Levitt .....	18576

## ORAL QUESTIONS

<b>Natural Resources</b>	
Mrs. Stubbs .....	18576
Mr. Carr .....	18576
Mrs. Stubbs .....	18576
Mr. Carr .....	18576
Mrs. Stubbs .....	18576
Mr. Carr .....	18576
<b>The Economy</b>	
Mr. Deltell .....	18576
Ms. Duncan (Etobicoke North) .....	18577
Mr. Deltell .....	18577
Mr. Carr .....	18577
<b>The Environment</b>	
Mr. Caron .....	18577
Mr. Carr .....	18577
Mr. Caron .....	18577
Mr. Carr .....	18577
<b>Natural Resources</b>	
Mr. Cullen .....	18577
Mr. Carr .....	18577
Mr. Cullen .....	18578
Mr. Carr .....	18578
Mrs. Kusie .....	18578
Mr. Carr .....	18578
Mrs. Kusie .....	18578
Mr. Carr .....	18578
Mr. Carrie .....	18578
Mr. Carr .....	18578
Mr. Carrie .....	18578
Mr. Lametti .....	18578
<b>The Economy</b>	
Mr. Poilievre .....	18579
Mr. Lightbound .....	18579
Mr. Poilievre .....	18579
Mr. Lametti .....	18579
<b>International Trade</b>	
Ms. Brosseau .....	18579
Mr. Leslie .....	18579
Ms. Ramsey .....	18579

Mr. Leslie .....	18579
<b>Interprovincial Trade</b>	
Mr. Nater .....	18580
Mr. Lametti .....	18580
Mr. Nater .....	18580
Mr. Lametti .....	18580
Mr. Barlow .....	18580
Mr. Lametti .....	18580
Mr. Berthold .....	18580
Mr. Lametti .....	18580
<b>Canada Revenue Agency</b>	
Mr. Dusseault .....	18580
Ms. Khera .....	18581
Mr. Julian .....	18581
Ms. Khera .....	18581
<b>Status of Women</b>	
Ms. Hutchings .....	18581
Ms. Chagger .....	18581
<b>Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship</b>	
Mr. Paul-Hus .....	18581
Mr. Hussen .....	18581
Mr. Paul-Hus .....	18581
Mr. Hussen .....	18582
Ms. Rempel .....	18582
Mr. Hussen .....	18582
Ms. Rempel .....	18582
Mr. Hussen .....	18582
<b>Health</b>	
Ms. Benson .....	18582
Mr. Blair .....	18582
<b>Foreign Affairs</b>	
Mr. Garrison .....	18583
Mr. DeCoursey .....	18583
<b>Justice</b>	
Mr. Nicholson .....	18583
Ms. Wilson-Raybould .....	18583
Mr. Nicholson .....	18583
Ms. Wilson-Raybould .....	18583
Mr. Cooper .....	18583
Ms. Wilson-Raybould .....	18583
<b>Housing</b>	
Mr. Oliver .....	18583
Mr. Duclos .....	18584
<b>Rail Transportation</b>	
Mrs. Block .....	18584
Ms. Hajdu .....	18584
<b>Indigenous Affairs</b>	
Ms. Jolibois .....	18584
Ms. Jones .....	18584
<b>Official Languages</b>	
Mr. Whalen .....	18584
Ms. Joly .....	18584

<b>Veterans Affairs</b>	
Mrs. Wagantall .....	18584
Mr. O'Regan .....	18584

<b>Justice</b>	
Mr. Fortin .....	18585
Ms. Joly .....	18585
Ms. Pauzé .....	18585
Ms. Joly .....	18585

<b>The Environment</b>	
Ms. May (Saanich—Gulf Islands) .....	18585
Mr. Wilkinson .....	18585

<b>Business of the House</b>	
Ms. Bergen .....	18585
Ms. Chagger .....	18585

### GOVERNMENT ORDERS

<b>Canada Business Corporations Act</b>	
Mr. Sajjan (for the minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development) .....	18586
Bill C-25. Second reading and concurrence in Senate amendments .....	18586
Mr. Lametti .....	18586
Mr. Bernier .....	18587
Mr. Dusseault .....	18587
Mrs. Shanahan .....	18587
Mr. Bernier .....	18587
Mr. Dusseault .....	18588
Mr. Dusseault .....	18589

Ms. May (Saanich—Gulf Islands) .....	18589
(Motion agreed to, amendments read the second time and concurred in) .....	18590

### PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

<b>Department of Industry Act</b>	
Mr. Bernier .....	18590
Bill C-396. Second reading .....	18590
Mr. Angus .....	18591
Mr. Lamoureux .....	18591
Mr. Clarke .....	18591
Ms. Ng .....	18592
Mr. Angus .....	18592
Ms. Ng .....	18593
Mr. Kmiec .....	18595
Mr. Clarke .....	18596
Mr. Lamoureux .....	18597

### ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

<b>Status of Women</b>	
Ms. Kwan .....	18598
Mr. Virani .....	18599
<b>Employment</b>	
Mr. Genuis .....	18600
Mr. Cuzner .....	18600
<b>Canada Revenue Agency</b>	
Mr. Cannings .....	18601
Mr. Lamoureux .....	18601

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