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(HANSARD)

Wednesday, April 25, 2018

Speaker: The Honourable Geoff Regan

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, April 25, 2018

The House met at 2 p.m.

Prayer

• (1405)

[*Translation*]

The Speaker: We will now have the singing of *O Canada*, led by the hon. member for Windsor West.

[*Members sang the national anthem*]

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*Translation*]

TRANS MOUNTAIN EXPANSION

Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, GPQ): Mr. Speaker, the media has confirmed that the whole Trans Mountain pipeline assessment process was nothing but a charade.

We now know that the entire process was hurried along at Kinder Morgan's request. We know that public servants were ordered to say yes to the pipeline by their political masters. We know that submissions from first nations, including the 164-page report submitted by Chief Maureen Thomas on November 28, 2016, went straight into the shredder. We know that scientists' concerns about marine oil spills were brushed off on November 29, 2016. What was the rush?

Members will recall that November 29 was the same day a reception organized by pipeline lobbyists was held here on Parliament Hill. It was the day the government approved the Trans Mountain project, reminding us that Canada is at the beck and call of private oil companies, regardless of who is in power.

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[*English*]

NORMAN PETERS

Hon. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is with great sadness that I stand to recognize the death of Norman Peters, loved by all Islanders as the Bearded Skipper. Norman was a lifelong fisherman from North Rustico, serving as president of the North Shore Fishermen's Association for two decades, representing fishermen in many roles in the P.E.I. Fishermen's Association, and serving on many committees for his industry and the province. He

was a giant as a representative for the lobster fishery on a trade mission to China.

Norman was loved by all who met him. His image as the Bearded Skipper was seen as a Canadian symbol for the fishery. He inspired the building of a fishery museum in his hometown and ensured that the harbour was in good stead, and his fishing charters were an experience to behold, a fishing trip never forgotten by locals and tourists alike. Norman was active in his church and his community. No matter the cause, he would lend a helping hand.

Our condolences go out to his wife Marie, son Corey, daughter Colleen, and family.

* * *

DAVID CRUTCHER

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today in memory of David Crutcher, a loving husband, father, grandfather, and friend, who passed away suddenly on April 3, 2018.

David was a man of faith, a greatly involved member of the Church of Latter-Day Saints. He was an engineer by trade and well known for serving as the president of the Progressive Group for Independent Business. He was heavily involved in politics in Calgary. He was a great volunteer for many Conservative candidates across the city. I will remember fondly door knocking with him.

David was a leader, a leader who did not let friends and volunteers fall behind. He had a warm word for everyone and was armed with a smile as well as a kind handshake. All of us have a David in our communities: remarkably accomplished, a big contributor to local civics, the glue that holds people together, and a gentle soul offering a helping hand to all.

My sincerest condolences go out to his wife Mary, his family, and his friends.

The Gospel of Matthew says, "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted."

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FRASER PETER HUTCHINSON

Mr. Darren Fisher (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada has a proud tradition of brave men and women fighting for their country, and I am honoured to recognize one of Nova Scotia's finest veterans, the late Fraser Peter Hutchinson.

Statements by Members

Mr. Hutchinson served in the defence of France in World War II, where he was wounded and captured. He escaped the prisoner of war camp and spent months trekking across Nazi-occupied Europe to find his way back to Britain. When he returned, he was the first Canadian soldier in the Second World War to receive the prestigious Military Medal. He went on to participate in the invasion of Sicily, where he became the first Canadian to capture an Italian prisoner. Although he returned home in 1943, he continued to serve Canada with valour until 1951.

Mr. Hutchinson risked his life on numerous occasions for our freedom but never wavered in his resolve to do his duty for his country. Mr. Hutchinson was a true Canadian hero, and I am proud to recognize him in this House.

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CANCER

Ms. Georgina Jolibois (Desnethé—Mississippi—Churchill River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, today my colleagues and I in the New Democratic Party stand in support of those living with cancer and their families by wearing a yellow daffodil. These yellow flowers are a symbol of strength, courage, and hope for those affected by cancer and are a message that things can get better.

The research and hard work supported by the Canadian Cancer Society have helped to increase the survival rate for those affected to more than 60%, but there is still much that needs to be done. For example, in Desnethé—Mississippi—Churchill River, people with cancer must travel far from their homes, families, and friends while dealing with the financial, emotional, and mental toll that goes with treatment.

I encourage all members of this House and all people in Canada to share their time, talents, and treasures with organizations that support those living with cancer across the country.

* * *

● (1410)

[*Translation*]

OLIVIA MONTON

Ms. Anju Dhillon (Dorval—Lachine—LaSalle, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to pay tribute to the extraordinary work of one of Dorval's great philanthropists, Olivia Monton, who was recently awarded the Sovereign's Medal for Volunteers by the Governor General, Her Excellency the Right Honourable Julie Payette.

For the past 10 years, Olivia Monton has shown that caring, tenacity, and humanism can change Canada. In 2014, she created Live for the Cause, a foundation that encourages people of all ages to experience the rewards of giving to others and our communities.

[*English*]

Like Olivia, we should never forget to give at least a little bit, whether it is financial, material, or time. She will be hosting the 2018 gala benefiting the Douglas Mental Health University Institute on Saturday, May 26. I would like to invite my colleagues to attend this event and to help me congratulate Olivia for her numerous accomplishments.

CANCER

Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today I am honoured to wear the daffodil pin in support of the Canadian Cancer Society's national fundraising campaign. I work with its national office through my role as the shadow minister of health, and I also support my local chapter in Sarnia—Lambton.

Daffodil Month is held each April, and the money raised from this campaign helps the Cancer Society with its critical work in the fight against cancer. Thousands of volunteers across Canada have been working to raise vitally needed funds for cancer research and support programs. Today in the House of Commons, we all wear our daffodil pins in support of this worthy cause. I ask MPs to share footage of themselves wearing the daffodil pin, using #jointhefight. Together we can make a difference for the almost one million Canadians living with cancer.

* * *

BELL ISLAND

Mr. Nick Whalen (St. John's East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, a unique feature in my riding is the rugged and determined cliffs of Bell Island. Even more unique are the rugged and determined residents who continue to fight for the survival of their communities. Now, 52 years after the closure of the Bell Island iron ore mines, less than a quarter of the peak population remains, as people seek to rekindle opportunities in farming and to create new opportunities in tourism and services for retirees returning from military service or from their satellite community in Cambridge, Ontario.

I was delighted to attend Jonny Harris's hilarious and uplifting performance last year as part of a *Still Standing* episode, where he took a few liberties in celebrating the colourful characters on the island.

Through the Canada summer jobs program, we are supporting 36 student leadership opportunities this summer. I believe in Bell Island and look forward to listening to the community at a town hall on Tuesday, May 15, from 6:30 to 8 p.m. at St. Michael's Parish hall. All are welcome.

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THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Mike Bossio (Hastings—Lennox and Addington, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I know a place where innovation thrives, where international markets are within reach, and where the environment and the economy truly go hand in hand. Why, it is Napanee, of course. This rural town in Lennox and Addington county is where FireRein just announced a contract with the U.S. military for its environmentally friendly, food-based eco-gel, a fire suppressant that was used to help with the wildfires in B.C. This is a perfect example of how Canadians in our biggest cities or in our smallest towns can lead the way to a clean and innovative economy.

Statements by Members

I am proud of our government for recognizing the ability of this small, rural business to make a big impact by investing \$325,000 in FireRein to scale up the company and get the product to international markets. I thank the members of the Enterprise Station of the Stone Mills volunteer fire department for being the first to bring this product on board, and I congratulate the whole team at FireRein.

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ORGAN AND TISSUE DONATION

Mr. Dave MacKenzie (Oxford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, every April, Ontarians celebrate BeADonor Month in support of organ and tissue donation awareness. Today I would like to recognize Joanna and Ryley Mitchell, constituents from my riding of Oxford, who are the recipients of the Trillium Gift of Life Network Champion Award. It is given to Ontarians who have made an exceptional difference in organ donation and transplantation. Ryley received a heart transplant at seven months of age, and they have dedicated the past 13 years to volunteering at awareness events and sharing their story with the media. Joanna sits on the executive committee of the Life Donation Awareness Association of Midwest Ontario, while Ryley regularly participates in the Canadian Transplant Games.

I thank Joanna and Ryley for their contribution to organ and tissue donation awareness and for their involvement and leadership in our community.

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●(1415)

HOSPICE VAUGHAN

Mr. Francesco Sorbara (Vaughan—Woodbridge, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on April 27, Hospice Vaughan and all residents of the city of Vaughan will celebrate the ground-breaking of an exceptional centre of excellence, a place where people coping with a life-limiting illness will find support in a time of need, as will their families and friends.

Located in my riding of Vaughan—Woodbridge, the new 10-bed residential hospice and health research facility will support palliative care as well as grief and bereavement services in a compassionate and home-like setting.

We would not be celebrating this milestone without the dedicated staff and volunteers at Hospice Vaughan or without the generous support of private donors in our community.

Everyone deserves dignity and the best end-of-life care. This residence means that patients and their families will not need to leave the familiarity of our beautiful city. I am very proud of the work that Hospice Vaughan is doing. I urge all my colleagues to join me in congratulating everyone who played a role in this noble initiative.

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*[Translation]***PIERRE DESCOTEAUX**

Ms. Linda Lapointe (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Rosemère lost one of her sons on April 9. Pierre Descoteaux was a former Rosemère municipal councillor, and from 2003 to 2007 he was the MNA for the riding of Groulx, which comprises Sainte-Thérèse, Boisbriand, and Rosemère. Pierre was always very active in

his community. For instance, he appeared on a program on TVBL, Thérèse-de-Blainville's community television channel, explaining politics to the people of the Lower Laurentians.

His wife of over 40 years, Marie Beetz, and his three children, Geneviève, William, and Simon, remember him as a proud family man who wanted to spend as much time as possible with his loved ones. His family and friends knew him as a wonderful husband, father, and grandfather.

The people of Thérèse-de-Blainville remember him as a man of conviction who was hard-working, dedicated, and always willing to go the extra mile for his constituents.

I would like to extend my sincere condolences to Marie Beetz, Geneviève, William, and Simon, as well as his extended family and friends.

Pierre, you left us too soon. Rest in peace.

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*[English]***THE ANGEL OF DIEPPE**

Mr. Phil McColeman (Brantford—Brant, CPC): Mr. Speaker, at 5:00 a.m. on the 19th of August, 1942, Allied soldiers launched a raid on Nazi-occupied Dieppe.

Of the 6,000 mostly Canadian soldiers that went ashore, 60% were killed, wounded, or taken prisoner. Those who survived the carnage would be treated by nurses, including the Augustinian nun named Sister Agnes-Marie Valois.

To her, they were “my Canadians”. To them, she was “the Angel of Dieppe”. Her compassion was only matched by her bravery. On one occasion, she stood between a captured Canadian soldier and a Nazi pistol, declaring that the bullet would need to pass through her first.

Sadly, we learned recently of her passing at the age of 103. Sister Marie-Agnes, “your Canadians” are eternally grateful. May you rest in peace.

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SUPPORT FOR CANCER VICTIMS

Ms. Jean Yip (Scarborough—Agincourt, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today is National Daffodil Day. The daffodil is the symbol of strength and courage in the fight against cancer.

I wear this pin in memory of my late husband Arnold, and for all the people living with cancer and wanting to conquer this disease.

Over the course of their lives, one in two Canadians will be diagnosed with cancer. By funding cancer research, we have seen the overall cancer survivor rate increase from 25% in the 1940s to 60% today.

Oral Questions

There are many different ways to support a person living with cancer, whether it is just being a quiet supporter, offering a meal to the families, sending a quick text message with no reply needed, telling a joke or funny story, providing a ride to treatments and appointments, volunteering at the Cancer Society, or giving a hug or a massage. Everyone can make a simple difference for people living with cancer.

* * *

● (1420)

WOMEN'S SHELTERS

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, recently several Campbell River realtors donated part of their commissions to the Campbell River and North Island Transition Society.

Stephen Grant, Deanna Collins, Heather Parker, Doug Marie, Andre Rivett, Vanessa Hird, and Deb Gyles together donated \$9,900 to support women and children fleeing violence. I want to acknowledge their generosity.

I also want to thank the executive director of the transition society and all of the amazing staff and volunteers who do such tremendous work. These people save lives. Their dedication and hard work is so appreciated.

Sadly, this issue continues to be so real and concerning across Canada. In fact, recently the United Nations special rapporteur on violence against women said that due to the lack of shelters or second-stage housing facilities, many women who have fled from domestic violence are subsequently forced to return to their homes, exposing themselves to the risk of facing further violence.

I ask the government to listen to the cries of women and children across this country and to the special rapporteur and raise the much-needed funding for these facilities. Women and children—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Flamborough—Glanbrook.

* * *

ANTI-SEMITISM

Mr. David Sweet (Flamborough—Glanbrook, CPC): Mr. Speaker, B'nai Brith Canada released its 36th annual audit of anti-Semitic incidents. While 2017 was a year of celebration for most Canadians, it was truly a difficult year for our Canadian Jewish community. Last year, as in the year before, anti-Semitism reached record-breaking highs, with acts of vandalism having doubled and acts of violence increasing by almost 50%.

The audit highlights disturbing instances of anti-Semitic occurrences on campuses, including calls for physical violence by a student leader at McGill, bomb threats at York, and an attempt by the University of Ottawa student union to revoke the status of a campus Jewish group.

What is even more disturbing is that this year there is a section called “anti-Semitism in the political sphere”, which discusses the actions of elected officials, including members of this House. Many experts who study racism refer to anti-Semitism as “the canary in the mine”, an indicator of general patterns of racism across the country. I call upon all members of this House to be active and loud in

denouncing all acts of racism, particularly anti-Semitism. Anything short of that brings shame upon this place.

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ATTACK IN TORONTO

Mr. Ali Ehsassi (Willowdale, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I stand before this House with a heavy heart today. I cannot express the depths of my sadness at the tragic incident that shook my riding of Willowdale two days ago. Those killed and injured are etched in my thoughts, and my heart goes out to all their loved ones.

We will never forget April 23, nor will we forget the response of our city and our country. Allow me, first and foremost, to salute all the first responders who courageously came forward, in particular Constable Lam, all the individuals who rushed to assist the victims, and of course the many people who have descended on Willowdale to pay their respects.

Allow me also to commend every member of this House for their leadership. I have no doubt that we will emerge from this more united than ever. Given all the angels I have seen in my riding, I have never been prouder to be a Willowdalian, a Torontonion, or a Canadian.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[*Translation*]

NATURAL RESOURCES

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, can the Prime Minister tell the House and all Canadians that he and his government will do everything in their power to make sure that the Trans Mountain pipeline gets built?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, all along, we have shown that we understand that protecting the environment and growing the economy go together.

For 10 years under Stephen Harper, the Conservatives were unable to build one kilometre of pipeline to new markets. On this side, we are working to ensure that this pipeline gets built. However, our desire to build this pipeline includes wanting to put a price on carbon pollution and to protect our oceans. That all goes together. Canadians know that the environment and the economy go together.

● (1425)

[*English*]

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, can the Prime Minister assure the House and all Canadians that he is using every tool at his disposal to ensure public support for the Trans Mountain pipeline project?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I find it wonderful that the member of the opposition is asking this question, because indeed we recognize that part of the tools to get this pipeline built is a price on carbon pollution right across the country.

Oral Questions

Canadians know that protecting the environment and growing the economy must go together.

For 10 years, Stephen Harper and his Conservative Party were unable to protect the environment and therefore unable to grow the economy the way they should have.

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, if the Prime Minister claims to be trying to build public support for this pipeline, perhaps he can explain to the House why his government gave a grant to an environmental lobby group that specifically used those funds to hire an activist to protest against the Trans Mountain pipeline.

Does the Prime Minister not realize that paying groups to protest against these projects is exactly part of the problem?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, unlike apparently the leader of the official opposition, we believe in free speech. We believe in advocacy on this side of the House.

On this specific—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order. I know that all hon. members believe in free speech, but it does not mean we can all freely speak at the same time. We need to hear the questions and the answers whether we like them or not.

The right hon. Prime Minister has the floor.

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on the issue of this particular advocacy group, it is important to highlight that it was also funded under the Harper government.

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has signed off on a grant that will go specifically to hire an assistant who will “work directly with [a provincial organizer] and the field organizing team to help our network stop the Kinder Morgan pipeline....”

Does he not realize that he is funding the very groups that are protesting against the project that is in the national interest?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): As I said, Mr. Speaker, the previous Harper government also funded this organization, and on this side of the House, we will not brand Canadians as “eco-terrorists”. We will not remove funding from advocacy organizations because we as a government happen to disagree with them.

We remember what that previous government did. Canadians do not want to go back to those terrible years.

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what the Prime Minister just said will come as a great surprise to the member for Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame. There is nobody who believes that the Prime Minister is committed to free speech when he punishes all those in this country who do not agree with his personal point of view.

What we are talking about here is not the principle of free speech. Yes, we all agree on that. We are talking about taking tax dollars from people who are out of work in the energy sector and giving it to

people who are trying to block a project in the national interest. That is shameful and Conservatives will stop that.

• (1430)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again we see—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order. This is debate; it is not cacophony.

The right hon. Prime Minister.

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau: Once again, Mr. Speaker, we see the true colours of these Harper Conservatives shining through. The commitment that this government has made to stand up and defend reproductive rights and the rights of women at every single opportunity is one that sticks in their craw.

We will not apologize for ensuring that women's rights are protected across this country.

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I feel awful, because I can see that the Prime Minister is not reading from a sheet of paper on this issue.

I would like to address a very serious concern, which is that the government's review of the Kinder Morgan pipeline project was rigged from the get-go. We are worried, because we know that Kinder Morgan lobbied the government more than 36 times in 2016 to try to get the green light on this project.

Our leader, Jagmeet Singh, and I have asked the Prime Minister for full disclosure of all the documents related to the approval. Will he agree to be fully transparent and release those documents?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, we recognize that under the previous government, the approach of not understanding how important it is to properly consult and engage in acquiring social licence needed to be fixed. That is why we actually added additional steps to make the process more rigorous. In fact, we extended the consultation process to ensure we were meeting and exceeding our responsibility to engage with and consult indigenous peoples. This is something Conservatives always failed to do.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I believe that the Prime Minister does not realize just how serious the situation is.

Once again, while his government was probably genuinely consulting first nations about the project, his senior officials were talking to the public service in an attempt to obtain a legal basis for saying “yes” and expedite the project's approval. Indigenous legal experts were troubled by these directives.

Will the Prime Minister commit to releasing all the documentation, and I did say all of the pertinent documentation, associated with the assessment of the Kinder Morgan project, yes or no?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in the House we all know that the process put in place by Stephen Harper was not working. That is why we added steps to the process to ensure that consultations with indigenous peoples and the rigorous study of this project are carried out properly.

Oral Questions

We know that the only way to forge a consensus across the country, not unanimity but a consensus, is to engage and and listen to Canadians from all backgrounds. That is exactly what we did, and that is why we were able to approve this pipeline.

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, breaking news: the Liberal Party of Canada has become the oil company party of Canada. While the Liberals were pretending to hold consultations, the CEO of Kinder Morgan was never concerned, because he knew full well that the decision had already been made. The consultations were a smokescreen. The Liberals laughed in face of the indigenous peoples, scientists, and the public.

Can the Prime Minister be transparent? Can he commit to tabling all the documentation on the Kinder Morgan approval process?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie has made it abundantly clear that he could never accept this pipeline regardless of the conditions that have been put in place.

We approached Canadians in order to be sure to extend the consultations and establish a more rigorous process. Even the hon. member's leader said he would be open to supporting this pipeline. That is precisely the type of people we are bringing together, not those, like the member across the way, who still believe that we have to choose between the environment and the economy.

[*English*]

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, there is no way he even believes that anymore.

This whole fiasco of an approval process is looking more rigged than a Russian election. The Prime Minister promised the people of Alberta a credible process. He broke that promise. He promised the people of British Columbia meaningful consultation with first nations. He broke that promise too. Many people suspected the fix was in from the beginning, that the decision had already been made, and now we have the proof from leaked papers from his own administration.

If the Prime Minister wants to regain a scintilla of trust that he once commanded in the country, will he reveal all the Kinder Morgan papers once and for all?

• (1435)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what we actually did in this process was add additional steps, a more rigorous process to a process we all recognize was terribly flawed under the previous Conservative government. We extended the consultation with indigenous peoples. I would ask the member opposite, outside of the House, to explain why he is ignoring the many indigenous communities that are in support of this pipeline, that are asking for these pipelines to be built, to ensure their future and their kids' futures. There are many indigenous Canadians that feel this is a good path forward. Why are those members ignoring them?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alain Rayes (Richmond—Arthabaska, CPC): Mr. Speaker, an organization that works against the natural resources industry is currently looking for an employee to help stop the Kinder Morgan

pipeline. Why is that organization currently receiving a federal grant?

Will the Prime Minister stop playing games with Canadians' money by subsidizing a group that is undermining our economy and the honest workers in the natural resources sector?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I said, that organization received funding from the Harper government.

On this side of the House, we will not criticize or attack organizations that do not share our values. We will ensure that all rights and laws are upheld. We know that Canadians have a diversity of approaches and opinions and that it is important to listen to them, hear what they have to say, and work with everyone so that we do not cause division, like the members opposite want to do.

Mr. Alain Rayes (Richmond—Arthabaska, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that is nonsense.

The Prime Minister needs to stop sending contradictory messages to Canada's energy sector, which employs honest workers across the country. Doing so jeopardizes well-paying jobs and drives off investors. It is time our Prime Minister showed a little leadership.

How can he defend the energy sector while using taxpayers' money to fund initiatives that undermine Kinder Morgan?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, since the election campaign, I have been saying that Canadians know that we need to protect the environment and grow the economy at the same time. However, today, we see that there are still people who do not believe that.

The Conservatives are attacking us because we are not doing as much as they would like to move Kinder Morgan's TMX project forward, and the NDP is angry that we are moving forward with the pipeline project at all.

As usual, the Liberal Party remains focused on Canadians' concerns, and we are going to work for Canadians.

[*English*]

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this is about trust. The Prime Minister claims he supports the Trans Mountain expansion and the thousands of jobs it will create, but he is funding anti-energy political activists who are being hired explicitly to stop the pipeline. The Prime Minister has already driven out over \$80 billion of energy investment, and now he is using taxpayer dollars to block the Trans Mountain expansion. No wonder no one believes a word he says. Why is the Prime Minister using Canadian tax dollars to block Canadian pipelines and kill Canadian jobs?

Oral Questions

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again, Canadians know that protecting the environment and growing the economy must go together. The members opposite simply do not understand that. On one side of the House, they are thinking about the economy but not the environment, and that did nothing for the economy under Stephen Harper. The NDP is still wrapped up in forgetting about the economy and doing everything it can to try to protect the environment, which is not working.

Canadians know we have to move forward in a thoughtful way that brings people together, instead of demonizing—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Lakeland.

• (1440)

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canada has always produced the most responsible oil in the world, and the Liberals' ongoing attacks are collapsing confidence in Canadian energy investment and in our country's reputation. The bottom line is this: The Liberals are paying people to "stop the Kinder Morgan pipeline". Chief Ernie Crey of the Cheam First Nation said, "Our young people every day come to me and say, 'I want to get trained. I want a job'" with the Trans Mountain pipeline.

Why is the Prime Minister undermining Canada's national interest and funding anti-energy activists to kill indigenous aspirations, thousands of jobs, and the Trans Mountain expansion?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is quite something to watch these guys—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order. Members do not seem to understand that one side gets to ask the questions and the other side gets to have its say as well. Each side gets to have its say. It is a democracy, and we have to listen in spite of not liking what we hear sometimes. Let us show a little respect for this institution, please, including the hon. House leader of the opposition.

The right hon. Prime Minister has the floor.

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, we see that the Conservatives learned nothing in the last election campaign. They continue to try to invent and torque things, and to attack their opponents and demonize everyone as they try to make things happen. It did not work. It failed miserably. You underestimate Canadians' intelligence when you treat them like children and try to scare them into supporting you.

Sorry, Mr. Speaker, not you, but them.

We are going to take Canadians seriously.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: We are all adults here, so let us act like adults.

The hon. member for Carleton.

* * *

EMPLOYMENT

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Waupoos Farm is a charity in my riding that provides free vacations to poor families that could not otherwise afford one. The Prime

Minister cut its summer jobs funding this year because it refused to attest to supporting his ideology, and yet today he claims that an organization that seeks a summer student for the express purpose to "stop the Kinder Morgan pipeline" gets the money under the Prime Minister's defence of free speech.

Why does free speech only apply to those trying to kill Canadian jobs and not to those trying to help the less fortunate?

The Speaker: I remind all hon. members and the Prime Minister to address comments to the Chair.

The right hon. Prime Minister.

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal Party of Canada is the party of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and we will always stand up to defend Canadians' charter rights. Organizations that cannot ensure that they will abide by the principles in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and that indeed will work to take away the charter rights of Canadians, will not get funding from this government.

I know the members opposite do not like that, because it means standing up for women's rights and reproductive rights, but it also means we will be unequivocal in always standing up to defend the charter rights of all Canadians.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we just witnessed the Prime Minister accuse the Waupoos Farm of attacking the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. This is an organization that provides low-income families with a rare recreational opportunity, the chance to have a vacation that they could not otherwise afford. It does not impose any values of any kind on those families. Waupoos Farm invites them and gives them an opportunity to recreate together and grow.

Why is it that the Prime Minister is prepared to support funding for jobs for organizations that are taking away opportunities from Canadians, but not for those trying to help the less fortunate?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, no matter how the members opposite try to spin it, the Liberal Party and this government will always stand up for charter rights. This is something that is ingrained in what we feel a government's responsibility is.

Under the Harper Conservatives, we saw them regularly defunding the court challenges program, put forward pieces of legislation that they knew was non-charter compliant. We are simply saying that if organizations want to move forward and get funding from the government, they need to demonstrate they are supporting the charter. I think that is a minimal thing we can expect of any organization we fund.

Oral Questions

•(1445)

*[Translation]***STATUS OF WOMEN**

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach (Salaberry—Suroît, NDP): Mr. Speaker, not only has the government allocated insufficient funding to combat sexual assault on Canadian university campuses, but the UN has also criticized the government's general inaction on the issue of violence against women. According to a United Nations report, resources are seriously lacking and there are not enough shelters for victims. The problem is systemic, and the Liberals' piecemeal approach does nothing to solve it.

Will the government stop simply talking about being a feminist government and actually take meaningful action to protect women who are victims of violence?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we understand how important it is to tackle gender-based violence, which is why budget 2018 allocates \$5.5 million to improve access to on-campus centres for the prevention of sexual harassment. We also committed \$86 million to develop a broader strategy to prevent and tackle gender-based violence. We understand that we still have a lot more to do, but we are here to fight for gender equality and protect everyone from violence.

[English]

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Mr. Speaker, that spending is years away.

We hear a lot of talk from the Prime Minister, but there is still so much to do on gender equality. This week, the UN special rapporteur on violence against women called out the government for its lack of action to end violence against women. Today, women from 20 countries called on G7 leaders to drop the feminist platitudes and take real action that would change the lives of women now.

The feminists I know get stuff done, so when will the Prime Minister drop the fake feminism and take real action for women today in Canada?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I very much understand where the member opposite is coming from. However, I would exhort her to remember that everyone can be allies as we move forward in the fight for more gender equality. That level of judgment is not something that is serving Canadians or the world.

I was proud to sit down with leaders in the W7, just at lunch today, to talk about how we could do more, and we must do more, on gender-based violence, and on promoting true equality and equity around the world. There is much to do, and we are proud we are having this conversation, and leading in this conversation.

* * *

NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. Jamie Schmale (Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has, in his own words, told Canadians that he plans to phase out the energy sector, having already driven out \$87 billion in investments, destroying investor confidence in Canada, and putting jobs and communities at risk. However, that was not enough.

Could the Prime Minister explain to Canadians why he is using taxpayer money to fund professional protestors whose job description is to kill the Kinder Morgan pipeline?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what we all remember from the years of the Harper government are the organizations that were de-funded because the government disagreed with them, whether it was KAIROS, whether it was a range of court challenge programs, or whether it was other organizations that were labelled as eco-terrorist. That Conservative Party is consistent in trying to shutdown anyone who dares to disagree with it. Know what? Canadians shut the Conservatives down by excluding them from government.

We respect the rights of Canadians to hold a diversity of opinions. We will defend the charter.

Hon. Kevin Sorenson (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC): Mr. Speaker, no one believes the Prime Minister is supportive of Canada's energy industry. Last week, when he was in France, he mourned the fact that he could not phase it out fast enough. Now we have documents that prove that the Prime Minister is using taxpayer dollars to fund professional protestors against the Kinder Morgan pipeline.

When will the Prime Minister just admit that he is using taxpayer money to fund the protestors and to fund his plan to shut down the Alberta energy sector?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, part of the reason the Conservatives under Stephen Harper, and they continue with the same approach, were not able to get a single kilometre of pipeline toward new markets built was they did not understand that respecting a broad range of voices in the country, encouraging people to express their views and working with them instead of shutting them down, is the way to ensure we can move forward as a united country that gets that growing economy and protecting the environment must go together in the 21st century.

•(1450)

[Translation]

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, deep down, the Prime Minister hates and despises Canadian oil. He said that he wants to phase it out as soon as possible, that this process is moving too slowly in his view. Things may be moving too slowly, but the Prime Minister's attitude is harming the economy. Investment has tumbled by \$80 billion, 125,000 jobs have been lost, two pipeline projects have been scuttled, and another is in limbo.

What is the Prime Minister doing to help? He is giving an organization a grant to hire someone, and that organization has posted a job offer for someone to help organize a network to stop the Kinder Morgan pipeline.

Why is the Prime Minister helping those who want to destroy the Canadian economy?

Oral Questions

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have been in government for nearly two and a half years. In that time, this country has seen economic growth. Indeed, last year's growth was the fastest in the G7. The unemployment rate is at a historic low, and over 600,000 new jobs have been created. We know that we are creating a growing economy, one that respects and protects the environment. That is what Canadians want, especially after 10 years of the Conservatives' pathetic economic performance.

[English]

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has already killed \$87 billion of investment in our energy sector. Now we finally have confirmation that he is actively funding the protest against Kinder Morgan. Here is the posting for the job he is funding to "help our organizing network stop the Kinder Morgan pipeline and tanker project."

Why is the Prime Minister funding these campaigns against our energy industry?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, again, we remember the Stephen Harper years, of which so many of the members opposite were part, where anyone who dared disagree with official government position was persecuted, marginalized, had funding yanked, was shut down. That was the approach Canadians suffered under for 10 years.

I can understand those members' outrage that perhaps we encourage advocacy on a broad range of issues. However, Canada is a country strong not in spite of its differences but because of our differences. We will always support the right of Canadians to express themselves.

* * *

[Translation]

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Ms. Karine Trudel (Jonquière, NDP): Mr. Speaker, farmers in Quebec and Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean are troubled by the government's lack of clarity on NAFTA negotiations. The Liberals cannot be trusted to prevent our supply management system from being further undermined. In addition to softwood lumber and aluminum, new sectors risk being hit.

Will the government finally commit to fully protecting supply management and the jobs in our other agricultural sectors?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as we have always said, we will defend supply management. It was a Liberal government that established supply management more than 40 years ago. We know that it works very well, not just for dairy producers, but for our entire agricultural industry. That is why we successfully defended supply management in several international negotiations. We will continue to do so, particularly in our NAFTA negotiations.

[English]

Ms. Tracey Ramsey (Essex, NDP): Mr. Speaker, farmers know the truth. CETA, TPP, every deal the Liberals sign they are betraying supply management.

Key environmental advocates in all three NAFTA countries have published a report warning that the current deal locks the whole continent into high carbon futures. This will absolutely prevent us from meeting our Paris agreement commitment. Two decades of aggressive energy proportionality provisions and it is clear what we must do to fight climate change.

Would the Prime Minister assure Canadians that energy proportionality will be removed from NAFTA?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we all know very well the NDP's perspective on trade deals. We respectfully disagree with the NDP, which cannot seem to find trade deals of any good for Canadians. We know they help Canadian workers. We know they help Canadian small businesses. We know they help Canadian consumers.

However, we recognize there is a need to be more progressive in our trade deals. That is why we are bringing in labour chapters, bringing in gender chapters, and making sure we are moving forward in a way that includes everyone in the benefits of trade. That is what Canadians elected when they elected a progressive government.

* * *

● (1455)

HEALTH

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz (Davenport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, sadly, cancer continues to be the leading cause of death in Canada. In fact, nearly half of all Canadians will be affected in their lifetime. Cancer does not discriminate. It is just as likely to strike someone in Davenport, of whatever background and means, as it is anywhere else in Canada.

[Translation]

April is also Cancer Awareness Month.

Can the Prime Minister update the House on the actions our government has taken on cancer research?

[English]

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Davenport for her long-time advocacy on this important issue.

All Canadians know just how devastating a cancer diagnosis can be for families and friends. That is why we are proud to promote partnerships such as the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer, with funding of up to \$50 million a year.

It is through the strength of these partnerships that we can collectively reduce risk factors, support research, and ensure better treatments today, but also for years to come.

Oral Questions

[Translation]

IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals refer to border crossings into Canada at points of entry that are not monitored by the CBSA as “irregular”. However, such crossings are considered a crime under the law. If the government does not enforce its own law, the message to the public is that the law is arbitrary.

Yes or no, does the Prime Minister think that it is acceptable for people to break the law and cross the border illegally?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, how sad to see members opposite using fear to drive wedges.

It is indeed illegal to cross the border between border crossings. However, we are also party to UN conventions that require us to analyze asylum claims using a rigorous process. We are currently defending our system, protecting Canadians, ensuring public safety, but also protecting the integrity of our immigration system.

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister just confirmed what we have been saying for a year and a half: it is illegal to cross our border. I thank him for admitting that.

Now, what does the Prime Minister plan to do to prevent people from illegally entering Canada?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I do not know whether the member opposite is asking Canada to withdraw from international conventions on refugees, but that is what he seems to be doing.

We are ensuring that our immigration system rigorously applies to all, and we are reassuring Canadians that they are safe, although there will always be challenges to our security. The members opposite are instilling fear and doubt among Canadians, while we are doing what Canadians expect of us: protecting our system, maintaining the integrity of our laws, and also—

[English]

The Speaker: The hon. opposition House leader.

Hon. Candice Bergen (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, last year alone over 20,000 people crossed the border illegally, as the Prime Minister now acknowledges, and that problem is only getting worse. The people who are really suffering are those men, women, and their families that are trying to come to Canada legally, but are being put at the back of the line because of the Prime Minister's inaction.

The Prime Minister has just acknowledged that the problem at the border is a problem of legality. He is the Prime Minister, after all. What is his answer to this ever-growing crisis?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first, the answer is not to stoke fear among Canadians and new arrivals about what is actually happening. We have a strong and rigorous immigration system that is being applied to everyone who arrives in this country. If they arrive between border points, they are arrested. They go through a process whereby if they call for

asylum, we have to respect our international conventions to analyze the request for asylum.

That is what Canadians expect, and that is what we are bringing forward.

• (1500)

Hon. Candice Bergen (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, let me be very clear, I am not invoking or talking about fear. I am talking about an issue at our border where people are coming across the border illegally. Our borders matter, or do they not matter to the Prime Minister?

The Prime Minister needs to answer to Canadians who are concerned. They are not racist. Canadians who are concerned are not racist. People who are trying to come to Canada legally are not racist. They have a legitimate concern.

The Prime Minister, instead of laughing, needs to answer the question.

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what we have been saying for months and indeed years now is that the integrity of Canada's immigration system is holding.

We are ensuring that anyone who arrives in this country, whether it is regularly or irregularly, goes through security checks and a rigorous immigration system that Canadians can be reassured is being applied to the full extent of the laws and rules that Canadians expect.

To suggest otherwise is simply irresponsible, polarizing politics.

* * *

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I was thrilled to hear that the Prime Minister is open to considering my motion on a national strategy to combat plastics in our lakes and oceans. I extended an invitation to him to discuss this very important issue, and I look forward to hearing from him.

However, I was also concerned that he failed to follow other countries, like the U.K., and take a simple step forward, such as banning plastic straws. I am pretty sure Shirley Temples would taste the same without plastic straws.

Will the Prime Minister commit, today, to doing something simple, like moving toward banning plastic straws? It is simple.

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I look forward to continuing to have excellent conversations with the member about the oceans and their protection.

Unfortunately for the NDP members, though, nothing is ever as simple as they would like it to be. We are committed and moving forward to protect the oceans, particularly from plastics, as part of our G7 leadership.

We intend to look not just at macroplastics but also at microplastics and even nanoplastics. There are many issues facing our oceans, and we are going to get them right. That is what Canadians expect.

* * *

[Translation]

AGRICULTURE AND AGRIFOOD

Ms. Ruth Ellen Brosseau (Berthier—Maskinongé, NDP): Mr. Speaker, last spring, a number of farmers in my region of Berthier—Maskinongé experienced exceptional flooding that caused significant damage to their farmland.

Despite repeated calls from the Union des producteurs agricoles, the federal government has not done anything. As a result, many farmers have lost more than \$100,000 and half of their crops. I urge the government to take immediate action.

Will the Prime Minister confirm today in the House that he will provide assistance to farmers in my region?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as a government, we recognize just how important the agricultural industry is to our economy; it is even a source of economic growth.

We were very happy to approve a protein industries supercluster, which will provide solutions across the country. We remain concerned about dairy producers and farmers in Berthier—Maskinongé. We will work with them, just like we will work to protect farmers across the country.

* * *

[English]

IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

Mr. Ted Falk (Provencher, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister misled many would-be migrants to illegally cross the border.

In response to a problem of his own making, the Prime Minister is throwing Canadian tax dollars at a problem with no concrete plan. Yesterday, the Prime Minister refused to even commit to a plan.

Can the Prime Minister tell the House if he believes it is wrong to illegally cross the border and jump the queue?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, not only have I answered that question today, but I have answered it many times over the past months. Crossing a border between official border crossings is illegal.

What the members opposite want us to do is step back from our international commitments—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

• (1505)

The Speaker: I am so pleased everyone is happy, but one person at a time, please. Order. The right hon. Prime Minister has the floor.

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, what the members opposite seem to take issue with is actually the commitment Canada has made to the international community to respect the rights of

asylum seekers and refugees. If someone claims asylum because that person is fleeing persecution, war, or violence, we are required to analyze that request. We are a party to the international convention on refugees and therefore we will stay true to our obligations.

[Translation]

Hon. Steven Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister acknowledges that the immigration crisis he triggered at the border is illegal, but he is doing nothing. We are expecting between 300 and 400 illegal entries per day this year.

Still the government does nothing, and that penalizes immigrants who come in legally and follow the process. We hear about people waiting up to 11 years. The Liberals' approach is unjust and inhumane.

Why the double standard? Why do illegal migrants get to jump the queue while immigrants who follow this country's rules have to wait in line?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is completely irresponsible of the Conservatives to arouse fears and concerns about our immigration system and refugees.

We enforce every one of the laws and regulations relating to our immigration system. Canadians have nothing to worry about when it comes to security and our system. The reason for the delays is that the Harper Conservatives spent 10 years cutting our immigration services and getting rid of the employees who process applications. They did not do what Canadians expected of them. They did not manage our immigration system responsibly.

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher (Beauport—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île d'Orléans—Charlevoix, CPC): Mr. Speaker, now that the Prime Minister has said that it is in fact illegal to cross the border, could he tell the House what the plan is and what he intends to do to stop illegal migration at the border?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, again we see that the Conservatives are only interested in playing politics. This is something I have been saying for a long time, and we have been talking about our plan for responding to this situation for a long time as well.

We are working with all orders of government, ensuring the integrity of our immigration system as a whole, keeping Canadians safe, and investing in our border services and immigration systems so that we can process all these applications.

* * *

INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. Emmanuel Dubourg (Bourassa, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, for many years, Montreal residents have been calling for public transit to be improved. Our government offered help last year by pledging to invest in the Réseau électrique métropolitain project, which is going to transform the region. However, that is not enough. Residents want to know when the metro's blue line will be extended.

Oral Questions

Could the right hon. Prime Minister tell us what our government is doing to move this project forward?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to answer the member for Bourassa's question, especially since, as the member for Papineau, I am thrilled to see progress happening on the blue line.

Two weeks ago, I got together with Premier Couillard and Mayor Plante to announce funding to prepare the business case and engineering studies for the extension of Montreal's blue line. The blue line project will improve metro access for residents of Montreal's east end, after a decade of Conservative inaction on Quebec infrastructure. I am proud to say we are going ahead with this project.

* * *

[English]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Hon. Erin O'Toole (Durham, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I thought my questions about the Prime Minister's scandalous trip to India had come to an end, but the government's story keeps changing. Yesterday we learned that the RCMP knew about the invitation of Mr. Atwal at least a day before the national security adviser told the committee that he knew. Security forces and Mr. Jean were kept in the dark by the Prime Minister's Office.

My question is simple. I just want a date. When did the Prime Minister learn that his friend Jas was on his invite list for the India state dinner?

• (1510)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the RCMP has corrected the information and has accepted full responsibility for the erroneous information that went out. However, the facts remain. There is no great conspiracy here that we are keeping from Canadians. The approach is one of concern that we have. We continue to deepen the friendships and the relationships with India, while ensuring that we are rigorous in our approach to defending Canadian values.

* * *

GOVERNMENT SPENDING

Mr. Daniel Blaikie (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, normally budget items have to get Treasury Board approval before being included in the main estimates. That is why last year we all agreed to delay the tabling of the main estimates so that budget items could be approved by the Treasury Board and included in them. However, this year's estimates include seven billion dollars' worth of budget initiatives that have not gone through the Treasury Board process and should be brought forward in supplementary estimates. It is a big change in the way we approve government spending, and that is why I have asked the President of the Treasury Board to request a take-note debate in the House so that we can learn more about this and pronounce on it.

Will the Prime Minister support that request?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, one of the things we wanted to do in improving access, transparency, and openness in government was align the estimates

process with the budget process. In previous years, as parliamentarians who have been here for a while will know, voting on estimates, even though it might have happened after a budget, had no relation to the budget that a government had just put forward. We chose to create greater transparency and, even more, greater ability by opposition MPs to hold the government to account on spending, which as we well know is at the core of the functioning of this place.

We are pleased with the movement we are making—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Saint Boniface—Saint Vital.

* * *

[Translation]

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Mr. Dan Vandal (Saint Boniface—Saint Vital, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, during the last election campaign, our party committed to renewing our nation-to-nation relationship with indigenous peoples.

[English]

In Manitoba, the Kapyong Barracks property was declared surplus by the Department of National Defence in 2001. The site comprises 40 buildings and over 65 hectares of land. Unlike the previous government, we are approaching reconciliation with a whole-of-government approach.

Can the Prime Minister inform the House as to what role DND and our government are playing in reconciliation with first nations in Canada?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Saint Boniface—Saint Vital for his leadership.

We recognize the importance of the Kapyong Barracks land to the Treaty No. 1 first nations, and we remain committed to working together in the spirit of reconciliation.

Last week, we were proud to announce an agreement in principle with the Treaty No. 1 first nations for the Kapyong Barracks land. This agreement is a concrete step on the path to reconciliation and renewing the relationship with indigenous peoples. We will continue working with the Treaty No. 1 first nations to develop a final settlement agreement.

* * *

PUBLIC SAFETY

Hon. Erin O'Toole (Durham, CPC): Mr. Speaker, now Canadians know the truth. We know that both the RCMP and the PMO knew about Mr. Atwal's invite, but it seems that the PMO did not share that information with the national security adviser. How can Canadians have confidence in the Prime Minister, when his office holds back information from security agencies and from his own national security adviser?

Since the Prime Minister will not answer simple questions, will he commit to appointing an independent council to review the handling of the Atwal Indian affair so that Canadians can get to the bottom of this?

Routine Proceedings

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again, the Conservatives are twisting and torquing the facts in any which way they can to try to make political hay out of an issue that is simply not one.

The RCMP corrected the record, but nothing about the actual timeline has changed in terms of when the information became available and how we acted on it immediately. For the members opposite to simply suggest that there is some grand conspiracy here is simply irresponsible.

I was pleased that the leader of the official opposition took that confidential briefing. I was pleased that members got—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Nunavut.

* * *

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Hon. Hunter Tootoo (Nunavut, Ind.): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister.

In a speech delivered on April 7, the Minister of Indigenous Services acknowledged that Canada has failed to address the many social determinants that lead to poor health and poverty in indigenous communities. Many in my riding of Nunavut feel that Canada has failed them and continues to fail them. Funding for housing, education, infrastructure, and health services is lacking as a direct result of the per capita funding allocation.

Will the Prime Minister commit his government to changing the per capita funding allocation to more of a needs-based approach?

• (1515)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to building a new relationship together with indigenous peoples based on recognition of rights, respect, co-operation, and partnership in a distinctions-based approach that recognizes the uniqueness of the Inuit-crown partnership.

Through budget 2018, Nunavut will receive \$1.6 billion in 2018-19 in major transfers, an increase of over \$50 million from the previous year. We are also investing over \$500 million to make progress in the areas identified through the Inuit-crown Partnership Committee, such as health and wellness, skills and training, and housing.

* * *

PRESENCE IN GALLERY

The Speaker: I would like to draw to the attention of hon. members the presence in the gallery of the Honourable Amadou Sanneh, Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs of the Republic of the Gambia.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Jenny Kwan: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order, and in a moment I am going to move a motion as well. We just heard in the question period exchange not only opposition members, including the Conservative House leader and other members, but the Prime Minister misrepresent to the House by suggesting that those who cross over at unofficial borders are doing this illegally. In fact, it

states very clearly in section 133 of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act that it is not illegal for people to make crossings at unofficial border crossings. In fact, it is not a violation of the Criminal Code.

Therefore, I would like to move a motion and call on the Prime Minister to apologize for using the term “illegal”.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Is there unanimous consent for the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

Mr. Mark Strahl: Mr. Speaker, during question period, the Prime Minister suggested that the opposition was inventing the controversy around the government funding protesters of the Kinder Morgan pipeline. I would like to seek the unanimous consent of the House to table the Dogwood Initiative job posting for an organizing assistant asking for someone to apply who will work directly with the Dogwood provincial organizer and the field organizing team to help the organizing network stop the Kinder Morgan pipeline. I would like unanimous consent to table that.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Does the hon. member have the unanimous consent of the House to move the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

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

While I am on my feet, I move:

That the House do now proceed to orders of the day.

[Translation]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

Routine Proceedings

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): In my opinion, the yeas have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Call in the members.

• (1555)

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

(Division No. 654)

YEAS

Members

Aldag	Alleslev
Amos	Anandasangaree
Arseneault	Arya
Badawey	Bagnell
Baylis	Bennett
Bibeau	Bittle
Blair	Boissonnault
Bossio	Bratina
Breton	Caesar-Chavannes
Carr	Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)
Casey (Charlottetown)	Chagger
Champagne	Chen
Cormier	Cuzner
Dabrusin	Damoff
DeCoursey	Dhaliwal
Dhillon	Di Iorio
Drouin	Dubourg
Duclos	Duguid
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Dzerowicz
Easter	Ehsassi
El-Khoury	Erskine-Smith
Eyking	Eyolfson
Fergus	Fillmore
Finnigan	Fisher
Fonseca	Fortier
Fraser (West Nova)	Fraser (Central Nova)
Fry	Fuhr
Garneau	Gerretsen
Goldsmith-Jones	Goodale
Graham	Grewal
Hajdu	Hardie
Harvey	Hébert
Hehr	Hogg
Holland	Hussen
Hutchings	Joly
Jones	Jordan
Jowhari	Kang
Khera	Lambropoulos
Lametti	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)
Lebouthillier	Lefebvre
Leslie	Levitt
Lockhart	Long
Longfield	Ludwig
MacAulay (Cardigan)	Maloney
Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)	
May (Cambridge)	
McDonald	McGuinty
McKay	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McLeod (Northwest Territories)	Mendès
Mendicino	Mihychuk
Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Sœurs)	
Monsef	
Morrissey	Murray
Nassif	Nault
Ng	Oliphant
Oliver	O'Regan
Ouellette	Peschisolido
Peterson	Petipas Taylor
Philpott	Picard
Poissant	Qualtrough
Ratansi	Robillard
Rodriguez	Rogers

Romanado	Rudd
Ruimy	Rusnak
Sahota	Saini
Sajjan	Samson
Sangha	Sarai
Scarpaleggia	Schulte
Serré	Sgro
Shanahan	Sheehan
Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)	Sidhu (Brampton South)
Sikand	Simms
Sohi	Sorbara
Spengemann	Tabbara
Tan	Tassi
Tootoo	Vandal
Vaughan	Virani
Whalen	Wilkinson
Wilson-Raybould	Wrzesnewskyj
Yip	Young — 158

NAYS

Members

Aboutaif	Albas
Albrecht	Allison
Anderson	Angus
Arnold	Aubin
Barlow	Barsalou-Duval
Beaulieu	Bergen
Bernier	Berthold
Bezan	Blaikie
Blaney (North Island—Powell River)	Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis)
Block	Boucher
Boudrias	Boulterice
Boutin-Sweet	Brassard
Brousseau	Brown
Cannings	Caron
Chong	Clarke
Clement	Cooper
Cullen	Deltell
Diotte	Doherty
Dubé	Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)
Dusseau	Duvall
Eglinski	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Falk (Provencher)	Fast
Finley	Fortin
Gallant	Garrison
Généreux	Genius
Gladu	Harcastle
Harder	Hoback
Hughes	Jeneroux
Johns	Jolibois
Julian	Kelly
Kent	Kitchen
Kmieciak	Kusie
Kwan	Lake
Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Laverdière
Leitch	Liepert
Lloyd	Lobb
Lukiwski	MacGregor
MacKenzie	Maguire
Malcolmson	Marcil
Masse (Windsor West)	Mathysen
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)	McCauley (Edmonton West)
McColeman	McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)
Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound)	Moore
Motz	Mulcair
Nantel	Nater
Nuttall	O'Toole
Paul-Hus	Pauzé
Plamondon	Poilievre
Quach	Ramsey
Rayes	Reid
Richards	Sansoucy
Saroya	Shields
Shipley	Sopuck
Sorenson	Stanton
Stetski	Strahl
Stubbs	Sweet
Thériault	Trost
Trudel	Van Kesteren
Van Loan	Vecchio
Viersen	Wagantall
Warawa	Warkentin

Waugh
Weir
Yurdiga

Webber
Wong
Zimmer— 128

PAIRED

Nil

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): I declare the motion carried.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

OCEANS ACT

BILL C-55—TIME ALLOCATION MOTION

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I move:

That, in relation to Bill C-55, An Act to amend the Oceans Act and the Canada Petroleum Resources Act, not more than one further sitting day shall be allotted to the consideration at third reading stage of the Bill; and

That, 15 minutes before the expiry of the time provided for Government Orders on the day allotted to the consideration at third reading stage of the said Bill, any proceedings before the House shall be interrupted, if required for the purpose of this Order, and, in turn, every question necessary for the disposal of the said stage of the Bill shall be put forthwith and successively, without further debate or amendment.

• (1600)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Pursuant to Standing Order 67.1, there will now be a 30-minute question period. I invite hon. members who wish to ask questions to rise in their places so the Chair has some idea of the number of members who wish to participate in this question period.

The hon. member for Mégantic—L'Érable.

[Translation]

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to rise in the House. Today I heard the Prime Minister say countless times in question period that he defends freedom of expression and he would like everyone to be able to express themselves. However, at the first opportunity, the leader of the government announced that there would be a motion to limit debate and prevent members from speaking to Bill C-55, which is very important.

It is unacceptable to say one thing in front of the cameras and do the complete opposite when the journalists have left and when it is just us here in the House of Commons. The government should be ashamed of itself for using this tool to muzzle people who want to defend Canada's fisheries workers.

Why has the government once again chosen to prevent members of the House from publicly and freely expressing themselves on such an important issue?

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to rise in the House, mainly to thank and commend all hon. members of the House for the remarkable work they did over the past few weeks and months. We had the privilege of holding wide-ranging debates; some

Government Orders

even rose several times for a total of 10 and a half hours of debate, including seven and a half at third reading stage alone—

[English]

Mr. Todd Doherty: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, we have just seen once again that the government has invoked closure on a piece of legislation that will impact Canadians from coast to coast to coast, yet we do not have the House leader here who may have the—

• (1605)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): I am sorry, but there are two things. It is not a point of order, and the member is not to refer to someone's presence or absence.

The hon. member for Cypress Hills—Grasslands.

Mr. David Anderson: Mr. Speaker, the answer to the question is supposed to be related to the bill. We do not see the natural resources minister, the environment minister, or the fisheries and oceans minister answering this question. I am not talking about whether they are here or not. Why do they not stand up and answer the questions related to the bill?

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Once again, I want to remind hon. members that we are not to refer to the presence or absence of any members of the House.

On the other point, it is up to the individual to come up with an answer. In about 30 seconds, I am not sure anyone has the time to come around to it. I will leave it to the hon. minister to come to it. I have heard many discussions in the House where I wonder where someone is going, and then the member wraps it around and brings it to the relevant question.

The hon. minister has the floor.

[Translation]

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos: Mr. Speaker, thank you for reminding us of the question that was asked and giving me the opportunity to complete my answer, which is very simple. I commend all members of the House, particularly the Conservative members who gave 21 of the 34 speeches on the issue. Two-thirds of the speeches were given by Conservative members. Their important opinions were heard.

The Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans did a remarkable job. It met nine times and heard from 34 witnesses. Those opinions are very important. Governments must listen to a variety of opinions from a wide range of people out of respect and in order to develop the best public policies possible. This bill has been improved thanks to the invaluable and much appreciated work of everyone in the House.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I thank the Minister of Families.

The Minister of Fisheries and Oceans did a great job on Bill C-55. That is not the problem. The problems is that the government is abusing the process by repeatedly imposing gag orders in the House. That is undemocratic.

*Government Orders**[English]*

Could the minister please explain to the House why we need time allocation? This is a good bill. It has been amended. It has gone through committee. It should not need to be forced through. We should be able to have the kind of work in this place which ensures that full debate can take place.

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate and value very much the contribution of my colleague. She knows really well, because of her vast experience, that the House has two responsibilities.

The first one is to listen to the diversity of perspectives and views in this chamber as well as in the other one. The House also has a responsibility to move forward with important changes that will make a real change in the lives of Canadians, especially when it comes to issues that matter very much to them, such as protecting the oceans of our great country. We have a country that has the immense privilege of having three oceans. We also have the immense responsibility of protecting all of these oceans, and that is exactly the purpose of the bill.

Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is dismaying that we get to stand up again on this abuse of process. I believe our hon. colleague from Saanich—Gulf Islands brought it up. When campaigning in the 2015 election, the member for Papineau said that under his governance, his government would be the most open and transparent government ever. He also said that he would give backbenchers more power. Well, we have seen how that goes, and our hon. colleague from Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame has seen full well how that goes.

He also said, among many other things, that he would let debate reign. I would like to remind everyone in the House that this House does not belong to the Prime Minister. It does not belong to you, Mr. Speaker. It does not belong to me. It belongs to the electors. We are the voice of the electors. We are elected to be the voice of Canadians from coast to coast to coast.

On a piece of legislation that will be so critical to Canadians, why does the government feel the necessity to abuse its power and abuse parliamentary privilege and process to shut down debate and ram this bill through?

• (1610)

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos: Mr. Speaker, the voices of members of the House are extremely important. The voices of Canadians in 2015 were equally important. Canadians let us know they wanted a greater share of our oceans to be protected. Less than 1% of our oceans were protected before 2015. We said in the campaign that 5% of our oceans would be protected by 2017. We achieved 7.75% in 2017. We said we would move to 10% by 2020.

This is an important bill that speaks to the vision and voice of Canadians when it comes to protecting the value of our oceans. I am proud that both the voice of the people in this House as well as the voice of Canadians in 2015 have been listened to respectfully and attentively.

Mr. Daniel Blaikie (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we all know in this place that the use of time allocation has become a pretty regular practice of the government.

Unfortunately, the other regular practice underneath that is when the government does use time allocation, it only calls for one more day of debate. That is quite unfair to MPs who may want to speak to legislation, who up to today would have thought they might have the opportunity to do so at some future occasion.

I wonder if the minister could explain why when time allocation is used, which is not something I condone, the government does not provide for more days of debate. The Liberals could pick three days, five days, or whatever number they want. Why do they always make it one day, shutting down MPs who might like to plan for future opportunities to speak to bills?

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos: Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, we have had the privilege of listening to approximately 11 hours of debate in this House, seven and a half at third reading.

The parliamentary committee on fisheries and oceans did a great job. It met with 34 different witnesses. It was amazing work and an experience that will last not only a matter of days but a matter of years, because this bill is going to change Canada for the future.

In the next few years, for instance, we will increase the share of the ocean being protected from about 7.75% in 2017 to 10% in 2020. The importance of those actions will keep increasing as we move forward in working better both for the environment and the economy.

Mr. Mark Strahl (Chilliwack—Hope, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the Minister of Families and Children for answering this question that relates to fisheries and oceans, natural resources, and the ministry of the environment. I find it odd that the Minister of Natural Resources will not answer questions on this. I find it odd that the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans refuses to stand and answer questions on this and that the Minister of Environment is refusing to answer these questions, leaving it instead to the Minister of Families and Children to answer questions about why the government is shutting down debate on a bill about oceans and offshore petroleum resources.

I also find it insulting that the government knows that today, on a Wednesday, with a shortened schedule, by closing down the debate and limiting it to one day, it actually means that 40 minutes of debate will occur after their obstructionist voting takes place.

Why will the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans not stand in this place and answer the question? Why is the government shutting down debate on a Wednesday, when we only get 40 more minutes to talk about this bill?

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos: Mr. Speaker, I think most members in this House will appreciate, value, and congratulate the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, the Minister of Environment, and the Minister of Natural Resources for their collaborative work in moving our country forward when it comes to supporting the environment and supporting the economy. This is a language and a vision that I think most Canadians also share. We look forward to more debate, more advances, and more action in the future. This bill, for instance, would set out a panel to inform the future work of this House as well as the work of the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans when it comes to meeting our international commitments regarding the protection of our very valuable oceans.

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We look forward to continuing this important discussion with all members in this House.

•(1615)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault (Sherbrooke, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech.

My question does not relate to the meaning of the bill, so I do not want to hear a response on the substance of the bill. My question has to do with the time allocation motion.

Without saying who is and is not here in the House, I can see that the minister is surrounded by some MPs who were here during the previous Parliament, when the Conservatives made good use of time allocation motions, which they moved nearly every day. These members always rose to speak out against these Conservative time allocation motions.

Today, the tables have turned. These same members are still here, but they remain silent. They are no longer critical of time allocation motions.

What changed between those days before 2015, when they were criticizing time allocation motions every day, and today, when then have nothing to say so they sit and listen?

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos: I thank my colleague for his comment, Mr. Speaker. It is true, he has been in the House a little longer than I have, so I am sure he knows how complicated things were prior to 2015.

I have not been in the member's shoes. Maybe I have not had the same traumatic experiences, but I know that in 2017 and 2018, our Liberal caucus is doing tremendous work. Our MPs take their work very seriously and they meet with ministers regularly.

I also know that opposition members are doing an excellent job, too. I want to commend the NDP in particular, whose members have risen six times, while Conservative MPs have spoken 21 times, out of a total 34 speeches in the House.

I believe that everyone has contributed. As the member also knows, a government must be willing to listen. A government also needs to take action on issues like protecting assets as important as Canada's three oceans. As I said, we are fortunate to have three oceans, but we also have a duty to protect them.

[*English*]

Mr. Mel Arnold (North Okanagan—Shuswap, CPC): Mr. Speaker, only the Liberals could be this arrogant. Yesterday the minister was at committee talking about how he was going to be open and transparent and how he was going to listen to Canadians. The Liberals are saying that they are doing that here today, yet here they are calling for time allocation, shutting down debate in this House because they are afraid to hear the honest debate about the unprecedented powers that will be given to the fisheries minister through this bill. He and only he would be able decide what areas would be shut down for transport, oil and gas exploration, fishing, and any type of activity in the oceans.

Why do the Minister of Fisheries, the parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Fisheries, the Minister of Environment, and the

Minister of Transport not have the jam to stand up and answer this question?

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos: Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the member and commend him for his interest and his contribution to the debate. As he well knows, Bill C-55 would correct a major flaw in the current system. The current system has two possibilities, zero protection or full protection, and nothing in between. The in-between matters where we have a presumption that some marine areas need to be preserved and protected. What we would put in place with Bill C-55 would be a regime within which interim protections could be provided. That means that the minister would have five years to consult extensively with Canadians, including indigenous Canadians, and draw upon science in the most extensive, respectful, and efficient manner, and within those five years, there would be interim protections. After five years, a decision would be made as to whether we wanted to permanently protect the area or not protect it at all.

It is a good way forward. There will be more to come with the contributions of the members in this House.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach (Salaberry—Suroît, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am truly shocked to hear the minister proudly state in no uncertain terms that the Liberals allocated enough time to debate this bill even though, as he said, only some thirty opposition MPs have spoken.

There are 338 members of the House of Commons. How is that democratic? How is that freedom of speech for all? How is that transparent? We are debating a bill that, as the minister himself said, is vital to the protection of the environment and our oceans. There really is a disconnect between what he is saying and what he claims to be doing. Why are they limiting the time we can spend debating it? I think that, in less than two and a half years, they have invoked closure 35 times. They are also adding only one more day of debate on this bill. I have not yet had my say.

Why are we not afforded the privilege of having an open debate on a bill that the minister himself deems so important?

•(1620)

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos: Mr. Speaker, I just want to say three things.

Number one, my colleague, like some of my other colleagues in the House, probably experienced some traumatic things in the pre-2015 era. My colleagues are well aware that we do not even come close to the former government's track record for shutting down debate.

Number two, as the member knows, this government needs to listen to Canadians and to the people Canadians elected to represent them. As I said, the opinions we have heard over the past few weeks have mainly been those of the official opposition and the NDP. We appreciate their views. We know MPs worked hard to share them. We also know they worked hard on the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans while it was hearing from its 34 witnesses.

Government Orders

Number three, Canadians understand that a government needs to take action and that there comes a point where, if a consensus cannot be reached and the House cannot unanimously agree, the government needs to push forward, especially on significant issues such as these.

Mr. Robert-Falcon Ouellette (Winnipeg Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the minister for being here today to discuss this bill and this vote.

[*English*]

I was wondering if the minister could discuss the amount of work that was accomplished by the fisheries and oceans committee. I was discussing this with the member for Avalon, and he told me that the committee put months and months of work into hearing from over 50 witnesses. That is an incredible amount of work. It was over many months.

Every member of the House has the opportunity to go to every committee meeting to offer comments and to listen to experts and people who are involved. I was hoping the minister could comment on the type of debate we might have heard at the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans.

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos: Mr. Speaker, this gives me the opportunity to congratulate the member, who knows how important it is to listen and be respectful of the diversity of views of Canadians, particularly indigenous Canadians, who have for too long been forgotten in the way the Canadian government has moved forward. He also knows the important work of other members in our caucus, including the member for Avalon, with whom I had a very good conversation earlier.

I know full well how valuable the effort was that he and others put into the work of the committee. There were nine meetings and 34 witnesses. They were all very important in informing the work of the House. We owe a big debt of gratitude to the members of the committee, and equally important, to all the witnesses and staff who made this work so useful and inclusive.

Mr. David Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the government says that it is doing well on the environment. That is clearly not true. It is not the case, and I will give an example from my riding.

There is a group of people trying to work with Environment and Climate Change on setting up a new pasture lease situation. They have found that the environment officials are dictating to them at every point. They are telling them the employment they need there. They are setting the provisions of the agreements to work with the community. They are threatening them and saying that if they do not do it their way, they will make it much more difficult for them and they will be jumping through hoops for a long time. Officials are condescending to them and assuming that any local activity is destructive. They do not want to talk to local people or give them any control over anything to do with the project. Basically, they have shown a complete inability to respond to unique situations, because they do not understand the area.

We are seeing it in the bill as well. There is a better way, which is that environment, natural resources, and fisheries and oceans need to begin with local communities and trust that people on the ground understand a little about what is going on their area. We have seen

that in our part of the riding, in particular with some of these situations.

I also should point out that this is actually going to be the only opportunity I have to debate the bill, so when the Liberals said that everyone has had a fair opportunity, that is not true.

How is the bill going to change the attitude of the ministers at fisheries and oceans, environment, and natural resources so that they can begin to work with local communities instead of destroying them?

• (1625)

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos: Mr. Speaker, I recognize, value, and commend the contribution of the member. I would like to signal that his views on the importance of being mindful of local circumstances is not only right but is exactly at the centre of the bill.

The bill recognizes the importance of a case-by-case analysis. Canada is a vast country. Canada has a vast number of Canadians interested in the protection of their environment, the marine environment in particular, and that is why it is so important, as the member said and as the bill explicitly states, to take into account local circumstances, local knowledge, science, and consultations adapted to the context of the projects being analyzed.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Robert Aubin (Trois-Rivières, NDP): Mr. Speaker, if my math is correct, if we prorate for the length of time the Liberal government has been in power, it has already surpassed the Conservatives in terms of the number of time allocation motions. This also helps explain why the Liberals backtracked on changing our electoral system, since the idea of working in a coalition appears to be completely foreign to the Liberal Party.

In its electoral proposals, does the government plan to ask the Chief Electoral Officer to bring us back to a time when Canada was made up of only 50 or so constituencies? The Liberals seem to think that 34 speeches for 338 MPs are sufficient to hear everyone's point of view.

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos: Mr. Speaker, I am once again delighted to have the opportunity to answer the question.

The member knows very well that the vast majority of the speeches on this bill came from the opposition. We heard 21 speeches from the Conservative Party, and six from the NDP. The member also knows very well that we are eager to see how the NDP votes when the time comes to vote on this bill.

We see this bill as an important tool in protecting our oceans. We are fortunate to have three oceans and, as I said, we also have a duty to protect them. Like all Liberal members in the House, I look forward to seeing whether the NDP agrees with us that it is important to go forward with this legislation, which is especially important, in order to enact the provisions of this bill that will help us reach our target of protecting 10% of Canada's marine areas by 2020.

Government Orders

Mrs. Celina Caesar-Chavannes (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the minister stated that the government, the opposition, and the committee debated this bill a great many times.

Can the minister tell us how this bill was strengthened by this process?

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos: Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would like to congratulate the member and let her know what a remarkable contribution she is making to the Liberal caucus and the government's activities. She goes about her work in a very open and transparent manner, in a way that is respectful of the many differences in the House, and with a spirit of inclusion.

Our work was carried out in that very same spirit of inclusion over the past few weeks and months to ensure that the House was apprised of the full range of available views. There were 34 speeches, including 26 by Conservatives and 6 by the NDP. We also heard from 34 witnesses over nine meetings of the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans. Consequently, we now have a better bill that will help change the way the government can protect our three oceans. That is very good news for Canadians. I would once again like to thank all members of the House and, in particular, the member who just spoke.

• (1630)

[English]

Mr. Todd Doherty: Mr. Speaker, it is quite dismaying that the minister has said that most of the speeches have been from the opposition side. Where are the 18 B.C. Liberal MPs? Where are their voices on this? Where are the 32 Atlantic Canada MPs on this? Bill C-55 will absolutely be transformative for our coastal communities. It will financially impact those coastal communities in a negative way.

Bill C-55 would empower the Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard to immediately designate marine protected areas by order and to prohibit certain activities in those areas while the areas in question are studied.

Could our hon. colleague across the way please inform the House what provisions are in place through Bill C-55 for any economic losses incurred by the communities and industry in those areas adjacent?

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos: Mr. Speaker, the colleague used the word “transformative”. Indeed this will be transformative in this government's ability to protect our three oceans. It has been transformative in the way in which my colleagues from Atlantic Canada and B.C. have been able to put forward their views, their vision, and their ability to work for their constituents in the context of the process that led to this very important bill.

I would like to congratulate the members from Atlantic Canada, as well as from B.C., for their important contribution, not only in this place but also in many other places outside of it where leadership matters and where they have shown the type of leadership Canadians expect from this government.

[Translation]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): It is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith the question necessary to dispose of the motion now before the House.

[English]

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): In my opinion the nays have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Call in the members.

• (1710)

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

(Division No. 655)

YEAS

Members

Aldag	Alleslev
Amos	Anandasangaree
Arseneault	Arya
Badawey	Bagnell
Baylis	Bennett
Bibeau	Bittle
Blair	Boissonnault
Bossio	Bratina
Breton	Caesar-Chavannes
Carr	Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)
Casey (Charlottetown)	Chagger
Champagne	Chen
Cormier	Cuzner
Dabrusin	Damoff
DeCoursey	Dhaliwal
Dhillon	Di Iorio
Drouin	Dubourg
Duclos	Duguid
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Dzerowicz
Easter	Ehsassi
El-Khoury	Erskine-Smith
Eyking	Eyolfson
Fergus	Fillmore
Fimmigan	Fisher
Fonseca	Fortier
Fragiskatos	Fraser (West Nova)
Fraser (Central Nova)	Fry
Fuhr	Garneau
Gerretsen	Goldsmith-Jones
Goodale	Graham
Grewal	Hajdu
Hardie	Harvey
Hébert	Hehr
Hogg	Holland

Routine Proceedings

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

NAYS

Members

Aboultaif	Albas
Albrecht	Allison
Anderson	Angus
Arnold	Aubin
Barlow	Barsalou-Duval
Beaulieu	Benson
Bergen	Bernier
Berthold	Bezan
Blaikie	Blaney (North Island—Powell River)
Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis)	Boucher
Boulerice	Boutin-Sweet
Brassard	Brousseau
Brown	Cannings
Caron	Chong
Clarke	Clement
Cooper	Cullen
Deltell	Diotte
Doherty	Dubé
Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)	Dusseault
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Paul-Hus	Paupé
Plamondon	Poilievre
Quach	Ramsey
Raves	Reid
Richards	Sansoucy
Saroya	Scheer
Schmale	Shields
Shiple	Sopuck
Sorenson	Stanton
Stetski	Stewart
Strahl	Stubbs
Sweet	Thériault
Trost	Trudel
Van Kesteren	Van Loan
Vecchio	Viersen
Wagantall	Warawa
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Webber	Weir
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PAIRED

Members

Freeland

Gill — 2

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): I declare the motion carried.

[Translation]

It is my duty pursuant to Standing Order 38 to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Mégantic—L'Érable, Agriculture and Agrifood; the hon. member for Sherbrooke, Taxation; the hon. member for Calgary Rocky Ridge, Canada Revenue Agency.

[English]

Ms. Ruth Ellen Brosseau: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. There have been discussions among the parties to allow the member for South Okanagan—West Kootenay to table a timely petition in the House. I wonder if we have unanimous consent to allow the member to table this important petition.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Does the hon. member have the unanimous consent of the House?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS*[English]***PETITIONS**

NATIONAL PARKS

Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank everybody for their kindness.

Government Orders

I stand to table e-petition 1390. Constituents had flown out from British Columbia to see this, but we missed it by going to orders of the day. They gathered 1,537 signatures on the petition.

The petition is in regard to the establishment of a national park reserve in the South Okanagan-Similkameen. Among other points, the petitioners mention that the B.C. dry interior ecoregion is unrepresented in the national park system. The South Okanagan is a hot spot of endangered wildlife in Canada. They point out that the region will benefit economically in the form of direct jobs and capital expenditures. There is strong local support for the park proposal.

The petitioners call on the government to expedite the creation of a national park reserve in the South Okanagan-Similkameen.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

• (1715)

[English]

OCEANS ACT

The House resumed from March 27 consideration of the motion that Bill C-55, An Act to amend the Oceans Act and the Canada Petroleum Resources Act, be read the third time and passed, and of the amendment.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): I wish to inform the House that because of the proceedings on the time allocation motion, government orders will be extended by 30 minutes.

The hon. member for Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound has one minute and 30 seconds remaining.

Mr. Larry Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to remind everyone that I am splitting my time with the hon. member for Yellowhead. I believe that puts my time down to about a minute.

Speaking to Bill C-55, the legislation goes way above and beyond what the government tried to pretend it wanted to do. It cuts into areas where fishermen have big concerns.

At the end of the day, this affects all the good changes that were made to improve the Fisheries Act in 2012. It seems to be the government's modus operandi that no matter what the item is, if the previous government did it, then it has to be reversed, instead of coming up with some good new legislation.

I wish the government would get back to dealing with some good ideas. Maybe if the Liberals sit down and think about it, they might even come up with something themselves.

With that, I am willing to take some questions.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I know that members from all sides of the House worked on the bill, whether it was pre-study reports or the fine work at that standing committee or some of the debate we heard in second reading. The amount of consultation was fairly extensive with respect to legislation.

It has been in third reading for a while now. It is time to start moving forward on this important legislation. I believe Canadians really and truly want this. The government talked about doing this in the last election platform.

Would my colleague, at the very least, agree that the legislation, as a whole, is good, is sound, and that we need to see it passed?

Mr. Larry Miller: Mr. Speaker, am I ever glad the member brought up consultation, or the lack thereof.

I happen to sit on the committee, so I know what I am talking about. The Liberal members on the committee were thoroughly embarrassed. In day after day of testimony on this, their constituents, their fishermen, kept coming back. Their biggest complaint was that there was almost no consultation, if any. It was basically “This is what we're doing.”

That is not consultation. That is telling people. I thank the member for opening that door for my comment.

Mr. David Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this comes back to something I raised a little earlier. Not only was there a lack of consultation but a lack of willingness to work with local communities.

I have a community pasture in my area. The people are trying to make an agreement with Environment Canada so they can use it the way they have for 70 years. They found that Environment Canada was really only interested in dictating to them. It was going to tell them how many employees they could have and how they could use them. They talked about it threatening them, “If you don't do it our way, we're going to make this a lot more difficult for you than it is right now.”

The department assumes that anything local communities do is destructive. These people have lived there for 100 years and have been able to manage a very hostile environment and do well at it.

Does the member think the bill will improve the government's attitude toward local communities?

• (1720)

Mr. Larry Miller: Madam Speaker, the hon. member comes from ranch country, like I do.

On the member's question about whether I think the government will change and listen to people, instead of trying to shove them around, all we have to do is look at everything from the attestation for Canada summer jobs, and I could go on and on. The simple answer is no, the government is not going to change. It thinks it knows better.

The member is from Saskatchewan. Originally when the changes came about in 2012, it was because of residents across Saskatchewan, through the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities, SARM, which brought it to our attention. I thought it was only in Ontario at the time. We found out it is right across the country.

The answer, again, is no, the government is not going to change.

Government Orders

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, as a member from an ocean coastal riding, I welcome Bill C-55. The hon. member may be interested to know that there is a proposed protected area for a national marine conservation area in my riding. It is still called the Southern Strait of Georgia proposal, although everyone in my area calls it the Salish Sea. It was initially proposed and supported by Jacques Cousteau in 1972, and it still has not been enacted. Therefore, I welcome anything under the Oceans Act to speed up protected areas.

I wonder if my hon. colleague, who does not touch the ocean, might agree it would be a good thing to get an important area like this protected.

Mr. Larry Miller: Madam Speaker, of course everything deserves to be protected, but we have to put this whole thing into context. There were some good changes in 2012, and the member knows that, and this bill would basically reverse all those changes. The good that was created there will go against what she wants. The member has even said that she is against a lot of good things in the country, like the Kinder Morgan pipeline. She is willing to go out and break the law on it, and I think—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I am sorry, but unfortunately time is up. I tried to allow the member extra time to get to his point, but it was taking a little longer than expected.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Yellowhead.

Mr. Jim Eglinski (Yellowhead, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is good to rise today and speak to Bill C-55, even though our time is going to be limited because of the actions of the Liberal government. I have been here four other times trying to get this conversation going, and I will try to get it done today.

I rise in the House to speak to Bill C-55, an act that would empower the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans to designate, without consultation, marine protected areas and prohibit activities in those areas for up to five years. After five years, the minister would be able to permanently designate that area as a marine protected area, or an MPA. The bill would also give the Governor in Council the authority to prohibit fishing, as well as oil and gas activity in MPAs. For a government that constantly praises itself for listening to Canadians and for public consultation, I was surprised when I read Bill C-55. I was surprised because the legislation completely ignores any kind of consultation.

I sat on the environment committee and was part of the study “Taking Action Today: Establishing Protected Areas for Canada’s Future”. I want to mention a comment by one of the witnesses, Paul Crowley. He said:

I think the most important thing is to do this transparently. What are the economic benefits? What is the baseline management that can be handed over to communities? Have that up front right away and across the board, being fair and not renegotiating from one space to the next, from one community to the next, or from one land claim to the next. Start at the highest level right off the bat, and get to “yes” very quickly.

He said that, but he was saying that we need to negotiate, and here we have a government that says it is going to enact this quickly and study it afterwards. Once again, the Liberal government is putting environmental activists ahead of our economy, and the local people whom these decisions would impact the most will suffer. According to fishermen in Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and British

Columbia, they have not been consulted about the impacts of Bill C-55 at all. Why should we expect that they would be consulted, when the Liberals want to turn their regions into protected areas as quickly as possible to reach a personal mandate by that party?

The Cape Breton Fish Harvesters Association representative said, “I think we are more upset by the process. It was not done the way it should have been done. It should have been done more respectfully.”

The director of Gulf Nova Scotia Fleet Planning Board, a fishermen’s group, said that “the consultation process was not well planned, organized, or transparent”, and that it was disorganized even within the fisheries department.

The Chief of the Pictou Landing First Nation said that they have received very little information about the consideration of their region as an MPA. She also said that her community depends heavily on the revenues from snow crab and the lobster fishery. That is a \$70-million lobster and snow crab fishery that has supported their small coastal region in Cape Breton for many generations, and it could be at risk because of Bill C-55.

Mr. Gordon MacDonald, a Fourchu fisherman in Nova Scotia, put it best when he said, “It’s more likely to be damaging than beneficial but it satisfies a need to be seen as doing good, as being a world leader in protection and conservation....”

Some of the locations being proposed are not in danger. They are being fished in a sustainable manner. That is exactly why our government enforces quotas: to protect these areas. Bill C-55 would require that when deciding to establish an MPA, the minister apply a precautionary approach: when in doubt, add it to the list, without any consultation.

First, if the government consulted with the people on the ground, it could avoid a lot of uncertainty. Second, if the government imposes an MPA that is unnecessary, even for five years, it would destroy the local economy, with little gain for the marine environment. However, as Mr. MacDonald said, the Liberals would look good on the international stage.

● (1725)

The Liberal government ran a campaign on transparency, yet there are serious questions about the transparency with the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, both in this legislation and in decisions he has made in the past. Let us go back a few months. The minister awarded one quarter of the Arctic surf clam quota to a partnership between Premium Seafoods and the Five Nations Clam Company. However, neither the Liberals nor the Five Nations Clam Company would say which indigenous groups were involved, until weeks after the decision was made.

Government Orders

Apparently, at the time of the application, not even the applicants knew who was involved, but they got the contract. There were only reserved spots in their proposal for indigenous groups, and it was not until after the quota was awarded that they filled those spots. It smells a little fishy, not to mention that the president of Premium Seafoods, which won the contract, is the brother of a current Liberal member and has contributed thousands of dollars to the Liberal Party. The president of one of the Five Nations partners is also a former Liberal member.

The minister needs to stop playing politics with our fisheries and come up with a real plan that would support high-quality, well-paying jobs in our coastal communities. This bill would not only impact commercial fisheries, but also hurt people who fish for sustenance, as well as negatively impact tourism in these areas. For example, when the International Pacific Halibut Commission met this year to determine the catch limits for the year for Canada and the U.S., it could not come to an agreement and determined to keep the 2017 restrictions in place.

When the recreational fishing industry in British Columbia reached its quota early in the year, it had to close for the season, with just 36 hours' notice from the government. This meant that fishing charters were either out of business for the rest of the year or forced to lease quotas from the commercial fishery. Either way, this cost the fish tourism business a lot of money.

What would happen when the government suddenly decides to make a region a designated area, without consultation, and enforces a five-year ban on fishing in the area? The companies that rely on sport fishing and tourism would be completely out of business, never mind closing early or having to lease quotas. They would not even be able to leave the docks for five years.

Where is the compensation for the lost income? It is not in this bill. The livelihood of Mr. MacDonald's family depends on the region's bounty of lobster, crab, and other species. He calls the proposed MPAs a "human exclusion zone". He said, "They're trying to eliminate humans as if that's a form of conservation.... True ocean health, within the part that humans have control, will involve greater human time and investment, not absence."

The Liberals' plan to protect 10% of marine and coastal areas by 2020 would undoubtedly result in inadequate consultation and large areas from coast to coast to coast being closed to commercial and recreational activities.

I am not opposed to the creation of MPAs. In fact, the Conservative Party has championed conservation and marine protected areas in the past. Our previous government focused on building on existing international markets and introducing new ones, while making significant investments in areas like marine research, harbour infrastructure, lobster sustainability, aquaculture innovation, and indigenous participation.

Rather than consulting the communities that would be most impacted by the Liberal government's plan on MPAs, the minister has chosen to fast-track this process in order to meet these self-imposed political targets.

A balance between the protection of marine habitats and the protection of local economies that depend on commercial and

recreational fishing must be struck. This cannot be achieved without extensive consultation and a concerted effort to prioritize the needs of local communities.

I challenge the government to answer why it is abandoning consultation and transparency. This bill has the potential to do a lot of damage to local fisheries, and it is not an example of the economy and the environment going hand in hand.

• (1730)

Mr. Ken Hardie (Fleetwood—Port Kells, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the hon. gentleman did not sit on the fisheries committee. There may be a few points of enlightenment, not the least of which is that most of the activities going on in an area that is designated an interim marine protected area would be allowed to continue so that the people who fish and make a living in that area would not be deprived.

The opposition members talk about consultation. We saw a glaring example of a lack of consultation, not by the previous government but by a government many steps down the line, on July 2, 1992, when John Crosbie closed the cod fishery. Why did he do that without consultation? He did it because it had collapsed, because steps had not been taken in advance to prevent that kind of collapse. I would ask the hon. gentleman if it is not better to come in with an interim safety measure, using the precautionary principle, to avoid what John Crosbie did in 1992.

Mr. Jim Eglinski: Madam Speaker, I believe what the Liberal government is attempting to accomplish is to follow up on taking action today and establishing protected areas for Canada's future.

This is a report done by the environment and sustainable development committee. CPAWS appeared before the committee and talked about designating 50% of Canada's land mass protected space and increasing the coastal protected areas. If we look at the chart, it pretty well surrounds all of our coastal waters. I believe what we are seeing is a government that is trying to make the 10% limit within the next year, as it promised the public. However, it is not doing it with proper and respectful consultations.

• (1735)

Mr. David Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC): Madam Speaker, earlier I asked the previous speaker a question. We had a project in my area, when our government was in power, that had to do with leasing pasture land. Environment Canada was very co-operative. The deputy minister and the chief of staff came out and sat down with the local community. There was a local community group set up to handle it. The government left the impression that it would be directing research funding through that area as a pilot project and that the local people would have a lot of say over how that money would be distributed for the research that might be done. It gave credit to local people for having knowledge about how to manage that area.

Government Orders

That has changed. Now we see local people being threatened, intimidated, and condescended to. The attitude seems to be that Environment and Climate Change Canada knows most everything. I do not know if that attitude came from the Environment and Climate Change people as much as it did from the current government.

Could the member tell us whether he thinks this is going to make it easier for local communities to work with the government and Environment and Climate Change Canada or if it will make it much more difficult? We did have a good relationship in my part of the world. That seems to have gone out the window. I am wondering what he sees happening with fisheries and oceans in this bill.

Mr. Jim Eglinski: Madam Speaker, proper consultation with the indigenous peoples of the area and local ranchers who are dealing with agriculture leases for range land, and stuff like, has to be done. We need to work with the local ranchers. We need to work with the local counties and local indigenous groups and plan ahead.

I am going to refer back to my favourite report, “Taking Action Today: Establishing Protected Areas for Canada’s Future”, because I sat on that committee. We had the environmental groups come and tell us that they wanted to protect all this land. Then we had the natives from northern Canada, the Northwest Territories, and the Inuit come in and say, “Slow down. We want to be involved in the consultations. We want to talk about what’s best for the land we live on. We want to know how we are going to protect the economy for our future but also protect the environment.” That is what it is about. Bill C-55 is fast-tracking to put these protected areas in immediately. They will do the consulting or negotiating after.

Mr. Wayne Stetski (Kootenay—Columbia, NDP): Madam Speaker, if there is time, I will be sharing it with my colleague, the member for South Okanagan—West Kootenay.

Last year, I had the fortune to work with the Standing Committee on the Environment and Sustainable Development during its study of protected areas across Canada.

Our committee heard from 81 witnesses and received briefs from another 27 individuals and organizations. We also travelled to areas where national parks and marine protected areas are already in place, including the west coast, to meet with communities affected by these areas. The outcome of that study was the committee’s fifth report, entitled “Taking Action Today: Establishing Protected Areas For Canada’s Future”, which was presented to the House just a year and one day ago, on March 24, 2017.

I would like to speak today to Bill C-55, legislation which would expand the power of the Ministry of Fisheries to speed up the creation of new protected areas, in the context of what our committee saw and heard and the recommendations we made in our report.

The purpose of the bill is to expand the power of the minister to speed up the creation of new marine protected areas by making amendments to the Oceans Act and the Canada Petroleum Resources Act. It would increase ministerial powers to terminate private resource interests in MPAs, and create stronger penalties for those found violating the rules of MPAs.

The bill does not, however, define minimum protection standards for marine protected areas or legislate timelines or targets. Thus, the new powers would not have the teeth necessary to protect ocean

biodiversity. The bill would provide some new legal tools to speed up the creation of it, but falls far short of Canada’s international commitments to protect our marine biodiversity. It fails to set minimum protection standards and targets for zoning in marine protected areas, which renders the designation inconsistent at best. It gives the minister far too much latitude to decide what activities are permissible in an MPA. If oil and gas exploration can take place in an MPA, what is the point of the designation?

As many parliamentarians know, Canada has fallen far behind in meeting our international commitments to preserve important wild areas across our country. In our environment committee’s 2017 report, it states that Canada committed to a set of 20 targets known as the Aichi targets, established under the Convention on Biological Diversity. Target 11 commits parties to an aspirational goal of protecting at least 17% of terrestrial and inland waters and 10% of coastal waters by 2020. As of today, we have protected only 10.57% of terrestrial areas and 1.5% of marine areas, 3.5% once Lancaster Sound MPA is approved, which is a far cry from the targets we have set for 2020.

Bill C-55 does introduce a framework that could improve the number of marine protected areas in Canada, and that is good. However, the environment committee heard that quality is just as important as quantity. The World Wildlife Fund told the committee:

While large MPAs are important, we must not simply designate vast expanses of the ocean that are not at risk from human use or that provide unproven or questionable ecological benefits at the expense of developing proper MPA networks. Canada’s progress on MPA networks has to go further than developing a collection of sites without meaningful consideration of how they connect and complement each other, and without including representative coastal and offshore sites within all three oceans.

Arising from that testimony and the testimony of other witnesses, the committee recommended that the Government of Canada focus the expansion of protected areas not only on the quantity to meet the targets, but also to protect terrestrial and marine areas with the highest ecological value in the country.

Even more important than the issue of quality over quantity is the question of what uses may take place in a marine protected area. Bill C-55 fails to restrict the activities within MPAs, nor does it provide minimum protection standards. The rules are inconsistent and broadly permissive, allowing, for example, environmentally damaging bottom trawling, and allowing oil and gas exploration within MPAs.

● (1740)

Two key witnesses attended the fisheries committee discussion on this matter. One of them said:

Government Orders

The law is currently very inconsistent. As you've heard and will probably continue to hear, people are astonished to learn that oil and gas exploration, undersea mining, and damaging fishing activities are all possible in the tiny fraction of the sea that we call marine protected areas. That's why an unprecedented 70,000 Canadians, members of the public, spoke out about one of the proposed new MPAs, Laurentian Channel, and said that we need to keep harmful activities out of these areas.

That was from Linda Nowlan of West Coast Environmental Law.

Another quote was from the David Suzuki Foundation:

I think the other area of the act that needs strengthening is the area of indigenous protected areas. Many indigenous peoples have a long-standing interest in conserving resources and protecting areas of their traditional territory, and there's an opportunity to enable the government to accommodate indigenous protected areas, which are determined, managed, and governed by indigenous people. This amendment would not only facilitate additional conservation of natural resources, but would take Canada further down the path of reconciliation with indigenous communities.

The International Union for Conservation of Nature, IUCN, stated that in a marine protected area we need a “clearly defined geographical space, recognised, dedicated and managed, through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long-term conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural values”.

It goes on to name the essential characteristics that a marine protected area needs to have, including being nature conservation focused; having defined goals and objectives; having defined boundaries; be a suitable size, location, and design; having a management plan; and, of course, the resources and capacity to implement it.

It also specifies, “Any environmentally damaging industrial activities and infrastructural developments with the associated ecological impacts and effects are not compatible with MPAs.”

● (1745)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Unfortunately, the time is up.

It being 5:45 p.m., pursuant to an order made earlier today, it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the third reading stage of the bill now before the House.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

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

Some hon. members: Yea.

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

Some hon. members: Nay.

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

And five or more members having risen:

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

● (1825)

The House divided on the amendment, which was negated on the following division:

(Division No. 656)

YEAS

Members

Aboultaif	Albas
Albrecht	Allison
Anderson	Arnold
Barlow	Bergen
Bernier	Berthold
Bezan	Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis)
Block	Boucher
Brassard	Brown
Chong	Clarke
Clement	Cooper
Deltell	Diotte
Doherty	Eglinski
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)	Falk (Provencher)
Fast	Finley
Gallant	Généreux
Genus	Gladau
Harder	Hoback
Jeneroux	Kelly
Kent	Kitchen
Kmiec	Kusie
Lake	Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Leitch	Liepert
Lloyd	Lobb
Lukiwski	MacKenzie
Maguire	McCauley (Edmonton West)
McColeman	McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)
Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound)	Motz
Nater	Nuttall
O'Toole	Paul-Hus
Poilievre	Rayes
Reid	Richards
Saroya	Scheer
Schmale	Shields
Shiple	Sopuck
Sorenson	Stanton
Strahl	Stubbs
Sweet	Trost
Van Kesteren	Van Loan
Vecchio	Viersen
Wagantall	Warawa
Warkentin	Waugh
Webber	Wong
Yurdiga	Zimmer— 86

NAYS

Members

Aldag	Alleslev
Amos	Anandasangaree
Angus	Arseneault
Arya	Ashton
Aubin	Badawey
Bagnell	Barsalou-Duval
Baylis	Beaulieu
Bennett	Benson
Bibeau	Bittle
Blaikie	Blaney (North Island—Powell River)
Boissonnault	Bossio
Boulerice	Boutin-Sweet
Bratina	Breton
Brosseau	Caesar-Chavannes
Cannings	Caron
Carr	Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)
Casey (Charlottetown)	Chagger
Champagne	Chen
Cormier	Cullen
Cuzner	Dabrusin
Damoff	DeCoursey
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Di Iorio	Drouin
Dubé	Dubourg

Government Orders

Duclos	Duguid
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)
Dusseauit	Duvall
Dzerowicz	Easter
Ehsassi	El-Khoury
Erskine-Smith	Eyking
Eyolfson	Fergus
Fillmore	Fisher
Fonseca	Fortier
Fortin	Fragiskatos
Fraser (West Nova)	Fraser (Central Nova)
Fry	Fuhr
Garneau	Garrison
Gerretsen	Goldsmith-Jones
Goodale	Graham
Grewal	Hajdu
Hardcastle	Hardie
Harvey	Hébert
Hehr	Hogg
Holland	Hughes
Hussen	Hutchings
Johns	Jolibois
Joly	Jones
Jordan	Jowhari
Julian	Kang
Khalid	Khera
Kwan	Lambropoulos
Lametti	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)
Laverdière	Lebouthillier
Lefebvre	Leslie
Levitt	Lightbound
Lockhart	Long
Longfield	Ludwig
MacAulay (Cardigan)	MacGregor
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maloney
Masse (Windsor West)	Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)
Mathysen	May (Cambridge)
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)	McCrimmon
McDonald	McGuinty
McKay	McKenna
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLeod (Northwest Territories)
Mendès	Mencicino
Mihychuk	Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Soeurs)
Monsef	Moore
Morrissey	Mulcair
Murray	Nantel
Nassif	Nault
Ng	Oliphant
Oliver	O'Regan
Ouellette	Pauzé
Peschisolido	Peterson
Petipas Taylor	Philpott
Picard	Plamondon
Poissant	Quach
Ramsey	Ratansi
Robillard	Rodriguez
Rogers	Romanado
Rota	Rudd
Ruimy	Rusnak
Sahota	Saini
Sajjan	Samson
Sangha	Sansoucy
Sarai	Scarpaleggia
Schulte	Serré
Sgro	Shanahan
Sheehan	Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)
Sidhu (Brampton South)	Sikand
Simms	Sohi
Sorbara	Spengemann
Stetski	Stewart
Tabbara	Tan
Tassi	Thériault
Tootoo	Trudeau
Trudel	Vandal
Vandenbeld	Vaughan
Virani	Weir
Whalen	Wilkinson
Wilson-Raybould	Wrzesnewskyj
Yip	Young— 208

PAIRED

Members

Freeland

Gill— 2

The Speaker: I declare the amendment defeated.

[*Translation*]

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Speaker: In my opinion, the yeas have it.

And five or more members having risen:

• (1830)

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

(*Division No. 657*)

YEAS

Members

Aldag	Alleslev
Amos	Anandasangaree
Angus	Arseneault
Arya	Ashton
Aubin	Badawey
Bagnell	Barsalou-Duval
Baylis	Beaulieu
Bennett	Benson
Bibeau	Bittle
Blaikie	Blaney (North Island—Powell River)
Boissonnault	Bossio
Boulerice	Boutin-Sweet
Bratina	Breton
Brosseau	Caesar-Chavannes
Cannings	Caron
Carr	Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)
Casey (Charlottetown)	Chagger
Champagne	Chen
Cormier	Cullen
Cuzner	Dabrusin
Damoff	DeCoursey
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Di Iorio	Drouin
Dubé	Dubourg
Duclos	Duguid
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)
Dusseauit	Duvall
Dzerowicz	Easter
Ehsassi	El-Khoury
Erskine-Smith	Eyking
Eyolfson	Fergus
Fillmore	Fisher
Fonseca	Fortier
Fortin	Fragiskatos
Fraser (West Nova)	Fraser (Central Nova)
Fry	Fuhr
Gameau	Garrison
Gerretsen	Goldsmith-Jones
Goodale	Graham
Grewal	Hajdu

Private Members' Business

Hardcastle
Harvey
Hehr
Holland
Hussen
Johns
Joly
Jordan
Julian
Khalid
Kwan
Lametti
Lapointe
Laverdière
Lefebvre
Levitt
Lockhart
Longfield
MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Masse (Windsor West)
Mathysen
May (Saanic—Gulf Islands)
McDonald
McKay
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
Mendès
Mihychuk
(Soeurs)
Monsef
Morrisey
Murray
Nassif
Ng
Oliver
Ouелlette
Peschisolido
Petitpas Taylor
Picard
Poissant
Ramsey
Robillard
Rogers
Rota
Ruimy
Sahota
Sajjan
Sangha
Sarai
Schulte
Sgro
Sheehan
Sidhu (Brampton South)
Simms
Sorbara
Stetski
Tabbara
Tassi
Tootoo
Trudel
Vandenbeld
Virani
Whalen
Wilson-Raybould
Yip

Hardie
Hébert
Hogg
Hughes
Hutchings
Jolibois
Jones
Jowhari
Kang
Khera
Lambropoulos
Lamoureux
Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)
Lebouthillier
Leslie
Lightbound
Long
Ludwig
MacGregor
Maloney
Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)
May (Cambridge)
McCrimmon
McGuinty
McKenna
McLeod (Northwest Territories)
Mendicino
Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-
Moore
Mulcair
Nantel
Nault
Oliphant
O'Regan
Pauzé
Peterson
Philpott
Plamondon
Quach
Ratansi
Rodriguez
Romanado
Rudd
Rusnak
Saini
Samson
Sansoucy
Scarpaleggia
Serré
Shanahan
Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)
Sikand
Sohi
Spengemann
Stewart
Tan
Thériault
Trudeau
Vandal
Vaughan
Weir
Wilkinson
Wrzesnewskyj
Young— 208

Gallant
Genus
Harder
Jeneroux
Kent
Kmiec
Lake
Leitch
Lloyd
Lukiwski
Maguire
McColeman
Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound)
Nater
O'Toole
Poilievre
Reid
Saroya
Schmale
Shipley
Sorenson
Strahl
Sweet
Van Kesteren
Vecchio
Wagantall
Warkentin
Webber
Yurdiga

Généreux
Gladu
Hoback
Kelly
Kitchen
Kusie
Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Liepert
Lobb
MacKenzie
McCauley (Edmonton West)
McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)
Motz
Nuttall
Paul-Hus
Rayes
Richards
Scheer
Shields
Sopuck
Stanton
Stubbs
Trost
Van Loan
Viersen
Warawa
Waugh
Wong
Zimmer— 86

PAIRED

Members

Freeland

Gill— 2

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

(Bill read the third time and passed)

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

● (1835)

[English]

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES ACT

The House proceeded to the consideration of Bill C-354, An Act to amend the Department of Public Works and Government Services Act (use of wood), as reported (with amendment) from the committee.

The Speaker: There being no motions at report stage, the House will now proceed without debate to the putting of the question on the motion to concur in the bill at report stage.

Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP) moved that the bill be concurred in.

The Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

When shall the bill be read a third time. By leave, now?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Richard Cannings moved that the bill be read the third time and passed.

NAYS

Members

Aboultaif
Albrecht
Anderson
Barlow
Bernier
Bezan
Block
Brassard
Chong
Clement
Deltell
Doherty
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Fast

Albas
Allison
Arnold
Bergen
Berthold
Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis)
Boucher
Brown
Clarke
Cooper
Diotte
Eglinski
Falk (Provencher)
Finley

Private Members' Business

He said: Mr. Speaker, I rise again with some pride to speak to my Bill C-354.

I would first like to thank the members of the natural resources standing committee for their co-operation in the review of this bill. I have seen how a lot of committees work in this place, I have sat in on quite a number of them, and of all of them, the natural resources committee seems to get the job done with good humour and respect. I thank the chair and the members for that atmosphere of collegiality.

I would also like to thank the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Services and Procurement who worked with me in good faith on this file. I trust that support will continue as the bill continues through Parliament to become law.

I will start with a little refresher on what the bill is all about. Its full title is an act to amend the Department of Public Works and Government Services Act, use of wood. As the title suggests, it deals with the use of wood in government infrastructure projects. At its heart, it is meant to promote the use of wood in those projects, much as the British Columbia Wood First Act and the Quebec Charte du bois.

The bill would amend the Department of Public Works and Government Services Act, specifically adding a clause after clause 7.1, the clause that sets out some of the minister's powers and responsibilities.

After careful study in natural resources committee, the additional clause specified in Bill C-354 was amended to read as follows:

In developing requirements with respect to the construction, maintenance or repair of public works, federal real property or federal immovables, the Minister shall consider any reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and any other environmental benefits and may allow the use of wood or any other thing — including a material, product or sustainable resource — that achieves such benefits.

This amendment effectively deals with many of the concerns some had with the first version of the bill around exposure to foreign trade actions and to concerns that the bill picked winners and losers, favouring wood over other materials such as concrete and steel. I personally did not believe the first version of the bill had those concerns, but I am happy this amendment has effectively dealt with that.

I would like to turn now to some of the testimony we heard in committee about the bill. I will start with comments from the forest industry, and I will first go to comments from Derek Nighbor, who is with the Forest Products Association of Canada.

Before committee, Mr. Nighbor stated in part:

We support fully and expect that thorough life-cycle assessments will and should rule the day when it comes to the evaluation of materials in procurement decision-making...I think the profile that he's given...about ensuring that wood is thought about early in the process, to us is the spirit of the bill. That's why we would support it.

Michael Giroux of the Canadian Wood Council, in discussions around national building codes and public works purchasing practices, said:

At the end, the solution is to update those practices to make them product neutral and greenhouse gas savvy or, as Bill C-354 suggests, to force Public Works, through an act or policy, to consider wood use with that carbon metric. In this way, the federal government can catch up to B.C.'s Wood First Act or Quebec's Charte du bois...Often

it is asked whether Bill C-354 picks sides. Really, this is a Public Works real properties act or policy and in the end, should wood not be treated or considered equally? It is a structural material much like concrete or steel and should be considered equally.

The spirit of this bill causes that to happen. Our experience with the private sector is that builders love a third choice. If nothing else, it forces everybody to sharpen their pencils and you get better value for your investments. That's a terrific acknowledgement right there.

• (1840)

As I mentioned earlier, one of the models for the bill is the B.C. Wood First Act. In committee, I asked Michael Loseth, who is the president of Forestry Innovation Investment Ltd., about how that legislation had changed the use of wood in British Columbia. He said, in part:

In my experience in British Columbia, there were a number of unintended impediments that we identified after the Wood First Act was put into place [and] I can give you an example...The Ministry of Education started to look at what building products were being used in B.C. schools. They found there was a lot of concrete and brick and steel and such, so they started to ask the question, why aren't we seeing more wood buildings?...Building codes allow for the vast majority of school types, and the size and shape and what have you, but it wasn't happening. It wasn't until the ministry was forced to go back and really start to peel it back that they identified their costing models and the project planning systems that they had with the individual school districts were all developed and based on building a concrete school.

I will stop quoting there and say, in parenthesis, that one of the schools I went to in Penticton when I was a kid, Princess Margaret junior high, was torn down and rebuilt recently. It is a very brutal concrete building, and I can see where that might have come from.

I will get back to what Mr. Loseth said. He stated:

When those school districts went through the process and provided all the required information back to the Ministry of Education, of course, more often than not they fell back to the concrete buildings, which was how the system had all been designed and set up. It wasn't until they started to change that and opened it up to be far more product-agnostic, and to look at wood to see where wood was being unnecessarily excluded from the process, that it changed.

Now we're starting to see a far better balance. Not every school in British Columbia is 100% built with wood, but there are more that are being built with wood, and those unintended impediments that existed in the system are being dealt with.

I now will go on to the Quebec experience with la Charte du bois. Mr. Gérald Beaulieu, from the Quebec Forest Industry Council, spoke about the benefits that had flowed from that policy. This is some of Mr. Beaulieu's testimony. He stated:

The Wood Charter states that, in every project financed by public funds, the project manager must consider the possibility of using wood. It does not say that wood must be used, but that it must be considered as a building material. A few days ago, Minister Blanche confirmed that more than 54% of the 188 projects identified had incorporated wood in the final design...

The provisions in the bill foresee the implementation of life cycle analyses into procurement policies, and that is analyses that consider the environmental costs of different materials throughout the entire process. Therefore, for wood materials, we would consider, for instance, the carbon footprint through harvesting, transportation, construction, as well as the carbon storage in the built infrastructure. These life-cycle analyses are already done in many situations around the world.

Athena Sustainable Materials Institute is one of the agencies that worked on those analyses. Jennifer O'Connor, the president of that company, testified:

Private Members' Business

You'd want to be sure you had a robust, fair, and transparent system for doing the accounting, with stakeholder buy-in for credibility and acceptance....The point I'd like to make is that all materials have impact....They're all critical to construction. What is more interesting to us is how we encourage improvements across all those sectors, so that...overall have an improvement and a reduction in environmental impacts....The focus would be on what is the performance target. When we have performance-based objectives, we set the target and we allow ourselves to find our own way there.

Therefore, the target in the case of the bill would be the considerations for greenhouse gas emissions and other environmental benefits.

Adam Auer of the Cement Association of Canada stated:

...the Canadian cement industry unequivocally supports the notion that federal procurement of infrastructure, whether direct or indirect through investment transfers to other levels of government, can and should influence construction markets toward low-carbon and climate-resilient design. We also agree with, and in fact have consistently championed, the use of life-cycle tools as the best tools, although not yet perfected, for advancing sustainability in the built environment.

● (1845)

There are persistent concerns about fire safety when people talk about large wood buildings, but we heard evidence from the National Research Council and others that these concerns are unfounded. NRC has tested fire performance in mass timber buildings and has found that these structures can remain sound for hours and are as safe as or safer than traditional concrete and steel buildings in that regard. The walls char quickly in a fire, and then the fire self-extinguishes. The structure remains sound for three hours or more and there is no appreciable smoke in stairwells, and therefore there is more than adequate time not only for people to exit the building but also for fire crews to fight the fire from within.

I will conclude by saying that I continue to visit mills and plants that use wood from our forests. I recently visited the Structurlam plant in Okanagan Falls once again to hear their plans for expansion. As many have heard, if they have ever listened to me speak about this bill or other things, Structurlam is one of the leading companies in North America in the production and design of engineered wood buildings using glulam beams and cross-laminated timber. It is a real leader in this field in North America and it is one of the reasons I brought forward this bill to champion the leading Canadian companies in North America.

Another example would be Chantiers Chibougamau in Quebec, which does a lot of the same sort of production.

These companies would allow the forest industry to develop another market for their lumber products. Structurlam is considering an expansion. We would have more jobs. More good jobs, well-paying jobs, would be created in Canada.

As Mr. Beaulieu testified, "A cubic metre of wood in a plant's yard is worth about \$69, but when it is converted into structural products installed in a building, such as cross-laminated timber, it is worth more than \$2,200...."

Our forest sector is facing some challenges, and this is a positive way we can help that sector. A new market could offset losses from protectionist tariffs in the United States, and the value-added mills would ensure that we could create more jobs with a wood supply that is becoming more constrained under the stresses of climate change.

I think Bill C-354 is a win-win for Canada, giving us beautiful infrastructure that fights climate change while supporting the forest industry, one of the natural resource sectors that has been at the heart of Canadian prosperity for more than 150 years.

● (1850)

Ms. Kim Rudd (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague and say on behalf of the committee what a pleasure it is to work with him and his passion for the natural resources sector and wood in particular. It is a distinct pleasure to support him.

I want to talk about a couple of things and ask if he could expand on them. Certainly Brock Commons in his home province of British Columbia is another outstanding example of wood construction. The member took me on a tour of Structurlam in the summer, and I had the opportunity to talk to the workers and to the owner. One of the things that struck me is that Canada is becoming such a leader in cross-laminated timber, CLT, and what the opportunities are like on the international market in terms of Canadians' know-how in architecture and building and what that means to companies in British Columbia.

Mr. Richard Cannings: Madam Speaker, I am passionate about this because I think we are really at the cusp of a revolution in building design and construction in the world, and Canada is at the forefront. The Europeans are doing it and Canadian companies are doing it, but the Americans are far behind, so we have this opportunity. That is one of the reasons I brought forward this bill.

There are so many things to talk about in terms of why it is a good way of producing buildings. They are constructed much faster, are more airtight, and can be built to very narrow specifications. The most airtight, energy-efficient buildings in the world are constructed with engineered wood. They are cost-efficient and beautiful, and because they are made of wood, they restore carbon that has been sequestered by the trees in the growing forest, so they can act to reduce our carbon footprint.

We are really leading the way in North America, and I hope this will continue.

Ms. Christine Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, NDP): Madam Speaker, a few years ago, I had a motion to have a national strategy on forestry. Does my colleague think that having a national strategy on forestry could help in completing this bill and bring another focus that could not be included, which would help the forest industry which is currently having a hard time?

Mr. Richard Cannings: Madam Speaker, I think a national forestry strategy would be a good idea. As I said, the industry is undergoing challenges now or a transformation. The forests themselves are facing threats from climate change, fire, insects, and other pests.

Private Members' Business

We have to plan ahead. Forests take centuries to grow, so we have to plan ahead to know what kind of forest we have. We are going to have challenges with the wood and fibre supply because of those things. That is why I think value-added propositions, such as engineered wood, really will help us get more value from the forests. However, we have to take advantage of that now.

I think a national strategy would be a good way to start that long-term planning for the future.

Mr. James Maloney (Etobicoke—Lakeshore, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for his kind remarks about our committee, but more so him personally, because the reason our committee is so effective is people such as him. He has brought passion and commitment to the committee, and it rubs off on all of us, frankly.

The hon. member spoke briefly about the revolution that is starting on wood. I know more about wood now than I did before. Perhaps he could tell me if this will have a greater impact on the construction industry at large.

• (1855)

Mr. Richard Cannings: Madam Speaker, yes, I think that this will change the construction industry dramatically. We will be seeing more and more buildings manufactured inside plants, in parts, and then those parts will be moved to the site and put up very quickly. Buildings will be constructed much more rapidly and in a much better way.

Mr. Nick Whalen (St. John's East, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am honoured to help close the debate on Bill C-354, an act to amend the Department of Public Works and Government Services Act (use of wood). I also want to thank the member for South Okanagan—West Kootenay for putting forward this legislation. When I joined the natural resources committee just after Christmas, we were in the midst of a study on wood, and of course, it was well timed for his bill to come forward.

Let me be clear. The Government of Canada fully agrees with the spirit and intent of the member's proposed legislation. The proposed legislation aligns well with the government's goals of supporting the Canadian forest industry, as well as reducing greenhouse gas emissions. However, these goals must be balanced with the government's commitment to a fair, open, and transparent procurement process for all suppliers.

I believe that the amendment to this bill that was passed by the Standing Committee on Natural Resources achieves the balance that we seek. That is why I am encouraging all members to support the bill with our amendment. Let me take this opportunity to explain a little further.

[*Translation*]

At second reading stage, we had occasion to highlight the importance of Canada's forestry industry. Our forestry industry helped build Canada, and it still makes a significant contribution today. Last year alone, it added \$22 billion to our GDP. Forestry plays a leading role in the local economies of the more than 170 rural towns where sawmills, pulp and paper mills and other forestry operations can be found. The industry employs more than 200,000 Canadians and also represents 9,500 jobs in indigenous commu-

nities, making it one of the largest employers of indigenous people. This is why initiatives to support Canada's forestry industry like those in Bill C-354 deserve our careful attention.

[*English*]

That said, we were concerned that the bill as originally presented by the member for South Okanagan—West Kootenay would contradict certain long-standing Government of Canada principles, policies, and obligations and lead to perhaps some unintended consequences. As a point of reference, the proposed bill had stated that the minister “shall give preference to projects that promote the use of wood, taking into account the associated costs and reductions in greenhouse gas emissions”.

The government is committed to fairness, openness, and transparency in the procurement process. These fundamental values of the policies of Public Services and Procurement Canada cannot be deviated from. Although Canadians expect their government to support a sector as important as forestry, they also expect the government to adhere to the basic principle of fairness in its procurement.

[*Translation*]

Depending on how the legislation is interpreted and enforced, it may well violate Canada's obligations under important trade agreements, such as the Canadian free trade agreement and the North American Free Trade Agreement.

Contract spinoffs have the potential to be significant, particularly in a sector that relies so heavily on access to export markets, mainly the U.S.

[*English*]

The Standing Committee on Natural Resources reviewed the bill. I would like to thank my fellow members of that committee as well as the parliamentary secretary for the careful review of the proposed legislation. In fact, we heard many of the same considerations that I have just reiterated.

I am delighted that my colleague, the member for Markham—Thornhill, who sits with me on the committee proposed an amendment so that the legislation would read:

In developing requirements with respect to the construction, maintenance or repair of public works, federal real property or federal immovables, the Minister shall consider any reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and any other environmental benefits and may allow the use of wood or any other thing—including a material, product or sustainable resource—that achieves such benefits.

Ultimately, the committee accepted this amendment and referred the bill back to the House. I believe that the amendment is very important and will help make this legislation more effective and ensure that our shared goal of supporting Canada's forest industry is on a sound footing.

• (1900)

Our discussion on Bill C-354 today also provides us the opportunity to reflect on steps the government is taking to help the forestry sector to embrace innovation and continue to be a vital part of our communities and our economy.

Private Members' Business

[Translation]

For example, the pan-Canadian framework on clean growth and climate change promotes federal, provincial, and territorial co-operation in order to encourage the greater use of wood in construction. Building codes will be updated to reflect that.

[English]

This will be encouraged in part by work that is under way to investigate the updating of the National Building Code of Canada. Currently, Natural Resources Canada and the National Research Council are conducting innovative research and development with a goal of updating our National Building Code to allow for wood buildings up to 12 storeys. Moreover, wood and wood products are important contributors to the Government of Canada's infrastructure needs.

Public Services and Procurement Canada policy requires contractors to propose materials that meet the needs of a project, including sustainability and performance criteria, and that conform to the National Building Code of Canada.

In fact, Public Services and Procurement Canada alone is spending approximately \$160 million a year on average for office fit-ups and interior finishes, of which approximately 15% is directly related to the use of wood products.

I would also like to highlight the important work of Public Services and Procurement Canada in supporting the government's commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The department is making government operations more sustainable through green building practices, including the use of sustainable materials, the move toward optimizing our space usage, and lowering the energy consumption of our federal buildings.

Buildings are a significant source of greenhouse gases and contribute 23% of Canada's overall greenhouse gas emissions. As we know, the government has committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions from federal buildings and fleets by 80% below 2005 levels by 2050.

As providers of accommodation to the Government of Canada, Public Services and Procurement Canada is in a unique position to have a direct and significant impact on the greening of government operations. It is the first federal department to complete a national carbon-neutral portfolio plan that takes into account all real property-related greenhouse gas emissions and energy reduction initiatives that the government has undertaken to reduce greenhouse gases.

[Translation]

Take for example the investment we have made in the energy services acquisition program, through which we are modernizing the heating and cooling system that serves about 80 buildings in Ottawa, including many of the buildings on and around Parliament Hill.

In advance of this modernization effort, we are piloting and testing wood chips for use as a possible biomass fuel. The results of this pilot project will help determine the potential for expanding this option to other federal heating and cooling plants.

Similarly, Public Services and Procurement Canada continues to take an integrated and holistic approach to project design and

construction, which includes the use of a variety of sustainable materials, such as wood, while giving environmental, social, and economic factors due consideration.

[English]

Its goal is to meet sustainable performance standards, such as leadership in energy and environmental design, commonly referred as LEED, and Green Globes. These performance standards encourage the use of products and materials for which life-cycle information is available, and that have environmentally, economically, and socially preferable life-cycle impacts. Projects involving Government of Canada buildings in Quebec City and Yellowknife are the latest ones to meet those standards.

In closing, Public Services and Procurement Canada will continue to lead the way in embedding environmental considerations, and specifically greenhouse gas reductions, into the design and approval stages of its proposed projects.

Bill C-354, as amended, will also support our efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and support our forestry sector. At the same time, it will support our commitment to an open, fair, and transparent procurement process. In short, the Government of Canada is committed to leaving to future generations of Canadians a sustainable, prosperous country. I would encourage all my colleagues to support this initiative.

I would also like to thank the member for South Okanagan—West Kootenay for his work in helping to craft important amendments to his original legislation that both preserve the original spirit and help further our government's plan to help support the forestry sector and at the same time reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

● (1905)

[Translation]

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to take part in the debate this evening. It is on an interesting bill that essentially seeks to give preference to the wood industry in federal government construction projects. I commend my NDP colleague on his common sense, well-intentioned bill, but unfortunately, we believe it would promote one industry over another. On the Conservative side, we believe in the free market and prefer not to give one resource a leg up over another.

About seven or eight years ago, there was a big debate in Quebec City around the construction of a new arena, which we know today as the Centre Vidéotron. Among the events held at the centre are the Remparts de Québec hockey games. Apparently, Patrick Roy is going to be the new coach, but we are still waiting for an NHL team. However, that is not what I want to talk about.

Private Members' Business

There was a big debate in Quebec City about whether the arena would be built out of wood or conventional materials. As I was saying earlier, people have good intentions when they say that since Canada produces lumber, which has the greatest impact on our economy, this would propel the industry into the world market. With greater recognition, we would do better. Products can be made out of both softwood and hardwood, and there would be increases in exports and the quality of wood. People wondered if this new Quebec City arena could be an opportunity to show that we can build large buildings out of wood.

However, people soon realized that the cost, as well as the risk and the time frame, would grow tenfold. The idea was abandoned. I vividly remember Mr. Dutil—he still heads up the Canam Manac empire, a jewel of Canada's economy located in Beauce, home to an MP whom I know quite well and am quite fond of. Beauce's spirit of entrepreneurship is also what drives the free market. Mr. Dutil publicly stated that he did not believe for a minute that any of the 125 members of the National Assembly knew how to build buildings. "Let us do our job; you do yours and we will do ours." That is why we decided, the members of my party and I, to not interfere in the free market.

That does not mean we oppose forestry. Far from it. About 10 years ago, Quebec City built the Chauveau soccer stadium on Ormière Boulevard, in my riding. It is a very innovative stadium. I go there all the time to attend community activities put on by local organizations. It is in fact a wooden structure. It is amazing and it inspires us. It is a good thing. They did it that way because they needed to. The market was left to decide what building material would work best in the circumstances, and wood won. That does not mean wood was given preferential treatment. It simply means that a decision was made in this case to build the stadium out of wood. Anywhere else, it might have been steel, concrete, aluminum, or any other kind of building material, like brick or glass. Let us leave the market to choose, because any kind of interference on our part would only lead to lawsuits, financial disputes, and public outcry. The reality is that the concrete, aluminum, steel, brick, and glass industries could challenge the decision, and we would be no better off.

We believe in the industry's potential for expansion. That is why, when we were in government, we created the expanding market opportunities program in 2013, at the urging of the Hon. Denis Lebel, who represented Lac-Saint-Jean for 10 years and cared deeply about the development of the forest industry. The goal of the program was not only to expand markets, but to increase investment in companies, in lumber mills, in order to develop new environmentally friendly processes and open up new areas of innovation. The program was also intended to give us a competitive edge over the United States, our partner and major competitor.

Case in point, about two months ago, I had the pleasure of visiting the riding of Chicoutimi—Le Fjord. I would remind the House that sadly, the people of Chicoutimi—Le Fjord have gone without representation in the House of Commons for almost six months now.

● (1910)

It is time for the Prime Minister to call the by-election. In fact, I would like to remind the House that our party has an excellent

candidate in the riding, Richard Martel. He has been there for the people in that riding since December, and we certainly hope that Canadians in Chicoutimi—Le Fjord will be able to cast their ballots soon.

As I was saying, I made my way to a small village in that riding that most people had probably never heard of at the time but that later drew the world's attention when Samuel Girard won a gold medal. I am talking about the village of Ferland-et-Boilleau, which has a population of 600. I mention this village because it is home to a forestry co-operative that works with wood, harvests timber, and sells it throughout North America. This co-operative broke new ground by distilling new essential oils from wood. They offered me some, but I purchased them. As pleasant as it is to receive gifts, it is important that MPs support the local economy. I vaporized some at home and it smelled really nice. I felt as though I was in the forest.

In short, we support the lumber industry, but we also support the free market. Innovative products and unknown sectors have yet to be discovered. That is what innovation is all about. If this bill is passed, we believe that it will be challenged in the courts and antagonize people in other areas of the construction industry who will ask why one sector is being favoured over another, and rightly so. People from the concrete, aluminum, steel, glass, and brick sectors will not be happy.

I am sorry to disappoint my colleagues, but that is part of the democratic process. We will not be supporting this bill. We do not think it is a bad idea, but the problems that this bill will create prevent us from supporting it.

Ultimately, we should let the market take its course and let people make their choices. I have confidence in the Canadian wood industry, which is strong and is being led by competent business people who know how to market their products without any direct help from the government, without preferential treatment or a free ride, not to put too fine a point on it. We must let the free market take its course. I am sure that the Canadian wood industry will figure out a way to come out on top, as it has for centuries, without begging anyone for help.

Ms. Christine Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, NDP): Madam Speaker, before I begin my speech, I would like to take a moment to say how surprised I am at the member for Louis-Saint-Laurent's remarks.

His remarks were germane to the debate at second reading stage. The bill has since been amended, clearing up the issues he raised in his speech. I am somewhat surprised, as he is usually so thorough and never cuts corners when studying legislation. To my great surprise, he seems to have failed to understand the nature of the proposed amendments.

Private Members' Business

Allow me to recap so that everyone understands this bill's history. When it was first introduced, it sought to give preferential treatment to wood and to prioritize its use in federal buildings. It was then referred to a committee, where experts appeared to explain in simple terms that wood did not need preferential treatment and that there was no need to prioritize it over other materials. The problem is that the use of wood is often not even considered. The industry has often said that it does not need preferential treatment and that all it wants is to make sure builders consider wood. The bill was amended accordingly.

For example, architecture students are not even taught that they can use wood or they are given only a few hours of instruction on the subject over the course of the entire program. That is why people do not often think to use wood. We do not even get to where we can consider its potential benefits.

As amended, the legislation will ensure that people know to ask. When building a structure, they will consider the building materials available to them and weigh the environmental benefits of using non traditional materials. If they see that there is a significant advantage to using wood, they may decide to do so.

There is, in fact, no preferential treatment. The market will still be free. Every industry can promote the advantages of its own materials. The wood industry is simply asking us to consider using wood. It is confident that it can convince people to use wood without getting preferential treatment because it knows that its products have a lot to offer in terms of greenhouse gas emissions and carbon capture, on top of having a positive impact on the Canadian construction industry.

We therefore went from a preferential approach, in the first incarnation of the bill, to a comparative approach, whereby markets remain free. No one is being forced. The bill simply states that any potential repercussions on the environment will be considered and taken into account. That is the main difference between the original bill and where we are now. If we only look at what wood has to offer, all its benefits become clear.

I have seen a concrete example of this in my riding. For the longest time, the Long Point First Nation community did not have a school. It was very sad. The children had been attending a school in the next town that was shut down by the school board. The school was in really bad shape. It even had mould. The kids spent years in a makeshift classroom in a gymnasium with no windows. This had serious repercussions on the kids' morale.

The town finally got a new school designed by an architect who had a really incredible vision. The school is in the shape of a beehive. There are hexagons in every part of the school, and it is built entirely out of wood. It is extraordinary. The children are now in a learning environment that motivates them. The atmosphere is completely different. This clearly shows how it is possible to build beautiful buildings out of wood.

It is a really long drive, since the town is quite far away, but if anyone has a chance to come and see the school some day, they will see how amazing it is. It is a perfect example of just how effectively wood can be used.

● (1915)

I think everyone can appreciate a bill like the one my colleague introduced, especially in its current form, with the Liberals' amendment. I know that they worked with my colleague in committee to get everyone to agree on the amendment so that the bill would be acceptable to everyone. In its current form, it is an excellent bill that meets the reasonable demands and needs of the industry. It can have a significant impact on the forestry industry and on the environment, since the use of wood has environmental benefits. Buildings are not built to be destroyed, but when they must be destroyed, those built out of wood have a much smaller environmental impact. Furthermore, they have a lesser impact on the local community and on the surrounding wildlife.

I think that the use of wood is a forward-looking solution. Large buildings can be built quickly and at a lower cost. Wood-construction technologies have evolved quite a bit. What was unthinkable before is now easily achievable. Changes have made it possible to build wood structures that are more than six storeys. Some buildings in my riding were built with a lot of wood, which gives the projects a unique touch. We can be proud of raising awareness of the use of wood in building construction.

The forestry industry has been mismanaged in recent years. In the last Parliament, I moved a motion on a national forestry strategy, and I moved it again during this Parliament because it is still current. Although my colleague's measure is extremely important, if we really want to support the forestry industry, we have to develop several strategies, and the federal, provincial, and municipal governments, along with the industry and the indigenous communities, will have to sit down together.

Together we can come up with all sorts of solutions to find the way forward for our forestry industry, which has a lot to offer. The problem is that we tend to overlook all that it can bring to the Canadian economy, not to mention the various products we use. Sometimes we end up missing out because we failed to consider a particularly interesting option that did not necessarily require preferential treatment to be successful. Sometimes a simple idea can spark the best solution. If no one tells us to determine the viability of a solution, it remains an unexplored idea and we are no further ahead.

I hope that hon. members will consider my colleague's bill. I also hope that the Conservative members will take the time to read the amendment in order to fully understand its scope, since it changes the bill considerably. I also think that it is time for the Conservatives to adapt their speech to the new version.

Lastly, I had the chance to meet the forest committee of the Union des municipalités du Québec. The committee members have a lot of concerns about the forestry sector and I think they deserve to get more support. It is a multi-pronged challenge, especially when it comes to the skills shortage. We have to do better when it comes to the forestry. I invite my colleagues to vote in favour of my colleague's bill.

Private Members' Business

• (1920)

[English]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Before I announce the next speaker, I just want to advise him that I may interrupt him, although it looks like we may have enough time.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Tobique—Mactaquac.

Mr. T.J. Harvey (Tobique—Mactaquac, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to join the debate this evening on Bill C-354, an act whose spirit and intent are both commendable and easy to support. Indeed, the hon. member for South Okanagan—West Kootenay has proposed legislation that reflects our government's own efforts to support and grow Canada's forest sector, efforts that not only acknowledge the forest industry's long-standing importance to the Canadian economy and local communities but also recognize its equally bright future.

While Canada's forest sector has endured more than its fair share of challenges in recent times, from historic fires and devastating infestations to unwarranted duties and tariffs from our neighbours to the south, Canada's forest sector continues to reinvent and transform itself for this clean-growth century. In fact, Canada's forest industry stands out today as one of the most innovative parts of our Canadian economy.

The timing could not be better. The world is at a pivotal moment, a time when climate change is one of the greatest challenges our generation will face and a time when investing in clean technology is the new imperative for a low-carbon economy. Canada's forest industry is central to this.

The Minister of Natural Resources has even gone so far as to say that there is no global solution to climate change without the forest sector, and there is a very good reason for that. As we all learned in high school science classes, forests are our planet's lungs. They absorb vast amounts of carbon from the atmosphere and store it for decades, which makes the forest industry unique among our resource sectors and creates huge opportunities for wood and wood products and for the mostly rural and indigenous communities that produce them. That is why the pan-Canadian framework on clean growth and climate change includes commitments from senior levels of government to promote the greater use of wood in construction projects, including \$39.8 million in federal funding over four years to support these efforts. That is why we have also joined with our provincial and territorial partners to endorse a forest bioeconomy framework, a comprehensive approach we have moved quickly to implement as we seek to make Canada a global leader in the use of sustainable biomass to transform our economy.

The challenges of a changing climate also represent an unprecedented opportunity for the forest sector, and our government is doing its part. Here are some quick examples.

Last fall, our government launched the clean growth program, with \$155 million for clean-growth technology development and demonstration projects. Importantly, one of the program's five priority areas is advanced materials and bioproducts. The clean growth program will help to accelerate their adoption.

Then there is the green construction through wood program that funds demonstration projects to increase the use of engineered wood

in non-traditional construction projects, such as tall buildings, low-rise commercial buildings, and bridges. The program also supports the necessary research that will allow tall buildings as part of the next cycle of the National Building Code of Canada, through collaboration with the National Research Council. This is critical, because previous building code changes have already had an impact on the adoption of wood in construction. In fact, there are currently close to 500 mid-rise wood buildings across Canada that are either completed, under construction, or at the planning stage because of code changes nationally and provincially. This number is also expected to increase significantly in the coming years as familiarity with the building code changes and grows.

These efforts are the result of broad partnerships including forest sector research organizations, academia, industry associations such as the Canadian Wood Council, federal and provincial governments collectively, and municipalities.

We have worked together on research, building codes, material development, education, and outreach to create awareness and knowledge on wood construction. Our government is supporting this move to wood through innovative projects across the country and around the world. At the University of British Columbia, for example, federal funding helped build a new 18-storey student residence that now stands as the tallest hybrid wood building in the world. The magnificent Brock Commons tall wood structure is not only an engineering and architectural showpiece; it is an environmental game changer, storing close to 1,600 tonnes of carbon dioxide and saving more than 1,000 tonnes in greenhouse gas emissions. That is the equivalent of removing 511 cars from the road each and every year.

On the other side of the country, we supported the construction of the 13-storey cross-laminated timber condominium building in Quebec City. The Origine project includes a 12-storey mass timber structure on a concrete podium.

As well, we have been taking Canadian ingenuity to the world. There is no better example of that than the new Sino-Canadian low-carbon ecodistrict project in Tianjin, China. It is a \$2.5 billion project showcase of Canadian know-how and Canadian lumber to create a sustainable community covering almost two square kilometres.

Private Members' Business

●(1925)

The first phase of this ecodistrict features 100 wood-framed townhouses incorporating Canadian energy efficiency technologies, which is not just creating new markets but new demand for Canadian wood products. Once completed, the eco-district will serve as a demonstration of how green building materials and technologies can help China realize its goal of ensuring that 50% of new buildings meet green housing standards by 2020. The Minister of Natural Resources was in China last June to renew a memorandum of understanding to maintain the momentum this project has generated and enhance Canada's support for green building in China.

As these examples illustrate, the forest sector can continue to play a central role in many of the most important issues of our time, leading environmental performance, driving clean growth and innovation, and advancing indigenous partnerships, turning climate action into a competitive advantage.

These were the motivations and goals behind Bill C-354. We should all support the bill from the member opposite, at least in principle. However, we just cannot put it into practice without some crucial amendments.

As others have pointed out in the House and at the Standing Committee on Natural Resources, the bill, with the way it was previously worded, was problematic. It raised questions around fairness in procurement. It also had the potential of running contrary to Canada's trade obligations, both at home and abroad. While these concerns are important, they are not impossible to overcome. In fact, I believe that the amendment proposed by the member for Markham—Thornhill and passed by the Committee on Natural Resources resolves this concern quite nicely.

Let me remind the House of the wording of the amendment. It reads:

(1.1) In developing requirements with respect to the construction, maintenance or repair of public works, federal real property or federal immovables, the Minister shall consider any reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and any other environmental benefits and may allow the use of wood or any other thing—including a material, product or sustainable resource—that achieves such benefits.

This amendment would support the Canadian forest sector. It would support other sectors and suppliers. It would ensure fairness, openness, and transparency in the federal procurement process. The bill, as amended, would create good jobs, a stronger economy, and shared prosperity for generations to come. I encourage all members to support this bill as it has been amended.

The hon. member brought forward Bill C-354 with passion and vigour on the subject, and I thank him for it. He spoke vigorously about it in committee and convinced us all that this was a worthwhile venture and something we should all be proud of as members of Parliament. It is something all Canadians can be proud of.

●(1930)

[*Translation*]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Before resuming debate, I would like to inform the hon. member that I will have to interrupt her speech at some point, but that she will be able to finish the next time the House resumes debate on this issue.

The member for Salaberry—Suroît.

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach (Salaberry—Suroît, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am very proud to rise to support Bill C-354, which was introduced by my colleague from British Columbia.

I would like to begin by reminding my colleague from Louis-Hébert, that I think he is looking at the wrong version of the bill. Before it was amended in committee, the first draft of this bill indicated that preference should be given to construction projects that promote the use of wood. That is no longer the case because the experts who appeared before the committee said that the industry did not need a preferential approach. They simply asked that wood be considered as a possibility from the start, because that is not currently common practice in the construction industry.

After hearing from experts, amendments were made in committee, so now the bill favours a comparative approach rather than a preferential one. The bill is short and simple. The summary reads, and I quote:

...that the Minister may, in developing requirements for public works, allow the use of wood or any other thing that achieves environmental benefits.

This refers to the minister of Public Works. The clause simply states:

(1.1) In developing requirements with respect to the construction, maintenance or repair of public works, federal real property or federal immovables, the Minister shall consider any reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and any other environmental benefit and may allow the use of wood or any other thing — including a material, product or sustainable resource — that achieves such benefits.

This responds to the questions and points raised by the Conservative member who spoke earlier. I think this can help him reconsider his position.

The wood industry has had enough challenges in recent years. Workers from several sectors of the wood industry in Quebec, Ontario, and British Columbia told us that the government should think about integrating wood in construction. Recent innovations and technologies have made wood a potentially very beneficial material. We want to reduce our carbon footprint, and, in the cycle of life, wood has a very small footprint compared to other materials, such as concrete or steel. Using wood could make it easier to achieve the targets the government set under the Paris Agreement. This would give an economic boost to workers in regions across the country.

●(1935)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The member will have six and a half minutes the next time this bill is before the House.

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

*Adjournment Proceedings***ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS**

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

[*Translation*]

AGRICULTURE AND AGRIFOOD

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Madam Speaker, it gives me pleasure to be here in the House to speak about a crucial sector of the Canadian economy, namely our agriculture industry.

On December 8, 2017, I asked the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food a question, and it was answered by the parliamentary secretary. By way of background, my perfectly simple question asked why the Liberals were abandoning farmers.

The parliamentary secretary's answer was about supply management. He reminded us of the Liberals' traditional position of supporting supply management. I strongly suspect it is the same answer we are going to get tonight. However, my question, which the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food did not answer, had other elements. I talked about how the Liberals had abandoned farmers by calling them tax cheats during the tax reforms, trying to take away their deferred cash tickets, and refusing to split Bill C-59 at the time.

Members will recall that back in December 2017, we predicted a crisis in grain transportation. We anticipated that grain transporters in western Canada would have trouble exporting their grain and that a crisis would erupt in the transportation system. We called on the Liberals to take action. Unfortunately, our calls fell on deaf ears, as did the calls of farmers and the industry. A serious crisis did develop, and grain farmers are still suffering the consequences today. That is the reality.

I asked why the Liberals were abandoning farmers. Sadly, not much has happened since. Actually, to be precise, a lot has happened, but to no effect. We have been presented with a budget that made absolutely no mention of agriculture. That is a fact. Now we have proof: since December 8, 2017, in regard to agriculture, the Liberals have abandoned Canadian farmers. What has happened since then? The grain crisis.

The Senate sent amendments to Bill C-59 back to the House. Those amendments could make Bill C-59 acceptable if we manage to adopt them. The Senate sent its amendments to the House over two weeks ago. We have not heard a thing. That is the government response to the amendments to Bill C-59. No news, and the crisis is ongoing. The Liberals refused to pass an order in council to resolve the crisis.

Now, once again, we have a very serious problem before us. What happened in the meantime? Oh, right, the NAFTA negotiations. Something did happen. The parliamentary secretary can give us all the reassurances he wants about supply management, but I have just one little thing to say to him. Despite his and his government's reassuring words, the Union des producteurs agricoles du Québec and its president are demanding that the government get tougher and stand firm. They want the Canadian government to say, loudly and clearly, that supply managed sectors will not be opened up to

American producers any more than they already are and that we will not sit back and let them impose tariffs on other products.

My question this evening is this: will the parliamentary secretary pledge to the president of the Union des producteurs agricoles du Québec and us that supply management will not be opened up any more than it already is? The president is not asking for protection; he is just asking the government not to open up supply management any more.

● (1940)

Mr. Jean-Claude Poissant (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague from Mégantic—L'Érable who is a member of the Standing Committee on Agriculture and is doing an excellent job. I have had the opportunity to visit his beautiful area of the country and its abundance of maple syrup producers.

That said, the success of the country's agriculture and agrifood industry is a priority for our government. That is why we regularly consult with farmers and why we are taking appropriate measures to help the sector remain competitive in the long term.

We have set the goal of expanding Canadian annual agrifood exports to \$75 billion by 2025. Budget 2018 builds on the investments in agriculture made in budget 2017, particularly the Canadian agricultural partnership, a supercluster initiative. This measure takes the necessary action to build a competitive, sustainable, and fair Canada where equality reigns. In Canada, where science and innovation help create economic growth, the Canadian agricultural partnership came into effect on April 1. It includes a \$3-billion investment over five years that will help strengthen Canada's agriculture, agrifood and agri-based products industry.

The Transportation Modernization Act is also a priority for the government. It will make Canada's transportation system more transparent, fair, and efficient. It will help bring Canadian agricultural products to domestic and foreign markets.

The government is also defending the main interests of the agriculture and agrifood sector as it negotiates several free trade agreements. On March 8, Canada and 10 signatories signed the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership in Santiago, Chile. Given that Asia-Pacific is a growing market for Canada, the CPTTP is excellent news for the agriculture and agrifood sector. This partnership will help create export markets, put Canadian agricultural producers on an equal footing with their main competitors, and ensure Canada's economic growth.

The government is also actively ensuring that the Canadian agriculture sector benefits from market opportunities created by the Canada-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement.

Last November, the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food spent 10 days in China, our second largest export market for agrifood products, to promote Canadian agricultural products. This trip paved the way for stable trade for agricultural products such as canola and meat.

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We will continue to invest in our farmers, livestock producers, and growers across the country. The agriculture and agrifood sector in Canada is an innovative and highly specialized sector and a key driver of Canada's economy. The government supports Canadian farmers and adopts policies that will give the industry a competitive advantage in growing global markets.

Mr. Luc Berthold: Madam Speaker, it is worrisome. The UPA asked the government to confirm that it will not make any more concessions in the negotiations with the Americans. There was no such confirmation. We are still waiting for a trans-Pacific partnership implementation bill to be introduced because if we are not among the first six, the other countries will take advantage. Again, the Liberals are abandoning the producers.

This is the latest crisis. The president of the Fédération des producteurs de lait, Bruno Letendre, says that we should not be implementing a labelling policy that will confuse consumers. Dairy products are healthy choices and should be recognized as such. He is launching this appeal to counter Health Canada giving its blessing to carbonated soft drinks. It is saying that there is no problem with carbonated soft drinks, but we have to label dairy products such as yoghurt and cheese because they contain saturated fat. However, science tells us that it is good for our health. That is why we feel that the Liberals are turning their backs on Canadian producers.

● (1945)

Mr. Jean-Claude Poissant: Madam Speaker, I would like to remind the hon. member that his colleague from Beauce wants to do away with supply management, whereas we have never changed our position in that regard.

We continue to defend supply management. I want to reiterate that the success of the agriculture and agrifood industry is a priority for our government. Budget 2018 will continue to enhance the competitiveness of Canada's agricultural industry. We signed agreements with the provinces and territories under the Canadian agricultural partnership, which took effect on April 1. We introduced a bill to create a more transparent, fair, and effective rail system, which will help grain farmers get their products to market. We will continue to work closely with stakeholders to defend the interests of Canada's agriculture and agrifood industry as part of the government's broader trade agenda.

TAXATION

Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault (Sherbrooke, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to follow up on a question that I asked the Minister of National Revenue last fall about the disability tax credit fiasco, which had a major impact on people with type 1 diabetes. Since I have only four minutes, I would like to briefly remind the House of what happened.

Overnight, the number of people with type 1 diabetes being denied the tax credit by the Canada Revenue Agency inexplicably began to soar. Such a thing had never been seen before. A person with type 1 diabetes who had never had any trouble getting the disability tax credit before was suddenly being turned down by the CRA on the pretext that they no longer met the criteria.

That could happen in one or two exceptional cases. Last fall, however, an astounding number of people started contacting members on both sides of the House to complain about this

situation, which was reaching unprecedented levels. The minister kept insisting that there had been no change in the criteria and that there was no reason to worry, even though the reality on the ground was that a staggering number of people were being denied the tax credit.

Eventually, the minister was forced to apologize, because concrete evidence, in the form of CRA emails, proved that an internal memo had been sent to agents telling them to review disability tax credit applications more closely, especially those from people with type 1 diabetes. She had to apologize because the facts were checked by the media and the opposition, who finally uncovered the truth. If the minister had to apologize, it is because something had in fact changed. This shows that she did a poor job of managing this file, to say the least. She confused everyone, as did the public servants who appeared before the committee. One message had been sent to the agents on the front lines, while the government was sending a completely different message.

As a follow-up, I would like to ask the government to tell us how many people were affected by this incredible fiasco. How many people suffering from type 1 diabetes in Canada were affected and became ineligible for the tax credit overnight? We hope that they won their case with the Canada Revenue Agency and that they have finally received their tax credit. There have been changes at the agency and we hope that other changes will be made in order to clarify the rules.

How many people were affected by the fiasco created by the Minister of National Revenue?

● (1950)

[English]

Ms. Kamal Khera (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am happy to rise once again in this House to help my hon. colleague get a better understanding of the disability tax credit. While I am certain that this may not surprise my colleague, I can once again assure him, as I have many times in this House, that the eligibility criteria for the DTC have not changed. Unlike the previous Harper Conservatives, our government is committed to ensuring that Canadians with disabilities not only receive the credits and benefits to which they are entitled but are able to advise the CRA on how best to administer them.

One of the most important steps we have taken is to reinstate the Disability Advisory Committee, which, again, the previous Harper Conservatives abolished in 2006. After more than 10 years without a voice at the table, Canadians with disabilities, their stakeholder organizations, and medical experts are now able to engage with the Canada Revenue Agency. Through this process, they provide insight on how to best ensure that they receive the benefits to which they are entitled.

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Our government values evidence-based policy-making. The Disability Advisory Committee allows us to hear directly from experts to ensure that the steps we take moving forward improve the agency's services. We have also taken concrete steps to make it easier for Canadians to apply for the disability tax credit.

Nurses form the backbone of many Canadians' health care. As a nurse myself, I know that nurses often follow their patients very closely. That is why I was proud that our government allowed nurse practitioners to certify the medical information and the effects of the impairment on the credit application form. This will make the application process more accessible for individuals who do not have frequent access to a doctor.

Let me be absolutely clear. Most applications for the disability tax credit received by the CRA are approved, allowing more than 700,000 Canadians to claim the credit on their annual tax returns. The agency does not have a target approval rate. Each case is processed on a case-by-case basis. We are continuing to improve the agency's transparency in the application and administration of the DTC. The agency has published detailed statistics on its website. Data related to this important credit, including the number people claiming it, the amounts claimed, and the number of applications accepted and rejected, will be published annually. We have also recently established the position of chief data officer, who will provide leadership and oversight as the agency takes steps to enhance its approach to data management.

Our government is absolutely committed to ensuring that all Canadians receive the benefits and credits to which they are entitled.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault: Madam Speaker, unfortunately, we get the same response all too often from this government.

As soon as the Liberals find themselves in an unpleasant situation, and that is putting it mildly, as soon as their mismanagement is exposed, they react. That is when they suddenly decide to create a panel of experts, because a problem needs solving. However, the problem needs to be uncovered by the public, the opposition or the media, otherwise the government does nothing and lets things go.

If no one had spoken up and said that their tax credit had been denied, even though they had been getting it for years, if we had not found out that so many people were experiencing the same thing, the government never would have done anything. It would have eliminated the tax credits for people with disabilities, for people with type 1 diabetes. It would have slipped under the radar.

Why does the government always wait until it finds itself in some sort of appalling situation before doing anything and taking action?

[*English*]

Ms. Kamal Khara: Madam Speaker, Canada is at its best when all of society benefits and everyone is included. Our government is committed to ensuring greater accessibility and opportunities for all Canadians, especially those with disabilities.

With all due respect, if my colleague asks the same question, he will get the same response. Once again, more Canadians claimed this important credit last year than ever before. That is good news, and we hope to see this trend continue upward. I sincerely hope that I

finally, perhaps for the last time, answered my hon. colleague's question.

• (1955)

CANADA REVENUE AGENCY

Mr. Pat Kelly (Calgary Rocky Ridge, CPC): Madam Speaker, for months last year, the Prime Minister and the revenue minister patted themselves on the back and made all kinds of claims regarding their attempt to recoup income taxes in particular from tax havens. There were repeated questions from different parties on the opposition benches that challenged them on what was being done to ensure the recovery of money from those who seek to evade taxes in Canada through tax havens.

They would say things like what the minister said on November 6:

In fact, over the past two years, we have invested nearly \$1 billion to combat tax havens. This investment has helped our efforts to recover nearly \$25 billion.

They have recovered nearly \$25 billion according to that statement on November 6. The same day, she said, "Our efforts have borne fruit. We are about to recoup \$25 billion."

These are the kinds of things the government has said.

Then on November 16, CBC ran a news story and exposed what they called "a lot of baloney". CBC said that it was complete nonsense, that the \$25 billion the government had referred to was really a multi-year number, mostly a result of domestic audits, not from offshore evasion. It included things like GST evasion or lack of remittance. Actually, only \$1.8 billion in annual evasion or aggressive avoidance was included in that \$25 billion that the minister, and the Prime Minister for that matter, repeated over and over again last fall.

Officials in the department clarified and made the point that a lot of that money will never be collected, that this was money they assess, and believe will be assessed, and that by the time they are finished with the objection process, litigation, tax court, etc., perhaps half of that money may be collected. This is not the offshore evasion piece that members of both parties on the opposition benches have questioned them about.

That brings me to the question I asked the minister on December 5. I said:

Mr. Speaker, the government has been targeting small businesses and people with disabilities while patting itself on the back for supposedly recovering \$25 billion from cheaters, including from offshore shelters.

She went on to reply, with a subtle backpedal, that they were on track to recoup \$25 billion as a result of audits conducted over the past two years. No longer was that the number they were actually going to recover through going after offshore evaders.

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For months the minister was misleading and completely disingenuous in the statements she made in the House to many questions about the serious issue of offshore evasion and avoidance. Therefore, I wonder if tonight we could perhaps hear from the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Revenue what they actually think they may be able to accomplish with their stated goal to collect and recapture taxes from offshore evaders and avoiders.

Ms. Kamal Khara (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Madam Speaker, after a decade of the Harper Conservative government sending cheques to wealthy millionaires and billionaires and their miserable track record of the growth for the middle class, Canadians made a choice for change.

I would remind my colleague that in 2015 Canadians made that choice. Canadians chose a party that would cut taxes for the middle class and raise them for the top 1%. Canadians chose a party that would send more money to nine out of 10 families, pulling hundreds of thousands of children out of poverty, instead of a party that sent cheques to millionaires.

Canadians also chose a government that would take the fight against tax evasion and aggressive tax avoidance seriously. That is exactly what we are doing.

Critical to these efforts are government investments to give the CRA the right tools in this fight, and our engagement and leadership with our global partners, placing us at the forefront of international efforts.

Allow me to bring to the attention of the House some of our recent activities to increase offshore compliance.

We have created a full-time team dedicated to addressing offshore non-compliance. The CRA has also hired additional auditors and increased the number of teams dedicated to scrutinizing the tax affairs of high risk and high-net worth taxpayers.

As of March 31, 2018, for offshore-related cases, audits of more than 1,112 taxpayers were under way and the CRA had more than 41 ongoing criminal investigations for tax evasion.

In 2016-17, CRA actions resulted in 37 convictions, more than 50 years of jail time, and \$100 million in court fines.

The agency reviews all electronic funds transfers of over \$10,000 to and from four offshore jurisdictions of concern every year. Let me be absolutely clear. We are ensuring that individuals with holdings in jurisdictions such as the Isle of Mann and Guernsey are complying with Canadian law.

In addition, the CRA is reviewing selected neighbourhoods in Canada to better compare lifestyle to income, particularly where

corporations, trusts or non-residents own residential property. This work is providing CRA auditors with multiple information sources with which to conduct their audits and improve their efforts to detect potential tax evasion and aggressive tax avoidance.

The CRA is also focused on identifying promoters of abusive tax schemes. The agency's work in this area has resulted in roughly \$92 million in third-party penalties and, since 2016, against tax professionals who have facilitated these schemes.

We will continue to seek to bring tax cheats to account. That is a priority for our government. We are on track to ensure we keep fighting for this. That is what Canadians expect.

● (2000)

Mr. Pat Kelly: Madam Speaker, once again, there were no real answers there. The government spent months claiming that it had collected \$25 billion from offshore cheaters, which was not true. That was not a correct statement. It was factually dishonest to say that. It took the media calling it out on that to point out that this was, as it put it, a bunch of baloney.

Tonight we have heard the government again seeking, it would seem, extraordinary credit for having 37 convictions in a period of one year, which is not atypical from what the numbers have been over many years in other governments. It is a handful of criminal convictions in one year, which is not really much of a track record.

The next election is coming and it is getting pretty boring to simply hear that the Liberals won in 2015. Canadians need something better than that.

Ms. Kamal Khara: Madam Speaker, I find it a little rich to hear the Conservatives talk about their record. It was their government that cut significant amounts from the Canada Revenue Agency, back in the Harper Conservative era.

Our government is firmly committed to combatting tax evasion and tax avoidance. We have made investments and we have seen the result of those. We want a fair tax system that works for all Canadians.

For the individuals or corporations that try to avoid paying their fair share of taxes, I have one thing to say. They have nowhere to hide. Our government stands on solid ground in this regard. We are on track, we are meeting our targets, and we are delivering results.

[*Translation*]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 8:04 p.m.)

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