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(HANSARD)

Thursday, November 29, 2018

Speaker: The Honourable Geoff Regan

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, November 29, 2018

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayer

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

•(1005)

[*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 response to one petition.

* * *

[*Translation*]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

INDIGENOUS AND NORTHERN AFFAIRS

Hon. MaryAnn Mihychuk (Kildonan—St. Paul, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 16th report of the Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs entitled, “Supplementary Estimates (A), 2018-19: Votes 1a, 5a and 10a under Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Votes 1a, 5a and 10a under Department of Indigenous Services Canada”.

[*English*]

PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

Hon. Diane Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to present the 75th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs that deals with petitions, both electronic and paper.

The ability to petition Parliament is an entrenched constitutional right that dates all the way back to the Bill of Rights, 1689, and was a cornerstone of the Westminster parliamentary system that we enjoy here in Canada. In fact, it was only the right to petition that allowed the Famous Five women to succeed in getting women defined as persons, which allowed them to be appointed to the Senate of Canada. While it has taken over a year to get to this point, I am pleased that this report recommends restoring the right to petition to those with visual impairments.

Therefore, I request the unanimous consent of the House to adopt the following motion. I move that the 75th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs entitled, “Approval and Updating of the House of Commons Electronic Petitions System”, presented to the House on November 8, 2018, be concurred in.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

* * *

PETITIONS

HUMAN ORGAN TRAFFICKING

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today on behalf of my constituents in Calgary Shepard to present three petitions on three different subjects.

The first is on the trafficking of human organs. The petitioners are asking for the government and all members of the House of Commons to support Bill S-240 and Bill C-350.

CARBON PRICING

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the second petition I am presenting today is on behalf of over 30 of my constituents who draw the attention of the Government to Canada to not having the full costs disclosed for the federal carbon tax on individuals and the average Canadian family. They are asking the government to fully disclose that information to members of the public, specifically my interested constituents.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the last petition I am presenting is on behalf of a few dozen of my constituents who are asking the Government of Canada to fully disclose all costs associated with the acquisition of the existing Trans Mountain expansion pipeline, as well as any construction costs related to it. This is, of course, of great interest to my constituents and they are asking for the expeditious provision of that information to the House of Commons.

Routine Proceedings

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Fin Donnelly (Port Moody—Coquitlam, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise to present a petition from constituents in the village of Belcarra in my riding. Beautiful Bedwell Bay, located in Belcarra, is where local residents sail, swim, water-ski, kayak and paddle-board. It is home to a commercial crab fishery and the Tsleil-Waututh Nation. Although it is illegal, on occasion recreational boats visiting the bay have been known to dump their sewage into these sensitive waters. The community is asking Parliament to enable the RCMP to enforce the prohibition of dumping sewage in the bay.

While the rules of the House do not allow me to endorse a petition, let me conclude by saying I am delighted to have so many residents actively engaged in this important petition campaign.

HUMAN ORGAN TRAFFICKING

Mr. Pat Kelly (Calgary Rocky Ridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present a petition today from a number of Canadians from many parts of Canada in support of Bill S-240, a bill on forced organ harvesting and trafficking. While this bill would not solve all of the problems, it would at least make it an offence for Canadians to participate.

VISITORS' VISAS

Hon. MaryAnn Mihychuk (Kildonan—St. Paul, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to present two separate petitions today. The first, from my constituents in Kildonan—St. Paul and other residents of Canada, calling on the government to recognize and grant Ukrainian nationals with biometric passports the ability to visit Canada visa-free for a period of up to 90 days.

• (1010)

HEALTH

Hon. MaryAnn Mihychuk (Kildonan—St. Paul, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my second petition is related to the Canada Health Act.

The petitioners are residents of Kildonan—St. Paul and other ridings in Canada, who are calling on the government to remind provincial governments of the Canada Health Act and ensure fairness to health care in North Winnipeg, capital region, and urge the provincial government to reverse its decision to close all emergency rooms in North Winnipeg.

HUMAN ORGAN TRAFFICKING

Mr. David Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have a petition here from people who are concerned about the increase in international trafficking in human organs where organs are removed from victims without consent.

There are two bills before Parliament dealing with some aspects of this issue. The undersigned urge the Parliament of Canada to move quickly on the proposed legislation so as to amend the Criminal Code and the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act to make these kinds of acts illegal.

ANIMAL WELFARE

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I have three petitions on three different issues to present today.

The first is in support of a bill that will be debated at second reading later today, Bill S-203, to prevent the keeping of our whales in captivity and to prevent the cruelty that exists as a result of that.

HUMAN ORGAN TRAFFICKING

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, the second petition deals with the issue of organ harvesting. Other members have raised similar petitions today.

Bill C-350 and Bill S-240 in the Senate are both designed to deal with trafficking and travelling for the purpose of human organ transplants. This is important legislation to end this quite atrocious practice.

NANJING MASSACRE

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, the third petition is on an issue that was also discussed in the House yesterday, which is the call to create December 13 of every year as Nanjing Massacre commemorative day.

What occurred in Nanjing in 1937 is truly a horrific event historically. The atrocities were described as hell on Earth. Many hundreds of petitioners call on this House to commemorate this so that it not be forgotten or ever repeated.

FIREARMS

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present a petition signed by Canadians from one riding, the great riding of Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke.

The petitioners call on the House of Commons to respect the rights of law-abiding firearms owners, and reject the Prime Minister's plan to waste taxpayers' money studying a ban on guns for guns that have already been banned.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon (Kanata—Carleton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise in the House and table two petitions from my constituents and other Canadians regarding the maltreatment of the Falun Gong related to human organ trafficking and other human rights abuses in China.

HUMAN ORGAN TRAFFICKING

Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table a petition calling on the government to support the speedy passage of Bill S-240.

This bill deals with the scourge of forced organ harvesting and organ trafficking. This bill has been delayed for the first hour of debate, but we are still hoping that we can get it passed before the next election to ensure that victims do not have to wait any longer.

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the calamity of marine plastic pollution is evident all over the world.

Plastics are making their way into our oceans and lakes via storm drains and global ocean currents, and consumer disposal and industrial waste, and making their way into salmon on the west coast.

I have so many petitions from citizens in Nanaimo, Lantzville and Ladysmith urging the government to adopt a national strategy. This would deal with single-use plastics but also make sure that we have funding in a permanent way to deal with some of the big problems, like ghost nets, fishing nets that move across our oceans, across the globe and continue to capture and drown animals.

HUMAN ORGAN TRAFFICKING

Hon. Candice Bergen (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise to present a petition on behalf of Canadians who are asking the government and all members of Parliament to support Bill C-350 as well as Bill S-240, which would deal with the horrific practice of organ trafficking, human organ removal and international trafficking. It is clear that this is an issue that resonates right across the country and many people are concerned about this. They want us to take action to protect the victims.

•(1015)

[Translation]

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today I would like to present two petitions.

The first is on Bill S-240, which addresses international organ trafficking. The petitioners are urging us to pass this bill quickly, in other words, before the next election.

[English]

AFGHANISTAN MINORITY COMMUNITIES

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the second petition I would like to present is about the plight of religious minorities, in particular Sikhs and Hindus in Afghanistan. The petitioners have a very specific ask for the Minister of Immigration to use the powers granted to him to create a special program to help persecuted minorities in Afghanistan to allow them to apply directly to come to Canada. This is different from, and in addition to, an announcement the minister made that was helping a certain percentage of those already in India.

The petitioners are asking the minister to address the issue of direct application for those in Afghanistan. It further calls on the Minister of Foreign Affairs to raise the persecution faced by this community with her Afghan counterpart and to strongly advocate for more to be done to protect them.

HUMAN ORGAN TRAFFICKING

Mr. David Sweet (Flamborough—Glanbrook, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today I am presenting a petition from dozens of Canadians in regard to Bill S-240. The bill calls on the government to amend the Criminal Code to prohibit Canadians from travelling abroad to purchase illegally harvested organs and tissues. The practice of forced organ harvesting and illegal organ trafficking is cruel and evil. The petitioners are asking the government to take decisive action to make sure the bill is passed.

Mr. Dave MacKenzie (Oxford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am presenting petitions from people from across Canada who ask that

Government Orders

Parliament move quickly on Bill C-350 and Senate Bill S-240 that deal with the harvesting of organs.

Mr. Bob Saroya (Markham—Unionville, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today I present a petition calling on the House to move quickly in passing Bill S-240. The bill calls on the government to amend the Criminal Code to prohibit Canadians from travelling abroad to purchase illegally harvested organs and tissues. The practice of forced organ harvesting and illegal organ trafficking is cruel and evil. Our government needs to stand up for victims and get the bill passed.

[Translation]

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased and honoured to rise in the House today pursuant to Standing Order 36 to request the consent of the House to present a petition about Bill S-240.

* * *

[English]

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

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

The Deputy Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

BUDGET IMPLEMENTATION ACT, 2018, NO. 2

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (for the Minister of Finance) moved that Bill C-86, A second Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on February 27, 2018 and other measures, be read the third time and passed.

Mr. Joël Lightbound (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am happy to have this opportunity to talk about Bill C-86.

[English]

Over the past three years, our government has been guided by the fundamental principle that real economic progress comes from carefully crafted, targeted investments in people and in communities, and not from austerity and cuts, as we saw in the previous government.

Bill C-86, also known as the budget implementation act, 2018, No. 2, or BIA, 2, is legislation that delivers the next phase of our government's commitment to invest in Canadians and build a vibrant and equitable economy that is fair to all.

Government Orders

Since 2015, we have already taken bold steps, and the impressive returns we are seeing on our investments in Canadians are clear evidence that our economic policies are working well and for the good of the many.

First, we started by asking the wealthiest to pay a little more, so we could lower taxes for the middle class. Today, this tax cut means that some nine million Canadians have more money in their pockets and good reasons to feel more confident about their financial situations.

We are also making significant investments in Canadian children through the new Canada child benefit, which helps Canadian families meet the high costs of raising their kids. This new benefit, or CCB, is tax free. Compared to the previous system of child benefits, the CCB is also simpler, more generous and better targeted to those who need it most. It has left nine out of 10 Canadian families better off.

• (1020)

[*Translation*]

In keeping with our commitment to reduce inequalities and to offer all Canadians equal opportunities to succeed, the Canada child benefit, or CCB, provides even more financial assistance to the low- and middle-income families who need it most. Roughly 65% of families receiving the maximum CCB amount are headed by single parents, of whom over 90% are single mothers.

Since July 2018, the Canada child benefit has been indexed to keep up with the cost of living. We implemented that measure two years ahead of schedule. Thanks to the middle-class tax cut and the Canada child benefit, by this time next year, a typical middle-class family of four will receive on average about \$2,000 more each year. That is \$2,000 more than they could expect to receive under the previous Conservative government of Stephen Harper.

For single-parent, average-income households with two children, or for families with two children where only one parent is earning an average income, the benefits are even more significant. When the tax-free Canada child benefit and other benefits are added to family income, those families pay effective personal tax rates of less than 2%, which means they keep more than 98% of what they earn.

Through these measures, more families will be able to buy things such as healthy food, warm clothes or winter boots for their growing children. On average, families who receive the Canada child benefit get \$6,800 every year. The CCB has helped lift more than 520,000 people out of poverty, including nearly 300,000 children.

That is not all. Salary increases for average Canadians are currently outpacing inflation. If the current trends hold, 2018 is on track to see some of the highest salary increases since the 2008-09 recession. Generally speaking, as we look at the legislative provisions to implement the measures in budget 2018, our economy is strong, healthy, and growing.

Since 2015, we have also been looking beyond our borders in order to reach new, modern trade agreements that will create jobs and help us be more competitive around the world. The fact that Canada is the only G7 country to have trade agreements with each of the other members of the G7 is a testament to the work we have done

internationally. The recently negotiated USMCA will give the international business community the confidence it needs to continue investing in Canada.

[*English*]

The many innovative domestic and international economic measures we have put in place mean Canada's economy is strong and growing. Our economic growth rate of 3% in 2017 was the highest in the G7, and we expect to stay among the fastest-growing economies this year and next year.

Thanks to the hard work of Canadians, the past three years have seen the creation of more than half a million new full-time jobs. These new jobs have pushed the unemployment rate to a 40-year low. For the average Canadian worker, wage growth is outpacing inflation. If current trends hold, 2018 could mark one of the strongest years of wage growth in almost a decade.

Confidence is nearing historic highs, both among consumers and business owners, and leading to business expansion and the hiring of new employees.

All hon. members know that small businesses are a key driver of Canada's economy and account for 70% of all private sector jobs. When small businesses succeed, Canada succeeds. That is why we cut the small business tax rate to 10% last January and will lower it to 9% effective January 1, 2019.

In 2019, the combined federal-provincial-territorial average income tax rate for small business will be 12.2%, by far the lowest in the G7. Several federal departments and agencies, including the Business Development Bank of Canada and Export Development Canada, are working hard to help these important job creators succeed and thrive.

This overall positive outlook reflects Canada's many competitive strengths, including a highly-skilled labour force, preferential access to global markets and a strong research and start-up capacity in emerging fields. We know that nurturing and expanding these competitive strengths demands policies that keep the focus on people and gives every Canadian the means to contribute fully to our society and our economy.

Wage growth is outpacing inflation for the average Canadian worker, as I mentioned, and we could see that growth mark one of the strongest years of wage growth in a decade.

Overall, as we consider this legislation that would implement measures from budget 2018, it is important to note that our economy is strong, healthy and growing.

I would like to briefly describe the essential pillars of Bill C-86.

Government Orders

The legislation includes an important measure to further stimulate economic growth, namely the new Canada workers benefit. The Canada workers benefit is an improved version of the current working income tax benefit. It is designed to encourage people to enter and stay in the workforce.

Under the Canada workers benefit, a low-income worker earning \$15,000 annually could get almost \$500 more in benefits in 2019 than he or she would get this year. In addition, the Canada workers benefit's expanded eligible income range would ensure that more workers would be entitled to it.

The new CWB would also be more accessible than the benefit it replaces. The legislation includes amendments that would allow the Canada Revenue Agency to calculate the benefit amount for all eligible tax filers, even if they do not claim it. These improvements to ensure access to the new benefit could be particularly useful for people with limited mobility, those who live far from points of service and those without Internet access.

• (1025)

[Translation]

The government estimates that, as a result of these changes, an additional 300,000 low-income workers in Canada will receive the Canada workers benefit for the 2019 tax year.

This is a major step forward in reducing inequality in Canada. What is more, it is estimated that the investments in the new Canada workers benefit will help lift roughly 70,000 Canadians out of poverty.

[English]

Another important aspect is addressing gender inequality, which is a vital component of the bill. Canadian women are among the most educated in the world, but they are less likely to participate in the labour force than men and are more likely to work part-time. Canadian women are too often working in unpaid jobs, which prevents them pursuing the opportunities that would help them reach their full potential.

There is an under-representation of women in leadership positions and the vast majority of Canadian businesses are still run by men. No economy can claim to be operating at full capacity if women are not being offered the same opportunities, including at leadership levels. Gender equality benefits everyone and benefits the whole economy.

We know that the participation of women in the labour market has been one of the key drivers of our economic growth in recent decades. During the past four years, the increased number of women in the labour market accounted for about one-third of real per capita GDP growth in the country. Indeed, RBC Economics estimates that adding more women to the workforce could boost Canada's GDP by as much as 4%.

[Translation]

The increased presence of women on the labour market is increasing household income and making a big difference to hard-working families across the country.

We need to establish an economic climate that will give all Canadians, particularly women, the opportunity to succeed and be leaders.

That being said, the gender budgeting act, which is part of budget implementation act, 2018, no. 2, will make gender budgeting an integral and permanent part of the federal budget-making process.

The bill will also convert Status of Women Canada into a new department, the department of women and gender equality, which will be responsible for the advancement of equality in respect of sex, sexual orientation and gender identity or expression. The gender gap remains too large and the evidence shows that taking steps to reduce that gap is not just the right thing to do, but also the smart thing to do.

Finally, I would like to talk about the measures that we are taking to protect the environment, which are an essential component of Bill C-86. We believe that putting a price on pollution is the best way to reduce emissions because it will encourage businesses and households to make more environmentally friendly choices and find more innovative solutions.

It is clear to us that pollution should not be free. Canadians are aware that that is the reality and that this is the right thing to do. We can see the costs of polluting everywhere. All one has to do is watch the evening news or take a look at the paper to see that droughts, floods and forest fires are becoming regular occurrences. That is not to mention the effects of pollution on our physical and mental health.

By implementing these measures to protect our precious environment, which is under increasing threat, Canada joins 67 other jurisdictions that have already taken this important step toward reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Together, these jurisdictions represent about half of the global economy and more than a quarter of global greenhouse gas emissions.

• (1030)

[English]

Despite efforts in some quarters to persuade Canadians otherwise, this is not an attempt to add to federal coffers. Provincial systems will apply in the several jurisdictions that are either already implementing their own carbon pollution pricing systems that meet the federal benchmark or are on track to do so.

The federal fuel charge will apply, starting in April 2019, in Saskatchewan, Ontario, Manitoba and New Brunswick. Those governments have not developed a system to price carbon pollution that meets the federal benchmark.

In those four provinces, the federal government proposes to return the majority of direct proceeds from the fuel charge directly to individuals and families through climate action incentive payments, starting in early 2019. Every dollar will remain in the province of origin. For most households, these payments will help offset their increased costs related to pollution pricing and help them to make more energy efficient, greener choices. The remaining proceeds that are not returned directly to households will go toward providing support to sectors within these provinces that will be particularly affected.

Government Orders

[*Translation*]

We estimate that climate change will cost our economy \$5 billion a year by 2020. If we want to reduce greenhouse gas emissions that are responsible for climate change, we have to accept the fact that polluting our environment costs us dearly and that it is very logical that polluters pay for the damage they cause.

Canadians can rest assured that they do not have to convince this government to protect the environment because we truly believe that doing nothing would be a failure to live up to our responsibility as federal legislators and would also betray current and future generations of Canadians, who have the right to a healthy, peaceful and prosperous life in a healthy environment.

Our shared quality of life and our economic prosperity are closely linked to the environment we live in. That is why it makes sense to build an economy that benefits all Canadians while protecting our environment and seeking to repair the damage we have already caused.

We want Canadians to feel confident about the future, to be better prepared for what awaits them and not to be concerned about those elements that sustain life, namely, the air we breathe and the water we drink.

The essence of this bill is that we are investing in Canadians, we are sharing the fruits of our strong economy with all Canadians, and we refuse to renege on our environmental commitments. Budget 2018 will help make a better Canada for all Canadians.

For these reasons, I am very proud to rise in the House to speak to Bill C-86, the budget implementation bill, at third reading. I think it gives Canadians measures that will grow our economy, which has always been our goal, and also protect the environment. We believe that these two things go together.

We also think that a greener economy, a green shift towards renewable energy sources and more effective environmental decisions offer some worthwhile business prospects. As has been proven many times, this is also a major market.

Furthermore, we think that putting a price on pollution is the right thing to do. As I explained in my speech, more than half of world economies have put a price on pollution. Quebec has done so since 2013, and British Columbia has for many years. These two economies within Canada are seeing impressive growth records and have had economic success. This shows that the environment and the economy can and must go together.

Furthermore, a measure like the Canada workers benefit reflects another essential pillar of our goal, as a government, to reduce inequality. For too long, under the former government, our government lacked leadership on reducing inequalities. In fact, the previous government created more inequalities than it reduced.

The measures we have implemented since taking office prove that we are different. We raised taxes on the wealthiest 1% so we could reduce taxes for nine million middle-class Canadians. The previous government sent cheques to millionaires' families, but we put a stop to that with our Canada child benefit. We decided to make that system much more progressive so we could help those who needed it most, and that move is clearly having an impact.

That is one way our government's approach differs significantly from the approach taken by the previous government. We are absolutely committed to reducing inequality and poverty in this country by means of a very ambitious strategy spearheaded by the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development.

Another way we are different is our national housing strategy. Under the former government and some of its predecessors, the federal government stepped away from playing a role in social housing, but our government launched an ambitious \$40-billion strategy. That is the kind of measure Canadians wanted to see, because they want a fairer country where economic growth and prosperity benefit everyone, a country where prosperity is inclusive. I think Bill C-86, the budget implementation bill before the House today, reflects that.

● (1035)

[*English*]

Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC): Mr. Speaker, before the last election, the Prime Minister made a promise that he was going to balance the budgets, and he said he would do so in 2019. However, not once during the hon. member's speech did he even speak about balancing budgets. In fact, as we know through Finance Canada, we are going to see a prolonged period of deficits in this country. In fact, my 14-year-old will be roughly 43 by the time we return to balanced budgets.

My question is simple: When will the budget balance itself?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Joël Lightbound: Mr. Speaker, we cannot forget that in 2015, the country was facing some questions. I remember it very well, since I, like all members here in the House, was in the thick of that election campaign. Canadians were debating whether the country was in a recession or heading for into a recession. The previous government's austerity measures and cuts were taking us in that direction.

We took a different approach, the one that Canadians voted for. Our approach was to make necessary, useful investments, either in infrastructure or in Canadians, that would reduce inequality and stimulate growth, such as the Canada child benefit, or in research, which was largely forgotten for a decade. Today, Canada is experiencing strong growth. Last year, we had the strongest growth in the G7.

As for the deficit, I want to point out that our debt-to-GDP ratio is on a downward track precisely because our economy is growing. This is good for the country and places Canada in the best economic position in the G7. This is something to be proud of.

Government Orders

[*English*]

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Mr. Speaker, here we are under time allocation, debating the budget implementation bill, Bill C-86.

We have been waiting three years in this Parliament for pay equity legislation to be tabled. Canadian women have been waiting 42 years since the first Trudeau prime minister promised to implement pay equity legislation.

Having spent three years ostensibly consulting with employers, the labour movement and the lawyers who have been litigating pay equity in the absence of federal legislation, the government finally jams it into this 800-page bill.

We thought it would really reflect the advice the consultations had gathered. Instead, under extremely tight timelines, the NGOs, the labour movement, teamsters, the Canadian Labour Congress and the Ontario Equal Pay Coalition all proposed extremely detailed amendments. They said the pay equity parts of this legislation would not work, and that women would not get equal pay.

I proposed dozens of amendments at finance committee that were written by the lawyers who have been litigating this all this time. Liberal members voted every single one of them down.

Why did the government not take the advice of the people closest to pay equity and get this right after waiting 42 years?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Joël Lightbound: Mr. Speaker, it is important to remember that we debated Bill C-86 in the House for 15 hours. Four committees also studied the bill for more than 20 hours and heard from 45 witnesses.

Indeed, it has taken far too long, 42 years, to bring in proactive pay equity legislation in this country. After a decade of inaction on this file by Stephen Harper's Conservative government, I am very proud that the current government has decided to take action and inspiration from what is being done elsewhere. Quebec, for example, has proactive pay equity legislation that is working very well and served as a model for our government's bill.

I am proud that federally regulated businesses and Crown corporations will henceforth be governed by proactive pay equity legislation that reflects our government's goal of having a society that respects gender equality and allows everyone to reach their full potential.

• (1040)

[*English*]

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my colleague talked about a number of different themes, two of which were the questions of social and income equality, and the other of which was that of climate change and the government's carbon tax proposal. I do not believe these two objectives need to be at odds. We can fight climate change in a way that also advances social equality.

However, the Liberal government has put forward a plan where the brunt of the pain will be felt by those who can least afford it.

They are proposing a carbon tax, but they are giving a break to large industrial emitters.

People realize that, very often, the kinds of transitions that allow people to significantly reduce their carbon footprint involve significant capital expenditures, such as buying an electric car or doing an energy retrofit to a home. Whereas one might consider programs like a home renovation tax credit, which allow people to make those kind of investments, the government's punitive approach does not leave any wiggle room for those who cannot afford to make those kinds of capital investments but will still have to pay the tax.

Why does the member not advance an approach to climate change that advances social equality at the same time, instead of giving a break to the wealthy and big industrial emitters while ensuring the pain—

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Joël Lightbound: Mr. Speaker, I cannot help but wonder where my honourable colleague has been all these months. Our plan clearly states that in provinces and territories that do not put a price on pollution, an incentive that is greater than the cost of pollution pricing will be paid directly to citizens. The average family in Ontario, for example, will have more money in their pockets.

I do not understand why my colleagues opposite are so intent on impoverishing their constituents, who will receive more money with this incentive to fight climate change, and on making pollution free in this country when we know the impact that carbon pollution and climate change are having on our environment. It is absolutely ridiculous. I am having a really hard time understanding it.

Mr. Francesco Sorbara (Vaughan—Woodbridge, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for Louis-Hébert for his intervention and speech.

[*English*]

Through Bill C-86, we are making ongoing investments in the economy, in middle-class Canadians and in those working hard to join them. As well, the investments in our recent 2018 fall economic statement will help businesses and individuals in his wonderful riding of Louis-Hébert. Perhaps he could he expand on that.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Joël Lightbound: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Vaughan—Woodbridge for making an effort to speak French. His French has improved markedly since he first arrived here in Parliament. I also thank him for the important work he does at the Standing Committee on Finance. It is greatly appreciated by all members of the committee.

One thing becomes quite clear when we look at the economic situation across the country, and nowhere is it more apparent than in my region, where the unemployment rate is 3.8%. I am talking about full employment. The corollary is a labour shortage. Employers are looking for skilled workers. In a way, that is a good problem to have, but it is a major challenge that we must address.

Government Orders

I look at how families are doing. Even the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, which provides help to those less fortunate in my riding, is seeing what a positive impact the Canada child benefit is having on local families. They have more money at the end of the month, especially those who need it most. That is why I got involved in politics, and I am very proud to see that our policies are having a very real, very direct impact on the lives of those who need it most.

• (1045)

[English]

Mr. Pat Kelly (Calgary Rocky Ridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, given that the parliamentary secretary will not answer the question about the timing for a balanced budget and the finance minister has repeatedly refused to even acknowledge the question as being asked, I wonder if we could go about this another way.

Does the member actually deny having made a clear and explicit promise to balance the budget by 2019?

[Translation]

Mr. Joël Lightbound: Mr. Speaker, our commitment was clear. We were not going to offer Canadians the same outcomes, the same abysmal failures as the previous government did with respect to growth and vital infrastructure investments.

The previous government made cuts at the expense of veterans, at the expense of our security agencies and at the expense of pay specialists, which is what caused the problems with the Phoenix pay system. That was the Conservative government's approach. They had the worst record in the area of export growth since the Second World War and the worst record on job creation. The Conservative record is really nothing for them to be proud of.

Our approach, unlike theirs, is working and is producing tangible results. We have created 550,000 jobs, most of them full time. We have seen wage growth in 2018 that is on track to become the strongest wage growth in a decade. We have the strongest growth in the G7, and we have achieved all that while reducing inequality and protecting the environment.

I think they need to take a closer look at their record and see what did not work. I cannot find the right word in either French or English to describe the enormity of the mess they left to Canadians after 10 years in power.

[English]

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be joining the debate on this bill at third reading.

In the next 20 minutes what I hope to do is to lay out a case as to why the government has failed to look after the interests of the middle class, has failed to look after the interests of upper energy workers, upper energy families, and then draw attention to a clause found in the BIA, this omnibus piece of legislation, that I think is deserving of an amendment. Mr. Speaker, I am going to request that two minutes before my time is up, I be given notice so that I can move an amendment. Before that I would like to provide commentary as to why I am moving it.

This BIA is the second bill to implement provisions in the budget. The government has added more deficits and more accumulated debt in the last three non-recession years than I think at any time in

modern history by any government. The prior government had a great recession to deal with. Governments before that in the 1990s had to deal with the debt wall they had hit and simply could not borrow more money. Difficult choices were made then. The government is basically laying the groundwork for those difficult choices to come in the future. Future governments will be constrained by difficult choices they will have to make.

We all know that the debts accumulated today are the taxes of tomorrow. If we value social programs, if we value retirement pension plans, if we value the services provided by the government, we have to ensure the proper management of government finances and that is not what we are seeing from the government side of the House. It is not what we see in this piece of omnibus legislation.

At the Standing Committee on Finance which I sit on, multiple members, even the members of the New Democratic Party, brought up the fact that the government repeatedly broke promises to not introduce more omnibus legislation. I note that twice already the Speaker has ruled and has divided up the budget bill, and taken out parts that violate the rule that measures found in the budget must be connected to measures found in the budget implementation act. The two cannot be separated.

The budget is three times the size of what was promised in 2015. Canadians made a choice in 2015. We can agree to disagree on the wisdom of that but they made a choice. They were promised multiple series of measures. The budget was supposed to be balanced by 2019, and it will not be. In fact, there are deficits and new debt as far as the eye can see. The government cannot give us in this chamber, at committee, or in public a fixed date of when the budget will be balanced.

We know that the Department of Finance has produced numbers showing that 2045 is likely the date when the budget will balance itself. Hopefully, it will not come to that and we will find some way to balance it before then.

An often-stated goal of the government is to ensure that we have the best GDP growth in the G7, the best GDP growth in the OECD. Different metrics are used to look at it. I am actually looking at OECD data right now. When looking at the data, we see that we have the weakest growth in North America. In 2019, we will be behind Mexico and the United States. In 2018, we are behind Mexico and the United States. The farther back we go, the more often we see that is the case. Actually, there is only one year in the last few years where we had stronger growth than they did. As well, when we project it into the future, that weakness in growth continues.

Our closest competitors, the places to which we are losing manufacturing jobs, the places to which we are losing energy jobs, the places to which we are losing auto jobs, are having stronger growth. That relates to the policies of the government: high carbon taxes, higher taxes in general, uncertainty in the investment climate, \$78 billion lost in LNG development. That all adds to an epic failure of leadership on behalf of the government.

This second budget implementation act continues that failure. It continues a record of failure.

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In my home province of Alberta we have lived it for three years now, dealing with a government that has as its sole intent the phase-out of the oil sands. Initially, when the Prime Minister said it, he said it was a gaffe, a mistake. He repeated the same thing in Paris at France's legislative assembly. He repeated it in French of course, hoping that we would not know what he had said, but we do. It is twice now he has said it.

There is a tanker ban on the west coast. It is a false tanker ban because it does not apply to the south coast of British Columbia.

● (1050)

Bill C-69 is regulatory legislation that would ensure that no major energy infrastructure project ever gets built again in this country. I am sure a government caucus member will stand and say I am wrong, that I have made a mistake, that a \$40-billion LNG project is going ahead. What Liberals will not tell us is that LNG project was approved in 2012 and the recent decision was a business decision to proceed, but wait: The contract says it is exempt from the carbon tax. It is exempt from many of the measures introduced both by the federal government and the B.C. provincial government, so it makes business sense to proceed.

That is telling. It is telling that the decisions being made by governments over the past three years are costing jobs and investment and only when they are removed does private business proceed with construction and provide the much-needed, much-wanted middle-class energy jobs.

That is also telling of the business climate we live in. We had an emergency debate yesterday on the plight of energy workers across Canada. Energy jobs are fleeing this country. Alberta is often called Texas north. I prefer to think of Texas as Alberta south as so many families from Alberta are there. They are just trying to make ends meet. They are trying to pay their mortgages, send their kids to good schools and save for their retirement. They will go where they need to go.

They have skill sets that it took Alberta a generation to attract and develop. It was not easy to convince people to come to Alberta. Typically, when people fly from eastern Canada to western Canada, they fly over Alberta and head to the beautiful west coast. To convince people that it is worth staying in our province, they have to be provided great benefits, great pay and a great place to live to raise their families. We have done so, but it took us 25 years to get there. In the span of three years, the Liberal government is robbing an entire generation's worth of work that was done to make Alberta the most productive and best place to raise a family.

That is one of the reasons I moved to Alberta. It was for work. I know that is the same reason everybody living in my area, the suburbs of Calgary, came to Alberta. We all became Albertans because of the work ethic that we bring, the can-do attitude. That is why there is a very common slogan in Alberta now, which the Prime Minister heard last Thursday, "build that pipe". We should probably replace the provincial slogan with "build that pipe". Whatever it takes we should build that pipe.

The government's solution has been to expropriate Kinder Morgan and take it into its administration for \$4.5 billion of taxpayer money that is now being used by Kinder Morgan to finance pipeline

construction in Texas. I do not know in what world that is good policy-making, but it is not. Why are we financing our competitors? It simply does not make any sense.

The government uses numbers to crow about its GDP growth. We should be looking toward the future. The government and government caucus members, especially in the past year, have been really interested in litigating the past. It is something they like to often engage in. Liberals are in government. Government caucus members defend three years of policy decisions that have led to a point where the oil price differential on Western Canadian Select and synthetic crude oil is at a record high.

I worked for the Chamber of Commerce years ago, almost 10 years ago now, and there was an oil price differential back then as well. It was about \$15 or \$20. It kind of fluctuated. Back then, people talked about how big an issue it was, how we needed to fix it and make good decisions for the future to ensure that pipeline capacity matches expected production growth. That is what many companies in the private sector were trying to do. They were trying to figure out where capital could be expended in the most profitable way possible to maximize their equity return in the most responsible way possible.

Many people in my riding who are now unemployed or underemployed used to work in quality assurance ensuring that pipelines were built safely and in a way that ensured the absolute minimum amount of risk to the population around them. Most Albertans have pipelines in their backyards. They know where they are. There are utility corridors all over the province because this is what Alberta has a competitive advantage in.

● (1055)

I will now move to the clause I mentioned before and the substance of the amendment I will be moving at the end of my speaking time. During debate on budget implementation act, no. 2, clause 470 was brought up. The clause deals with the Canada Labour Code and provides for leave. The member for Foothills proposed an amendment at committee to provide 12 weeks of bereavement leave for parents dealing with the death of a child or the perinatal death of a child. That amendment was voted down by the government.

To head off possible arguments against the amendment I will be moving at the end of my speech, there are three main arguments I heard that I want to elaborate on and explain why they are not good arguments to vote against providing 12 weeks of bereavement leave.

First, an argument was made that there are other types of leave being amended within the BIA. A good argument could be made as to why we are doing it in this way, in the BIA, in a budgetary implementation bill when we are amending the Canada Labour Code. I believe there are over 850 pages in this bill, and we may sometimes wonder why it is being done in this way.

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One of the arguments was that there is another type of leave which people could be eligible for. Mothers are allowed 17 weeks of maternity leave now. Within that 17 weeks, if their child passes away they can take the full length of the leave as bereavement leave. When I asked officials whether this applied to fathers, they said it did not. Fathers do not get this bereavement leave.

Fathers only get five days, which is consistent with the Canada Labour Code. They get five days, three of which are paid and two of which are unpaid. I thought this was patently unfair. In fact, I asked officials what happens in the case of 17 weeks plus one day. These are very difficult cases, where parents have lost a child, for example, from SIDS, a pre-existing condition or a rare condition. Many members will know that I lost my youngest daughter in August, so this issue really speaks to me. I thought this was a much rarer issue in Canadian society than it actually is. Fathers get three paid days and two unpaid days. This argument that there are other mechanisms to use is not a good one in this particular case.

As I mentioned, we moved an amendment at committee. We had the debate. There was some willingness at least to hear the argument. There is a great Yiddish proverb which speaks to the situation we find ourselves in, "From success to failure is one step; from failure to success is a long road." My amendment will be proposing a long road to get to success.

Another argument advanced at committee was that there was a motion under consideration at a different committee which considered the situation that parents, mothers and fathers who have lost a child, find themselves in. Motion No. 110 is at the HUMA committee. It does not deal specifically with bereavement leave in the Canada Labour Code, which was perhaps an error in the argument being used at committee to provide a reason for why we should vote down an amendment to provide equality to both parents, mothers and fathers, with 12 weeks of leave.

It is a good argument that work being done by a committee of the House, with a report that will come some day, hopefully before the election, should not stop us from doing the right thing right now when presented with an opportunity to do so in the BIA. The BIA is going to deal with different pieces of legislation, from the Canada Labour Code to budgetary measures, to spending announcements, to changes to the accelerated capital cost allowance, to changes to export and import permits. Therefore, why not deal with this too? We are already making modifications to it. We are making small amendments to it.

It is not a good argument to say that another committee is taken with the issue when it is not actually this specific issue it is reviewing. It is reviewing it in a broader sense. It is looking specifically at employment insurance. Although important, that committee's work should not preclude us from making a decision in this chamber that parents are deserving of equality. That is a very important concept here.

Another argument advanced at committee was that we did not have all the facts of the impact that introducing up to 12 weeks of bereavement leave would have compared to 17 weeks in maternity benefits being offered, which specifically applies to mothers, as I mentioned. Again, I found this argument unconvincing.

● (1100)

I offered at the time a subamendment. We could have delayed clause-by-clause consideration of the BIA before it came back to this chamber to give ourselves an extra day so that the Department of Justice lawyers could provide us with an opinion. I think it is not a good argument until we have all the facts before us.

As opposition members, and I am sure many New Democrats will agree, we are saddled with these omnibus pieces of legislation, and they have gotten longer and more complex. I see some nodding heads. Not only are we now sitting down, and our staff is sitting down, to compare what is in the budget implementation act and what is in the budget to make the connection between the two so that we can then rise in this chamber and explain why certain parts do not belong in this particular budget implementation act and could be separated out so we could go into the details, the specifics, clause by clause, section by section, but on top of all that, the government used cloture, a guillotine motion, to send the bill to the finance committee as quickly as possible, limiting debate in the House of Commons on the generalities at second reading.

The government then produced a programming motion, a guillotine or closure motion, at committee to force us to consider it expeditiously within just a few weeks, which included a constituency week. There was very little time for the finance committee to actually give the bill a fulsome, in-depth review.

Of course, we pick and choose the portions that are most interesting to us. The most interesting to the Conservatives is the case of bereavement leave and the Canada Labour Code provisions, because there is an issue of unfairness that is embedded right now. That will continue if we do not propose an amendment, which I mentioned I will be proposing, to fix this issue so that fathers would be provided with the same equitable benefits mothers are provided. More broadly, I think it will give us an opportunity to get at all the facts and have an opportunity to have officials return to committee and explain to us in a more fulsome way how it would work.

As I mentioned, we had officials at committee, and they provided some information, but not all of it. An argument advanced by the government caucus members was that, in fact, we did not have all the facts and therefore we should not proceed but should let another committee of the House do some other work on a related issue not specific to this particular one. However, if it is found in the BIA, my argument is that we should deal with it. It should not be that whatever the government proposes in a budgetary bill simply passes and we should just accept the fact that it will be carried forward.

This has happened before in the last few years. The Senate actually had serious misgivings about a specific portion that dealt with and affected Desjardins Caisse populaire, so that measure was eventually dropped by the government. Therefore, it is not unheard of for the government to accept amendments to slow down and have reconsiderations.

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I think it would be a wise decision in this situation to offer mothers and fathers, especially fathers, in this case, an opportunity to take advantage of bereavement leave of up to 12 weeks. This would be for federally regulated employees, of course. We know that in the private sector, employers offer varying types of leave.

Having presented the case, I believe the amendment I am proposing is reasonable. It will give us time to reconsider the matter. I think the House, in its infinite wisdom, can provide the committee with this type of direction. Therefore, I move, seconded by the member for Elgin—Middlesex—London:

That the motion be amended by deleting all the words after the word "That" and substituting the following: Bill C-86, A second Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on February 27, 2018 and other measures, be not now read a third time, but be referred back to the Standing Committee on Finance for the purpose of reconsidering Clause 470 with the view to ensuring that every employee, regardless of gender, be entitled to and shall be granted a leave of absence from employment of up to 12 weeks if the employee is the parent of a child who has died, including in cases of perinatal death.

• (1105)

Mr. Francesco Sorbara (Vaughan—Woodbridge, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague and friend from Alberta, who I have the pleasure of sitting on the finance committee with and who I have also worked with extensively over the last few months in the Kurdish friendship group.

I wish to speak to the amendment as well as provide some thoughts on this bereavement leave. I have spoken to the member several times about this recommendation. It is an issue that is very important to many Canadians. However, I want to ask him for clarification. Currently, if a situation arises where a perinatal child passes away, the mother is permitted to take up to 17 weeks of leave. My understanding is that the amendment would reduce that to 12 weeks and would also apply to fathers. It would be unfortunate if the unintended consequence of this sort of policy, and we spoke about this at committee, was that mothers could potentially see the time they were given to recover and get support from family and friends reduced from the current 17 weeks to 12 weeks.

I do not believe that is the intended purpose of the amendment and what was debated at the finance committee. Therefore, I would ask my friend to provide clarity.

• (1110)

Mr. Tom Kmiec: Mr. Speaker, the purpose of the amendment I proposed in the House of Commons is to take this matter at third reading stage and return it to committee for a full consideration of this issue of bereavement leave.

I do not believe the member is correct. With respect to the 17 weeks that are provided, when we talked to officials at committee, they said it included time for recuperation after giving birth, for which 17 weeks is very reasonable. If within that time a mother lost her child, she would only get up to 17 weeks. She would not get anything in addition. If at 17 weeks plus a day her child were to pass away, the mother would get nothing. She would get the three paid days and two unpaid days. I also think that is patently unfair to a mother who loses a child.

The second part is that 12 weeks be provided to fathers. There has to be some type of equality provided to fathers and consideration of

their feelings and what they are going through. That is not currently the case in the Canada Labour Code.

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my colleague would be surprised to know that I do not agree with all of his speech, although I very much agree with some of what he said. However, I agree with the amendment he has brought forward.

This was discussed at committee, and like every other amendment brought forward by the opposition designed to fix some of the glaring holes, problems and mistakes in Bill C-86, it was rejected by the committee. It defies understanding why when opposition members bring forward, in good faith, amendments designed to improve legislation, the government simply, with the back of the hand, slaps all of that back. The amendment the member tabled today is very much in keeping with that. It was not supported in any way by government members.

I would like to hear the member's perspective on why government members rejected something that is clearly needed and fits with the principles and values of the vast majority of Canadians.

Mr. Tom Kmiec: Mr. Speaker, the member for New Westminster—Burnaby is absolutely correct. It happens all too often. I can live with motions or amendments being voted down, as long as there is at least consider some amendments and work in a more collegial manner. In some committees, that is possible, and in others less so. To the credit of the government, there are government caucus members who have accepted amendments at other committees. However, I would say it is an infinitesimally small number of amendments. In a case like this, I do not think there are any political points members are trying to score either way.

It is during the questioning of officials that we sometimes discover an inequity in the system. It is not an intentional inequity. It is simply an accumulation of policy decisions and legislative changes made over time that lead us into situations where we may realize that we have accumulated legislative measures and regulatory ideas that have now built inequity into the system. In this particular case, there is a good case to be made that we have inequitable bereavement leave that discriminates against fathers who have lost a child as well as mothers after the 17th week.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am going to go to the bill itself. The member made reference to the province of Alberta and the price of oil. Obviously, that is of great concern to the government. I would like to think it is of concern to all members of Parliament. Where I take exception is that the Conservatives have consistently tried to pin blame on the government because of policy decisions. I would ask the member to recognize that the core of the problem, as I see it, is that 99% of our commodity is going through the United States. That has been the case since Stephen Harper actually became the prime minister of Canada, and it never changed.

The opportunity to expand our markets was there during Stephen Harper's time. Now, for the first time, we have a commitment that engages Ottawa in taking ownership of a pipeline in order for us to expand the market. That is far more than what Stephen Harper ever did.

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• (1115)

Mr. Tom Kmiec: Mr. Speaker, the approach the member has suggested and the measure he is speaking of, the expropriation and purchase of Trans Mountain, is, to quote Ronald Reagan, “I’m from the government and I’m here to help”. It is patently untrue. The vast majority of Albertans would say that if the government got out of our way, we could get the job done.

It is also not factually correct to say that there were no pipelines or infrastructure built to tidewater, because in fact, the pipelines that were approved under the previous government led to Cushing and from there to Freeport, Texas. It is kind of like believing that if a road is built towards a highway, but because the highway is not on the direct road and the overpasses are not directly connected, the off-ramps do not count or do not exist. That is a patently untrue argument to make.

Pipelines are connected throughout North America. What the parliamentary secretary is suggesting is that somehow these pipelines that were approved by the previous government, and built by the private sector, lead to nowhere. It is an admission of failure for the government to spend \$4.5 billion, and another \$8 billion in construction in the future, to build something the private sector wanted to build.

Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC): Mr. Speaker, by his own admission, the member for Carleton has asked a simple question well over 400 times, either through committee or the House of Commons in question period, asking the government when the budget will be balanced.

The government members deflect, defer and do not answer the question. I want to ask the hon. member why that question is so important, not just to the Canadian economy but to our competitiveness and to future generations as well.

Mr. Tom Kmiec: Mr. Speaker, the member draws our attention to the fact that the date for balancing the budget is now difficult to even predict, because many finance department documents and budgetary documents do not quite match up. It does not make a lot of sense.

To me, it is very simple. The stewardship of the financial resources of the public treasury should be, if not mission number one, mission number two of the Government of Canada. Today’s debt is tomorrow’s taxes. It is leaving it to future generations to clean up the financial mess the government is leaving behind.

Let us return to the Yiddish proverb for a moment just so the member can hear it again: “From success to failure is one step; from failure to success is a long road.”

The government is failing to account for the true cost of the carbon tax and the cost of not balancing the budget today, and that long road ahead of fixing the messes and the failures of leadership will probably take two or three generations to ensure that our great-grandkids are not stuck with the bill.

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am very disappointed to rise in the House to speak to Bill C-86. I think the disappointment I feel about the promise of the government in 2015 versus what it has delivered recently is felt acutely by many Canadians. Hopes were high in 2015 that things would change.

Certainly the Prime Minister, in his admittedly very effective campaign, talked about how things would change in Ottawa, how parliamentarians and Parliament would be respected and get back to doing the work we are paid to do on behalf of Canadians from coast to coast to coast after the Harper years.

In the Harper years we saw a systematic denial of the ability of parliamentarians to get amendments and legislation through and systematic dumping of two or three hundred page omnibus bills in the House of Commons. Then there was fairly systematic recourse to the “guillotine”, as we say in parliamentary procedure, meaning that parliamentarians were not able to speak to and address their constituents’ concerns on the floor of the House of Commons.

Those days seem almost quaint now. The offence we took at the Harper government’s use of 200 page budget omnibus bills, the dumping of a whole range of unrelated factors into omnibus legislation and forcing it through the House of Commons in a week or two, seem almost quaint now as we come into 2018, almost 2019. I say this because of what the Liberal government has done instead of keeping its commitments to make parliamentarians get back to the work we are paid and asked to do on behalf of Canadians, to scrutinize and improve legislation, to work through and hear witnesses and make sure that everything that we pass through the House is the best possible legislation and does what it is purported to do.

Instead of putting back in place a Parliament that would function well, one where there was consultation with opposition parties, what we have seen saw from the Prime Minister has been a doubling down. I will come back to that later in my speech, because what we have seen over the last few months in particular really goes to the character of the government and the Prime Minister and finance minister.

Bill C-86 is the living embodiment of everything that has gone wrong with the government over the last three years. Despite the high promise and firm commitment by the Liberals before they came to Parliament, three years later we now see in Bill C-86 another example of how the government is no different from the government before it, but even worse in many respects. Instead of 200 or 300 page omnibus budget implementation bills that throw everything but the kitchen sink into one piece of legislation, we now have almost 900 pages, and with Bill C-86, some seven stand-alone pieces of legislation being included.

Instead of having the week or two of parliamentary scrutiny that we had under the Harper regime, which in itself was inadequate, we now have one or two days of consideration before the bulldozer is brought in and parliamentary rights and privileges are simply pushed aside. Instead of the government’s being willing to accept the expert testimony of witnesses and to work with opposition parties to improve legislation, we see a government that is purporting to push legislation through that it knows is inadequate and will lead to court challenges.

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That is the sad case with Bill C-86. Under the Harper regime it happened half a dozen times. The Conservative government rammed legislation through the House after a week or two of consideration, knowing that ultimately it would be decided in the courts. Half a dozen times the courts rejected the legislation because it was so shoddily made, because the government refused to hear from witnesses.

• (1120)

Bill C-86 has not been adopted yet, but the government is indicating, with all of its strength, that it will refuse to heed any advice or counsel that would improve this legislation in any way. The Liberals say they are just going to force it through, and we know now that women will be forced to return to the courts on the pay equity issue. It is a sad commentary that a government that knows that what it is doing is bad is relying on spin over substance. The Liberals have been saying in the House that they have brought forward pay equity legislation. The fact that it is full of flaws, the fact that witnesses identified the flaws, and the fact that the NDP systematically brought forward amendments that would fix the flaws so that we would have solid pay equity legislation are all tossed aside.

The government feels that spinning the point that it has put forward pay equity legislation will override the sad substance of what is in Bill C-86 as currently constituted. This will force women back to the courts again so that they can get the right of equal pay for work of equal value. It is incredible that a government would do that. It really beggars belief that a government that knows that what it is doing is wrong still intends to do it anyway, because its members think they can spin their way out of it.

That is why I say that C-86 is the living embodiment of the dashed illusions and dashed hopes of Canadians, who back in 2015 were quite enthusiastic about the government. They felt that the government would make a difference and that it would be a change from the Harper regime. Three years later, so many Canadians, including people in my riding who voted Liberal back in 2015 and were so enthusiastic, now only say that they might perhaps vote Liberal. The Liberals will say that in the opinion polls they are still doing well, but what they do not understand is that there is a difference in the strength of intensity of belief. The reality is that in the next few months there will be a debate on a whole range of government decisions, and the traditional Liberal sense of entitlement and arrogance that seems to have re-established itself after three brief years in power is going to encounter that reaction from Canadians.

Indeed, the living embodiment of Liberal broken promises contained within this massive budget, Bill C-86, has planted the seeds of what could well be, in the coming 11 months, a strong reaction from Canadians that the government does not deserve another mandate. We do not want to go backwards to the Harper regime years, but Canadians, and certainly my constituents, feel tired of a government that makes promises and then promptly breaks them.

The biggest flaw with Bill C-86 is what is not in it and what could have been in it. I will include within that the mini budget that we heard last week, which was so out of touch with Canadian realities. It

was so out of touch with Canadians struggling with profoundly deep debt loads, the the highest debt loads in our history and the highest debt loads of families in any industrialized country on this planet. Those debt loads were prompted by government policies over the last 30 or 40 years, the refusal to provide supports for affordable housing or pharmacare, the refusal to provide supports for families.

What we saw, both in Bill C-86 and the mini budget, was a cascade of money for corporate CEOs. The government seems unable and unwilling to address any of the concerns of regular folks right across the length and breadth of this land. To do a quick accounting, in just the last few months, the cascade of money includes \$4.5 billion for an old leaky pipeline, twice its asset value. Despite that, the government did not flinch at throwing \$4.5 billion into that purchase. Now we are seeing the construction costs of that pipeline again going up, being anywhere between \$11 billion to \$15 billion, but the government is not flinching. The finance minister does not even have a firm estimate of the costs. He is going with Kinder Morgan's estimate. That is most probably another \$15 billion on top of the \$4.5 billion.

• (1125)

In the mini budget last week, we saw \$14 billion being given to corporate CEOs. The Liberal members will say that it is going to revitalize the economy, but when we look at the budget documents—because that is what we do in the NDP; we read through the documents—we see what the mini budget actually aimed to do was to accelerate tax writeoffs, so it included tax gifts for CEOs for very plush private jets and stretch limousines. I questioned Finance officials about this, because I wanted to be sure I understood it. I asked if a stretch limousine was covered by this accelerated writeoff, this big tax gift given by the Liberal government. They said it was. I asked if private jets were covered. They said yes. That is another \$14 billion, and I am not even talking about the over \$20 billion a year that goes to overseas tax havens.

Mr. Speaker, as you will recall, the Parliamentary Budget Officer, who is a hero, along with everyone else who works in that office, struggled for three years under the Harper regime, and another three years under the Liberal regime, before he was able to get the tax data that will allow us, for the very first time next spring, to have a conclusive and comprehensive evaluation of the amount of money that the wealthiest Canadians and Canada's most profitable corporations are squirrelling away offshore.

Small business owners, trades people and single mothers are paying their taxes, and Canadians are proud to do that because it is part of the character of our country that we provide for funds in common that are then to be invested to support all of us. However, that is not the way some of Canada's wealthiest and most profitable corporations have acted. The estimates go up to \$20 billion, but the PBO could well find much more than that.

Let us do a quick accounting. We have \$4.5 billion, another \$15 billion, and another \$14 billion on top of that. That is over \$20 billion, and we are well over \$50 billion without even pausing to take a breath or a sip of water.

Government Orders

What is not in Bill C-86 and not in the mini budget? Universal single-payer pharmacare was not in it. I have mentioned this before and I will mention it again. Every day, Parliamentarians pass Jim, begging on the bridge between the Chateau Laurier and the East Block. He is begging because there is no single-payer universal pharmacare system in our country. He has to beg for \$500 a month. He lives on scant savings and a little money, but he has to beg so he can get the medication that keeps him alive.

Business owners pay \$6 billion a year for drug plans, and yet we know that with our universal medicare program, that is a competitive advantage. That is \$3,000 per employee per year, as a result of American businesses not having to pay into the medical plans that American businesses have to pay into.

Pharmacare is a win-win for everyone, and the PBO indicated that it would be. It would represent \$4 billion in savings overall for Canadians. However, there is nothing in Bill C-86 and nothing in the mini budget that addresses the crucial difficulties that people like Jim are facing. If any member of Parliament from the government side in any way is skeptical, they can just go to talk to Jim. He is out there now, begging for money so he can get the medication he needs to stay alive. It is incredible that in a wealthy country like this, a country where the Liberal government has been willing to fritter away \$50 billion over the last few months with no hesitation, the government is unwilling to provide support for pharmacare.

Nothing in Bill C-86 addresses the housing crisis we are living in. It is incredible what Canadians are forced to live through in this housing crisis. Every time I mention housing, the Liberals start heckling and reacting very badly, but we are talking about real Canadians who are suffering profound difficulties.

• (1130)

I have spoken in the House about John, a senior who has ended up homeless and is in a homeless shelter now because of the lack of affordable housing in the country. I have talked about Heather. I have talked about Raj and Wade. I can mention so many stories.

Here is another one, and this comes from last night.

I turned left as I exited the Wellington Building last night and there was a woman, who I will call Yolande, sleeping outside under the canopy at the building. Every MP who left last night would have seen her. It twisted my gut to see her there. I am a parliamentarian. Despite the fact that there are 40 New Democrats here, we have been unable to get the Liberal government to understand there is a problem.

Canadians are getting increasingly frustrated with the Liberal government's inability to recognize that we are in a profound crisis. Thousands of Canadians are sleeping on the streets in our towns and cities. People like Yolande in Ottawa are sleeping under canopies. People are sleeping downtown on top of steam vents, or in parks, or in entryways of stores that have closed for the day. They are desperately seeking shelter for the night. That should not happen in a country as wealthy as Canada, full stop. Nothing in Bill C-86 addresses the profound crisis we are living through.

Nothing in Bill C-86 addresses the profound crisis in our education system for indigenous children who are underfunded and are living in appalling conditions. They go to schools that belie

belief. The average is \$6,500 to \$10,000 less per student per year for students in an indigenous school as opposed to kids in other schools. Nothing in Bill C-86 addresses that at all.

It is not just the Liberals approach in Bill C-86. It is not just the glaring misplaced sense of priorities. It is the fact that witnesses have said, as they did with pay equity, that the bill needs to be improved otherwise women will have to go back to court. It is a sense from the Liberal government that it will not change it, that it does not care.

That is the biggest part of my profound disappointment, after three years of the Liberal government. I have a profound sense of disappointment in the lack of an understanding of priorities, the sense of entitlement that somehow being able to spin words and say that pay equity is in the bill is the most important thing, not whether it is done right, not whether women have to return to court. It is the Liberals overall sense that it is fine, because they can spin it and tell everybody that they put equity legislation through, regardless of whether women have to go back to court or not.

It is like the excise tax that was imposed on medical cannabis users. The Liberals were stunned when I started to ask questions about it. Finance ministry officials had to look into it and realized that the excise tax had been imposed on medical cannabis users, 250,000 Canadians who need medical cannabis for pain management. They are often in intense pain.

We tried to fix that last spring and the Liberals said, no. They did not care. We tried to fix it again last week in Bill C-86, and Liberal members again rejected the amendments on eliminating the excise tax on medical cannabis, as they did with every other amendment that came from the opposition. This means that medical cannabis users join other Canadians who cannot afford their medication. It is just a lack of empathy, full stop.

I understand the Prime Minister comes from a life of privilege as does the finance minister. I do not begrudge them that and I do not think any Canadian would. However, it is the lack of empathy, the lack of understanding of how their policies are making, demonstrably, the lives of so many Canadians worse that I and the rest of my party decry.

Bill C-86 could have been improved. It should have had other measures that addressed the concerns of Canadians. Because it does not, I will be voting against it.

• (1135)

Mr. Adam Vaughan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development (Housing and Urban Affairs), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is not really a question of whether the glass is half full or half empty. Regardless of how much we take out of it, it is full. I am not thirsty, so I will not take a sip of it right now.

Government Orders

The reality is that the national housing strategy, which is a \$40-billion investment over the next 10 years, is a re-profiling of the investments we have set to make and we now have signed bilaterals with the provinces to lock it in and deliver it.

What the member opposite fails to understand and what his criticism continually highlights is that he actually has not read past budget documents. If he had, he would know that in 2016, we invested \$5.73 billion in the housing system. We did that by doubling our transfers to the provinces and tripling our funding for homelessness. That \$5.7 billion is not in this budget implementation plan because it was in the previous one. We are not going to do it every time just to make the member happy.

This \$5.73 billion, I might add, is four times more than the party opposite promised in its last campaign, a party that thinks the housing crisis started yesterday, apparently. Its plan for a budget this year was to put zero dollars into affordable rental housing and only \$10 million toward homelessness, whereas we have \$100 million and \$5.73 billion.

Could the member opposite please explain to me why he thinks last year's budget implementation budget should be debated today instead of the one in front of us?

• (1140)

Mr. Peter Julian: Mr. Speaker, all members of Parliament had to battle Paul Calandra under the Harper regime, who would say things that simply were not true. It got to the point that it was an embarrassment to—

Mr. Adam Vaughan: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. What I just said is true and to suggest that it is not is to suggest that I am not telling the truth, which is to say that I am lying. I would ask the member opposite to withdraw that.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): I am afraid that is more debate than it is a point of order.

The hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby.

Mr. Peter Julian: Mr. Speaker, Paul Calandra did exactly that kind of thing every time it was pointed out he was simply wrong.

The member for Vancouver Kingsway showed the member for Spadina—Fort York the platform this week, so he has the figures right in front of him. He knows it was a \$3-billion investment, yet he continues to say something that he knows is not true. He knows that the billions of dollars he pretends has rained down to address the housing crisis is simply not true either.

This is what I say about the character of the government and the Prime Minister, their inability to distinguish the spin or whatever they decide to manufacture as truth and actual reality.

The actual reality is that the number of homeless in the country is growing. The number of poor children in the country is growing. There are two ways the Liberal government and the parliamentary secretary could react to that. One is to say, yes, that is true, that they will withdraw the \$14 billion they gave to corporate CEOs last week and invest it in housing.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Order, please. I will remind the two members from the NDP and the Liberal Party who are talking to each other while the hon. member is trying

to answer his question that it is making it very difficult for him to concentrate and for us to hear what he has to say.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. As much as I am loath to agree with my friend from Spadina—Fort York on anything, it is a matter of order, not a matter of debate, that no one can accuse a member of lying in the House. Members ought to be called—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): It is a matter for debate. No one accused anyone of lying. They were arguing the truth, which often happens in the chamber. Someone has to call someone a liar or something similar. There are different ways of getting around things, not that we definitively agree on that, but we will see where we go from there.

The hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby can finish his answer. He has very little time left.

Mr. Peter Julian: Mr. Speaker, my point was that Paul Calandra was used as an enforcer on the floor of the House of Commons. The member for Spadina—Fort York is doing exactly the same thing.

The reality is that putting things forward that members know are not accurate information is not something they should do on the floor of the House of Commons. Whether the Conservatives or the Liberals are upset by that, the New Democrats will continue to do our work and put forward the truth. Our role in the House of Commons is to read through this document, as we did, and provide truthful, important and accurate amendments that would improve the bill. The fact that the Liberals refused any amendments from the opposition says a lot more about them than it does about any of us.

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I disagree with the member characterizing someone disagreeing as being an enforcer, not that I agree with much said by the member for Spadina—Fort York. However, the spirit of this is supposed to be to authentically have conversations in a reasonable spirit.

Nonetheless, I want to ask my colleague about the issue of the media bailout. I genuinely do not know the NDP's position, so I would be very curious to hear what he has to say about that.

We are concerned when public money is given to the media. Frankly, I think many in the media are concerned this will raise questions about their independence. Journalists do important work. However, when the government is intervening to make evaluations about who gets money and who does not, it raises serious problems and questions.

I wonder if my colleague agrees, recognizing the important role of an independent media, that we should not be having a government appointed panel handing out government dollars in this fashion.

• (1145)

Mr. Peter Julian: Mr. Speaker, the member will not like the answer, so he may get up on another point of order.

Government Orders

Over 10 years, the Harper regime did nothing about the web giants as they came into our communities, Facebook and Google, and sucked up advertising revenue. In my communities of Burnaby and New Westminster, we lost half of the weekly newspapers because of that. Companies can now advertise on Facebook and not have to pay taxes in Canada. They do not have to pay for pensions, or employees or anything. Therefore, of course they can undercut traditional advertising means such as our media.

The Harper regime did absolutely nothing to address this chronic problem, even though we asked question after question in the House and put it forward as opposition motions. The Liberal government has done nothing since it took power.

Ultimately, the media fund is an important lifesaver to the media that remains in the country. What we need is a comprehensive review of our tax system so the web giants cannot get away with undercutting Canadian businesses.

That came out of the pre-budget hearings as well. We heard many people in the business community ask how Canada could have a tax structure that would allow foreign companies to come in, not pay any taxes at all and compete for Canadian businesses. This has been a long-standing problem in the country. It started under the Harper regime, has continued under the Liberal government, and it needs to be addressed.

I think this will be part of what Canadians will be considering in 10 month's time, when they talk through our federal election in 2019. They will be concerned about members of Parliament who were not willing to apply a level playing field in the tax system so Canadian companies could compete.

Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for his attempts to amend this bill. The government has repeatedly said that we are all in this together, yet when it comes to tabling bills, it rejects every sensible amendment.

Last night, there was an emergency debate in the House on the energy situation particularly being suffered in the province of Alberta. Almost a year ago exactly, in Bonn, Germany, the Minister of Environment and Climate Change committed that she would finally invest some dollars and have a strategy on an energy transition strategy for workers. Here we are about to go to the next COP on climate and nothing has been invested by the Liberal government.

Could the member speak to what the government could have done to invest in helping our workers, including our oil field workers like those of Iron & Earth, who are proud to be oil field workers but would also like to be trained as well so they can move into the energy efficiency and renewable energy sectors. Why has the federal government put nothing in this budget?

Mr. Peter Julian: Mr. Speaker, by far, that is the best question I have received today. It is a question of substance.

The green energy, or clean energy, market in the United States is exploding. As the member knows, it is estimated by building trades to quadruple over the next decade. Yet, we have unemployed oil and gas workers in Alberta who are crying out for clean energy funding that would allow capped oil wells to take advantage of geothermal.

There is immense potential for solar and wind power in Alberta as well and a tremendous ability to transition those oil and gas workers into another sector of the energy field.

Under the past Conservative government as well as under the current Liberal government we have seen complete inaction. That is absolutely tragic. We could be talking about up to a million clean energy jobs with the right investments and we are not seeing any action from the federal government.

• (1150)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Dan Ruimy (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity today to talk about the importance of the intellectual property strategy.

From the beginning, our government has always worked to strengthen Canada's IP laws.

[*English*]

IP incentivizes and rewards intellectual activity in the industrial, scientific, literary and artistic fields, and it is essential to a modern and dynamic economy. In fact, I would argue that it is a fundamental asset of the knowledge economy. IP protections act as an incentive by rewarding creators and inventors for their contribution to the economy in our society. IP enables them to profit from their ideas and their creativity and provides them a mechanism to obtain a return on their investments. IP laws achieve this by granting them exclusive rights, thereby preventing others from making, selling or using the fruits of their labour without their permission.

In addition, the use of IP is correlated with positive economic outcomes. Businesses with a solid understanding of IP and a strong, strategic plan for its use and protection are important contributors to the Canadian economy. In fact, these businesses create jobs that pay, on average, 16% more than businesses with little or no IP. Also, businesses using IP in patent-intensive industries have about eight to 10 times more revenue than those not using IP.

Canada's laws cover many forms of intellectual property, including patents, trademarks, industrial designs and copyrights. Following on budget 2017's commitment, budget 2018 proposes \$85.3 million over five years and \$10.1 million on an ongoing basis for measures in support of a new intellectual property strategy.

In April 2018, on World IP Day, our government officially launched the IP strategy that will help solidify investments in creativity and innovation, support our efforts to create high-quality jobs and enhance the understanding of the elements necessary to succeed in the global, modern economy.

Government Orders

The IP strategy is an important element of the innovation and skills plan, by fostering an ecosystem that enables businesses to grow to scale. The strategy will ensure that Canadian firms have the awareness and incentive to strategically use IP to grow and compete. The elements of the IP strategy fall under three strategic pillars: the need to increase IP awareness, education and advice; the provision of strategic IP tools for growth; and legislative amendments.

A number of initiatives are under way and planned under the first pillar of IP awareness, education and advice. Most notably is that the Canadian Intellectual Property Office, CIPO, will continue to build on current learning tools and resources and also develop new educational resources to better equip innovators and businesses with the knowledge they need to succeed. Its teams of IP advisers located across Canada work directly with companies and innovators to deliver seminars and participate in innovation and business-related events.

We will be conducting an IP awareness and use survey to identify how Canadians understand and use IP, including groups that have traditionally been less likely to use IP, such as women and indigenous entrepreneurs. The results of the survey will help better meet the needs of these groups.

We will support increased engagement between indigenous people and policy-makers both domestically and internationally by providing support for this engagement, for research and for capacity-building.

We will encourage the creation of IP legal clinics by providing funding to help clinics obtain resources and tools to improve the quality of prior art searches. We see IP legal clinics as a win-win-win, enabling law students to learn more about IP, helping businesses get a sense of their IP needs and facilitating access to the profession that can provide quality IP advice.

Finally, there will be a new team of dedicated IP experts working through existing federal programs to ensure that Government of Canada program officers have the knowledge and capacity to address IP issues and guide program recipients to improve their IP knowledge and savvy. These advisers will supplement, rather than replace, existing IP professionals.

● (1155)

The second pillar of the IP strategy provides some tools to help Canadian businesses make the most of their new-found awareness of IP. First, one of the recurring issues that we heard during the consultation process was the lack of visibility of IP held by federal public institutions and institutions of higher learning. To this end, the IP strategy includes a new online IP marketplace designed to help surface dormant IP that was funded by public institutions.

We also heard about the time that it can take to resolve IP disputes and to get a ruling on a new copyright tariff. We all know that time is money. The IP strategy includes additional resources for the Federal Court to assist in the management of complex litigation, as well as a reform of the Copyright Board.

The additional fiscal support for the Copyright Board and accompanying legislation will make it more efficient and effective. These changes will help rights holders who now better understand

the value of the IP they hold by reducing the time they spend fighting over their IP and more time monetizing it.

Canadian technology is cutting edge and should be recognized as such more often. The IP strategy will support enhanced participation of Canadian businesses in the standards-setting process, and encourage the inclusion of Canadian innovations in international standards.

The Standards Council of Canada will work with innovative Canadian companies to leverage their IP during this standards-setting process.

Finally, the last tool will be the development of a patent collective to bring together businesses to facilitate IP outcomes for its members. The patent collective is the coming together of firms to share in IP expertise and strategy, including but not limited to gaining access to a larger collection of patents and IP.

The third pillar involves proposed amendments to key IP laws, notably the Patent Act, the Copyright Act and the Trade-marks Act. The proposed amendments are intended to encourage creation and innovation by either clarifying acceptable behaviours or discouraging actions that have possible negative consequences. The proposed amendments would protect consumers by clarifying that notices that include settlement offers or payment demands do not comply with Canada's copyright notice and notice regime. They would also fulfill the earlier objective of expediting IP disputes by making the Copyright Board's decision-making process more efficient.

Proposed amendments to the Trademarks Act would prevent the abusive use of the trademark regime, such as by applying for registration with the sole intention of seeking remuneration from the legitimate owner of the trademark by creating—

To continue, being the chair of the industry committee, we had lots of conversations with our witnesses. Universities were saying they had a lot of great practices. Businesses were saying that finding access to IP was very challenging.

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One of the initiatives that we introduced earlier this year was the \$950-million supercluster initiative. Part of that supercluster initiative is having academia and industry come together, to work together, to create jobs and economy, but also to share the intellectual property that is sometimes locked away in places that will never see the light of day.

It is important if we want to grow our economy and if we want to create jobs, to have intellectual property accessible not only to academia but to businesses as well.

• (1200)

When we look at how we are moving forward and the investments we are making, it is so critical that we create an environment where all of our businesses and academia can work together, so that they can thrive and build the economy and grow good, well-paying jobs.

When we look at B.C., for instance, we have the digital supercluster that was awarded to British Columbia. B.C. is already at the forefront of digital media and IP is so critical. When we look at the economic tables, we can tell that currently on digital health care products, our revenues are about half a per cent or about \$7 billion. By 2020, it is estimated that the digital health care marketplace in the world will be about \$322 billion.

We are trying to create an environment where we get the best minds, the best people, the best research and the best companies that can work together to put us at the forefront of that marketplace. That is where we want to be. Do we want to be behind the eight ball, or do we want to be in front, leading the charge?

We are attracting the best and brightest minds here in Canada. This is what a government should be doing, to be able to lay out the environment where we can all thrive. We heard from all of our witnesses that it is so critically important that we have a national IP strategy and what is proposed in this budget is going to help address those issues. The \$85 million over a five-year term will help to grow the landscape of intellectual property and help educate people so that they have an understanding of what that means.

If they do not know what kind of intellectual property is out there, people either have to reinvent the wheel or they have to go through an expensive process. The more we can share intellectual property, the easier it becomes because then they can license it for a short period of time, which allows them to move faster and create the products necessary to grow our economy.

When it comes to intellectual property, we have to look at those three pillars and education is absolutely critical. We need to be able to help people understand the ins and outs of intellectual property.

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, there was an interesting delay in the middle of the member's speech, but things like that happen every day for all of us. I appreciated the grace with which he dealt with that.

As a member who represents a rural and remote riding, one of the challenges of the communities that I represent is looking at ways to be innovative and creative with the lack of Internet access that they have. I think in particular of Campbell River, one of the communities that I am proud to represent. The city itself has built infrastructure within the downtown core to have that very high level of

accessibility to fibre. The businesses that the member mentioned, which focus on things that are really IT and meeting those high needs, have actually done that themselves because they simply could not get it any other way.

Could the member explain how we are looking at rural and remote communities to make sure that they get the resources that they need, as they look at their changing economies? The people I represent are extremely innovative. They are doing a lot of amazing things with what they have, but they definitely need to see the support in order to see their communities stabilize and grow in this changing economy.

• (1205)

Mr. Dan Ruimy: Mr. Speaker, a rural broadband strategy is something we have looked at. We know that if we can figure out how to get broadband to rural communities, to the last mile, it will help businesses thrive. We know that absolutely. In budget 2016, we invested \$500 million in the connect to innovate program, which helped quite a bit. I believe the CRTC has also invested another \$750 million. However, it cannot end there.

When we did our committee report on the broadband strategy, we saw some low-hanging fruit. We saw some things that can help. For instance, can they piggyback on existing infrastructure, such as telephone wires and railway lines? Is there an opportunity for that to happen if we all work collectively together?

Also, some projects might not be viable for large companies. By contrast, smaller companies have the ability to go out into the small, rural communities and actually contribute and deliver the services that are needed. This is part of that strategy.

Earlier this year, the industry minister and the provinces all got together and signed a memorandum of understanding on how to create a national rural broadband strategy. It is absolutely critical, and we absolutely need to move forward. It is a process to get to where we need to go.

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we understand that there is a difference of perspective between the current government and our party about whether or not Canada should run large deficits, especially in the current context. Surely, though, the member would acknowledge that the platform he ran on in the last election promised balanced budgets by this fiscal year. That was a clear commitment. The Prime Minister was very specific about saying that it was set in stone.

We now see the government running away from that commitment, claiming that it promised deficits, which it did. However, it promised limited deficits, up to a point, not unlimited deficits.

Would the member agree that his party has broken its promise with respect to deficits? Would he agree with us that the finance minister should at some point tell Canadians when the Liberals' plan envisions the budget being balanced?

Government Orders

Mr. Dan Ruimy: Mr. Speaker, when we came into power, we looked at the lay of the land and saw what was happening. The investments we are making in this country are critically needed.

When we talk about investment in housing, we are not just making it up. People need to have a home to go to so that they can find a job. I challenge anybody who does not live in a home and does not have a roof over their head to go out and find a job. It is not an easy thing to do, because nobody will want to hire them.

Therefore, the investments we are making, whether in housing, intellectual property or digital superclusters, are designed to help grow our economy and not shrink it. Our country is like a six-cylinder engine firing on two cylinders. We are not going to go very far. We need to make investments that are going to help the other cylinders start to fire, and that is by helping people get a roof over their heads, helping them find jobs, and helping employers who want to hire them. It is creating an environment where people and businesses can thrive.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, the member touched on the issue of copyright. I hope he will forgive me, because I know this is not in Bill C-86. It is a question of what we do about the Copyright Modernization Act, which was brought in under the former minister of heritage, James Moore, in the 41st Parliament.

The word “education” was put in there, and it has cost the authors, publishers and creators of this country. They have lost \$30 million from poor interpretation. It was not clear when the act was put forward, and I remember telling the minister at the time that it was going to cause confusion. What has happened is that holus-bolus, entire texts are being photocopied without providing copyright, without paying for the use of that material. We are going to lose Canadian content.

I wonder if the member has any thoughts on the direction this is going in. In the short term, Canadian publishers are going to need some financial support to help make up for lost revenue from poor interpretation of an act brought in by the last Parliament.

• (1210)

Mr. Dan Ruimy: Mr. Speaker, the member may know that we are in the process of doing a five-year legislative review of copyright. When we set out to do this task, we laid out a format that would ensure that we heard from all the different sectors. We heard from education, artists, writers, creators, producers, singers, songwriters, lawyers and academics.

In short, we have heard from about 180 witnesses and done a road trip, and we will be wrapping up our study by the end of this year. We have heard a lot of information from both sides, some anecdotal and some factual. The challenge for the committee will be to sort through the information and try to come up with recommendations that are well thought-out and grounded in actionable items.

Ms. Kim Rudd (Northumberland—Peterborough South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am on the finance committee now, and I very much enjoyed the member's remarks regarding intellectual property, because it is something we are talking a lot about. He talked about the IP collective with respect to the sharing of IP. It was certainly a struggle for small businesses to be able to afford to go through the process.

Can the member talk a bit about the opportunities for small businesses to be able to expand with respect to IP?

Mr. Dan Ruimy: Mr. Speaker, the best example I can give is the supercluster initiative. It is not just made up of small or large businesses. Rather, it is a collaboration of a whole bunch of people and organizations. Therefore, a one-man company in my riding could tap into the supercluster and get access to intellectual property that would never otherwise have been accessible. When people have the ability to do that, their minds can start to go in ways that we cannot even imagine. They can take that IP, open it up, unleash that intellectual property, and see where our country will go from there.

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to have the opportunity to speak to the government's budget implementation bill. It is a very long bill, unprecedented in its length in terms of Canadian parliamentary history, despite promises to the contrary from the government.

There are many different aspects and themes that one could dig into. I am going to focus my remarks on what I see as five dominant debates that have emerged around this budget. I will share some thoughts on each of those five areas.

I want to speak about the government's carbon tax and associated debates about the issue of climate change and how we should respond.

I want to address deficits. The current government's massive deficit is relatively without precedent in peacetime and in times without a global economic downturn.

I want to discuss some of the debates around poverty, equity and how we can and should be responding to those very real issues.

I will speak about the energy sector and pipelines.

Finally, I want to address the government's media bailout. It has been interesting observing the debate around the media bailout and having conversations with the people I know in the press. I will contend very strongly that our position, opposing the bailout, is the fundamentally pro-media position. We recognize the importance of strong, independent media, and there is a legitimate discussion about what can be done that establishes conditions for the financial success of the media.

However, the way in which the government has approached this, whereby the media are dependent on the evaluations of a government-appointed panel, makes the media very vulnerable in terms of perceptions of lacking independence. They will be vulnerable to the kinds of challenges that naturally arise when they have been put in a position of having to come to a government-appointed body for dollars. I will speak more to that in a few minutes.

The first issue I want to address is that of the carbon tax. We have a government that does not want to have a debate around the effectiveness of the carbon tax as a tool. The Liberals will accuse anybody who does not agree with their chosen policy mechanism of somehow being not serious about responding to the challenge of climate change.

Government Orders

I sincerely believe that we need to respond to the challenge of climate change, and that we need to do it in a way that is effective, which means not using the climate change issue as an excuse for imposing new taxes on Canadians. Let me make a few points about that.

The first point is a historical one. Let us look at the records of the past Conservative government and the current Liberal one, as well as at the record of the previous Liberal government, by way of a contrast.

A previous Liberal government, under Chrétien and Martin, signed the Kyoto protocol, yet greenhouse gas emissions went up significantly during that period. Our Conservative government proposed binding, sector-by-sector, intensity-based regulatory targets. In other words, they did not penalize companies for increasing their output, but sought to regulate in a way that enhanced the efficiency of our production here in Canada.

In the long term, those kinds of measures would ensure and indeed increase our competitiveness. They would also ensure that we were part of effectively responding to the challenge of climate change.

The objective record of greenhouse gas emissions under the previous government shows that emissions went down. It was the first government in Canadian history under which emissions went down. In response to that, people like my friend from Spadina—Fort York will praise the record of the Kathleen Wynne Liberals, which is not as popular in Ontario as he might wish it to be.

However, across different jurisdictions we see that in every single Canadian jurisdiction, emissions under the Conservative government either went down, or they went up by less than they had under the previous Liberal government. Although the member for Spadina—Fort York might not want it to be true, he must recognize that under the previous Conservative government, progress was achieved in terms of the issue of climate change and greenhouse gas emissions in every single jurisdiction across this country.

That was done with an approach that emphasized binding sector-by-sector regulations but also ensured that individuals had the capital they needed to make investments in these kinds of improvements.

● (1215)

Rather than a punitive approach, like the carbon tax which punishes people, we had things like the home renovation tax credit, which ensured that people who wanted to make energy innovation investments in their own homes had the tax advantage in the process of doing so. That empowered people to engage with an issue that I think many people want to engage with, rather than the punitive approach adopted by the Liberal government.

What have we seen from the government? Upon taking office, the Liberals decided they would take the punitive approach, that they would impose new taxes on Canadians. Make no mistake that this approach is designed to raise revenue for the federal government. The GST is consistently being charged on top of the carbon tax. The GST, as everyone knows, is a federal tax. The imposition of the carbon tax in association with the GST means that this tax is designed to and will increase revenues for the federal government.

It is a punitive approach. It is a negative approach. It is a taxation-oriented revenue approach that is imposed on all Canadians. Because it is a point-of-sale tax, it is particularly regressive. We know that consumption taxes are more likely to hit those who are struggling economically. Even the natural regressivity of a sales tax was not enough for the government, which decided on top of that to provide an additional benefit for Canada's largest emitters.

It makes one wonder how sincere the government is in its rhetoric. The Liberals will extol the virtues of a carbon tax, yet they give a break to the largest emitters. The Liberals say these large emitters will really struggle to pay the carbon tax and it might hurt us economically. However, they are completely indifferent to the suffering this imposes on small and medium-sized businesses and to the suffering this imposes on individual consumers.

It especially hurts low-income people. Without the benefit of things like the home renovation tax credit, without some of the positive, constructive policies we had in place before and without things like the transit tax credit, which was an environmental measure that benefited people who were using public transit, without those kinds of measures, we are in a situation under this government where many people may not be able to make those kinds of investments that would allow them to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions.

This underlines the failure of a punitive approach instead of a constructive approach. Our party believes that through constructive regulations and supporting innovation and not through punishing people we can work collaboratively for environmental improvements that do not hurt the economy. That is what we saw previously.

I would just note parenthetically that whenever we talk about the issue of how greenhouse gas emissions went down under the previous government, members on the other side will always say that was only because of the global recession. However, they never bring up the global recession in the context of deficits, which I will talk about next. When they want to complain about the fact that deficits were run under the previous government, they mysteriously forget that there was a global recession, but then when they are trying to explain away the real progress that was made under the previous government on the issue of greenhouse gas emissions, they are happy to talk about the fact that there was a global economic downturn.

The reality is that Canada was relatively less affected by the global economic downturn because of prudent policies that were pursued by the previous government in the lead-up to that. Canada was relatively less affected and our emissions still went down; whereas other parts of the world were more affected and yet global emissions went up. It is simply not logical to say that greenhouse gas emissions went down only because of the global economic downturn, because Canada was outperforming the rest of the world in terms of environmental improvements as well as the economic situation relative to the rest of the world. That very much contrasts with what we see under the Liberal government.

I want to speak now to the discussion about deficits. Let us be very clear that we are dealing with a significant dissonance between what the government promised in the last election and what it is saying today.

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•(1220)

The government promised three deficits which would be a maximum of \$10 billion and then in the final fiscal year, which is the one upcoming, the budget would be balanced. However, the government has articulated absolutely no plan to balance the budget ever.

It is great to see young people watching the debate today. I know they will have to pay for the spending of the government long into their future, as a result of the fact that the government has no plan to balance the budget and is spending money today that those young people will have to pay back tomorrow. At the very least, it is a broken promise.

How do members of the government respond to the reality that they broke a promise? The previous speaker, the member for Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge, talked about when they came into office, they started to take a look at the situation. Maybe the Liberals should have started to take a look at the situation before they wrote their platform. The fiscal situation is quite clear in the reports coming out from the government, in terms of all the financial data that is publicly available. It is not as if there is any surprise in the fiscal situation.

The Prime Minister made commitments that he said were set in stone, yet he broke those commitments as soon as he came to office. The Liberals have to explain why they brought one spending plan to Canadians in the election and delivered a completely different spending plan as soon as they were elected to government. Beyond the question of broken promises, it is hard for me to understand how anyone who claims to care about their children and the next generation would impose on them the burden of paying for the benefits we enjoy today, plus interest.

Sometimes we hear members across the way raise the spectre of austerity. Let us be clear that the worst cases of austerity are those that we have seen in countries which have had no choice as a result of a debt crisis. When governments spend without a plan of ever balancing the budget, it causes a situation where the most severe form of austerity is forced on them whether they like it or not. What goes up ultimately must come down.

What we advocate then is having a plan to control spending, that is, to moderate the growth of spending in such a way as to balance the budget, not to dramatically increase spending beyond government revenue. It is a little bit absurd to suggest that any call for spending control or any call for balance will somehow be austere. It is a grievous misuse of the word “austerity”, as if to imply that we only have two choices, austerity on the one hand or out-of-control spending on the other. I actually think we can pursue a middle way, which is prudent measured spending that recognizes fiscal realities, while still investing as much as possible in the future in social programs but in a way that ensures that those social programs will be sustainable.

Members across the way know that if one spends consistently more than one has, or makes promises as the Kathleen Wynne Liberals did that are completely unbudgeted with no plan to pay for them, then yes, people are going to be disappointed when those things cannot be delivered. However, it is a result of overspending. It

is a result of out-of-control debt and deficits. Then subsequent generations will have to pay not only for their own needs, but they will also have to pay down the debt and interest on the consumption of previous generations.

We propose a fiscal policy that avoids the need to pay massive interest and instead is prudent and measured. It is one in which when we make spending commitments to people, we do so in the context of a balanced budget so that they can have the certainty that those programs will be there for the future.

What we see from the Liberal government are these branded plans, these national strategies that often involve most of the spending in the latter years of those programs, but they have no realistic fiscal plan of actually delivering on. It is a grievous problem. It is one that will negatively affect the next generation and the most vulnerable. Inevitably, the government is promising things that it will not be able to deliver. I think that is a good segue into making a few comments about the government's approach to the issue of poverty.

•(1225)

The budget implementation act proposes to legislate goals, legislate the hopes and aspirations of policy-makers. Might I humbly submit, that is not going to provide very much confidence and reassurance to those who are living in poverty. What makes much more sense are concrete policies that would benefit the most vulnerable.

I have already spoken about how the carbon tax disproportionately impacts those who are most vulnerable in terms of being forced to pay more and not getting the same holidays that the large emitters get.

The government legislates goals. It spends half a million dollars developing a logo for an anti-poverty organization, yet it does not pursue the kinds of policies that we pursued that help the most vulnerable.

With respect to homelessness, the Conservatives invested significantly in housing first. We raised the base personal exemption and lowered the lowest marginal tax rate. We also cut the GST, which is the one tax that everybody pays.

Our approach was to recognize the need to help the most vulnerable but also to understand that helping the most vulnerable should not be an excuse to increase the size of government. Big government does not benefit those who need help the most. Constantly growing government benefits well-connected insiders, as we have seen consistently from the policies of the Liberal government.

The Liberal government could consider following the positive track record of the previous government. It could provide tax relief through raising the base personal exemption, through lowering the lowest marginal rate, through cutting the GST, through providing relief on the carbon tax to those who need that support the most.

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There is nothing progressive about the government's approach to policy which gives huge amounts of money in corporate welfare, in payouts to companies like Bombardier. Bombardier even said it did not need the money, and then used some of that money to give benefits to its executives.

Nothing helps the most vulnerable when the government subsidizes CEOs through policies like the supercluster. Instead we could have a competitive tax regime. We could cut taxes for the most vulnerable. We could establish the conditions by which people could keep more of their own money and use more of their own money to meet their own needs.

Instead, the government uses climate change, uses poverty, uses whatever excuse it can come up with as part of its insatiable plan to increase the size of government and to increase government spending.

I am going to try to hit my last two points in the brief time I have left.

When it comes to our energy resources, the government spent a huge amount of public money to buy a pipeline with no plan to get that pipeline built. Under the previous government, four pipelines were built, some of which did increase our ability to move resources to tidewater.

The government has no plan to proceed with pipelines. It brings in legislation like Bill C-48 and Bill C-69 that would significantly hurt our ability to move forward in terms of pipelines, while, through the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, it is paying a Chinese-controlled bank, an instrument of Chinese foreign policy, to build pipelines overseas. Its justification is that Canadian firms might get some of that work.

I have visited the headquarters of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank in Beijing. It told us that regardless of whether Canada is a member of that bank or not, Canadian firms would still have the same ability to bid for work through that bank.

This talking point for justifying sending hundreds of millions of taxpayers' dollars to China to build pipelines in Azerbaijan and other places instead of building pipelines here by getting out of the way of the private sector holds absolutely no water.

Finally, on the point of the independence of the media, \$600 million of taxpayers' money is going to a bailout of the media. Leading voices in the media have talked about how problematic this would be, because in order for the media to be strong, independence of the media is required. It also requires the perception of independence.

Journalists recognize that the perception of government handing over significant amounts of money through a process that fundamentally can be controlled by government makes them so much more vulnerable to misperceptions and criticism. We need to have media that are independent of government and that can do their job well.

This is an attack on the independence of the media through the government's attempt to control the process of allocation of funds. It is a significant threat to the media's independence more so than we

have seen in the recent history of this country and more so certainly than the odd verbal criticism here and there.

For these and many other reasons that I do not have time to go into because it is such a large bill, I will be opposing this legislation.

• (1230)

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I listened with great interest to my colleague's intervention today. In reference to the Conservative Party, I heard him say that "What we advocate then is having a plan to control spending" and that the Conservatives would spend nothing beyond available revenues.

If we look at the Conservative record, 16 of the last 19 budgets introduced by Conservatives ran deficits. Of the three that did not run deficits, one came on the heels of a \$13 billion surplus that Paul Martin left, and the other came in 2015 when they sold the shares of GM, cut EI, and did whatever they possibly could before an election to make it look as though they had balanced the budget. As a matter of fact, if we add up the amount of debt accumulated by this country over the last 151 years, we see that the Conservatives racked up 73% of that debt while being in power only 38% of the time.

My question for the member is very simple. In what world does he live if he actually thinks that the Conservative Party has any bearing to stand and preach on fiscal responsibility, when the facts just do not support that over the last 151 years?

• (1235)

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Mr. Speaker, the member really does have to go back 151 years to try to distract attention from the particular questions of his government's fiscal policy.

He cannot point to the fiscal prudence of Liberal prime ministers 100 years ago to justify the policies that the Liberals are pursuing today, namely, a massive engorging of the public sector.

The member is shouting about Paul Martin, and let me tell the House that notwithstanding some points of disagreement, I would gladly take Paul Martin over this finance minister. I would gladly take the relative prudence of those previous governments compared with the out-of-control spending of the current government.

That member, who wants to claim the benefits of those previous governments, needs to recognize how much his party has changed and, to the extent that the Liberals ever recognized the need for fiscal prudence, how far the current policies of the government have completely and totally left them behind.

I would not propose to hold him accountable for all of the decisions of his party in the past. I would not blame him for the residential schools opened by Pierre Trudeau, or for other significant policy errors made by previous governments that share the same label.

I would ask the member to defend his policies today, which are a disaster for this country.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Karine Trudel (Jonquière, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I listened carefully to my colleague's speech.

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I would like to talk about my region of Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean. This week, we had a visit from a representative of the Front d'action populaire en réaménagement urbain, or FRAPRU, who came to tell us about our city's household income statistics.

I represent the riding of Jonquière. The government promised us huge investments, mainly in Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean. I remember the government saying in 2015 that it was going to make historic investments in infrastructure, and yet there is still an urgent need for new infrastructure. According to Statistics Canada and what FRAPRU said about my city, people are still spending a large proportion of their income on housing. The need is pretty clear.

Omnibus Bill C-86 would have been a good opportunity to allocate more resources to social housing infrastructure. The government keeps saying that it is investing in social housing. That is what the members opposite always seem to be claiming. However, it is not true. There is no money allocated for social housing until after the next election.

I would like to know what my colleague thinks about that.

[English]

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Mr. Speaker, my colleague makes some very good points that the government over-promises in so many different areas ahead of an election, and then we often do not see the results.

I think the member was also alluding to the fact that in some of these heavily branded, heavily promoted social policy discussions the Liberals want to put in the window, oftentimes we see how the money is allocated towards the end of an extended period of time. They will present a lengthy 10-year spending plan, with spending that is end-loaded, when they can then re-evaluate it.

It is unfortunate to see these kinds of tactics by the government. Obviously there is limited fiscal capacity, and it cannot spend on everything all at once. A better approach is to be frank and honest with people about the realities of the fiscal limitations we face, rather than creating all kinds of false expectations, spending all of these resources on branding exercises, and then not actually delivering the goods for vulnerable people, for the middle class and for everyone else, when it comes time to do so.

Mr. Adam Vaughan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development (Housing and Urban Affairs), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the new member is a good, young speaker in the House. I used to joke that his parents perhaps read too much Ayn Rand to him as a bedtime story, but he protested and said that he did not get that until high school. However, maybe it is Adam Smith, but he did not read the right Adam Smith and only read *Wealth of Nations* and not Smith's very good book on morality and the need to be socially progressive.

Then I heard him talk like Tony Blair today about finding the middle way, and I thought, "My goodness, I really have this guy wrong." However, with the climate change numbers he cited, he claims that the Harper government reduced greenhouse gas emissions by not doing anything and simply asking industry to voluntarily cut emissions. What we know to be absolutely true is that the global recession was one of the most significant contributors. In fact, the Tories liked the global recession so much they tried to start a

second one all on their own in the last year of their government. They almost did it, until we had the election, and then we changed course.

The reality is that Ontario, which accounts for about a third of Canada's economy, reduced its greenhouse gas emissions by 40%. That 40% reduction was almost entirely due to the elimination of coal plants, which the party opposite protested and said that we needed more coal and could not run a country without it. When the member opposite realizes that it was the elimination of coal, a global recession, and the progressive implementation by cities across the country of greenhouse gas reductions, will he finally abandon this notion that somehow Stephen Harper did anything about greenhouse gas emissions other than complain that doing something was a headache for him?

• (1240)

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Mr. Speaker, speaking of headaches, I have not read Ayn Rand. I want to clarify for the member the source of my philosophical education and the books he should read in order to understand it more deeply. He talked about finding the middle way. I would recommend *The Nicomachean Ethics* by Aristotle, which speaks of virtue as being a mean between the extremes. Also, I have recommended *After Virtue*, by Alasdair MacIntyre, to him on a number of occasions. I think that would give him a better understanding, rather than throwing out titles with very little appreciation for how they might or might not actually relate to the substance of my comments. I would be happy to sponsor the member's reading over the Christmas holidays, if he would like either one of those books sent to him.

Now, in terms of the issue of looking at changes that happen with greenhouse gas emissions, I made the point very clearly that emissions went down, or went up by less, in every jurisdiction across the country during the period of the Conservative government as compared with the period under the previous Liberal government. We saw progress in every jurisdiction. We can debate the particular policies of any provincial government, and I know that Ontario has just come out of an election, in which the policies of the Kathleen Wynne government were widely debated and that government ended up with fewer seats than my minivan.

However, if the member wants to take a similar approach to the people of Ontario in the next federal election, I would certainly welcome that debate. Our approach, which brought about progress in every jurisdiction across this country, resonated with Canadians and showed that we can achieve progress without using the environment as an excuse to impose new taxes on Canadians. That is exactly what the Liberal members are trying to do.

[Translation]

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, all I want to do is commend my colleague on his excellent speech and his extensive literary knowledge.

Does my colleague have any other books he would like to recommend to our Liberal colleague?

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Mr. Garnett Genuis: Mr. Speaker, I have plenty of suggestions for books that my colleague should read. In fact, I have been making the same suggestions in the House for years now. However, it seems obvious to me that he has not started any of those books yet, so for the moment, I will stick with the titles I have already given him.

[*English*]

Hon. Larry Bagnell (Yukon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Winnipeg South.

Before I start, I want to say that this could very easily be a great day for indigenous people in Canada, because just after 3 p.m., if things go according to Hoyle, which sometimes does not happen in this Parliament, there will be a discussion on the use of aboriginal languages in the House. It would be a great sign of reconciliation for indigenous youth to see their indigenous languages used at the centre of our democracy and nation. Therefore, I look forward to that discussion and hope everyone else does as well.

My speech today is on a topic that has come up quite often during this debate, which is omnibus bills. I will explain the technical aspects and how they work for new members of Parliament and new senators. Therefore, if members are not interested in hearing about the Standing Orders and how an omnibus bill works, they can go for lunch.

Since 1888 in Parliament there was no description or definition of omnibus bills until the recent government came to power. There were accusations of legislation being abused to do too many things or more than one major thing in a bill. An example would be a budget bill with a lot of clauses and things related to the environment that are unrelated to the budget speech. This was seen to be an abuse of a bill, or what some people called an “omnibus bill”. This was viewed as unacceptable.

In the last campaign, our party made a suggestion to remove the potential for such abuse by making a change with respect to that. On June 20, 2017, we made that correction so that people could no longer bring forth bills, in the general course of Parliament, that aimed to do a lot of things, or at least more than one thing, or to bring forth a budget implementation bill containing things that were not at all related to the budget. The way we fulfilled that promise was by adding Standing Order 69.1 to the Standing Orders, which we in the House, here in Parliament, approved.

There are two subsections in the new standing order. The first subsection is with respect to the general course of bringing forward legislation. Subsection 69.1(1) states:

In the case where a government bill seeks to repeal, amend or enact more than one act, and where there is not a common element connecting the various provisions or where unrelated matters are linked, the Speaker shall have the power to divide the questions, for the purposes of voting, on the motion for second reading and reference to a committee and the motion for third reading and passage of the bill. The Speaker shall have the power to combine clauses of the bill thematically and to put the aforementioned questions on each of these groups of clauses separately, provided that there will be a single debate at each stage.

That is how that was dealt with. Not only was that promise kept, but subsequently, use of that section has been requested at least twice. I will cite the two examples. On June 11, 2018, it was used with regard to a bill relating to national security, which the Speaker split into three votes. On October 31, 2017, a request for use of this new provision, which protects against abusive use of omnibus bills,

was proposed for a corrections bill. However, the Speaker ruled that the items were related, and the bill was not split for the purpose of a vote.

The second potential use of an omnibus bill is with respect to a budget bill.

• (1245)

Those who understand legislation know that we have a budget speech, but, of course, that is not the law. We need a budget implementation bill to actually bring into force what is in the speech. As I have said, the Liberals thought there was an abuse of power in using that budget implementation speech to do a bunch of major, serious things that were not limited to the budget. Therefore, they wanted to remove that potential for abuse.

Standing Order 69.1(2), entitled “Budget implementation bills” reads:

(2) The present Standing Order shall not apply if the bill has as its main purpose the implementation of a budget and contains only provisions that were announced in the budget presentation or in the documents tabled during the budget presentation.

Budgets, as members know, often deal with the spending for dozens of departments. That is what a budget does. A budget implementation bill has to implement all of those things, and so it could be very long. It could be 1,000 or 2,000 or 3,000 pages. It is whatever it takes to implement what is in the budget.

Most parliamentarians would suggest that more changes to improve things in Canada would obviously make a longer bill. Whether we reduce, increase or modify expenditures, it would have to be put into the implementation bill. Therefore, the length is not relevant, unless we go off-course from what is in the budget. It could be very long, but the key is whether there is abuse, or doing something major that is not in the budget.

Standing Order 69.1(2) makes sure that we can do a budget, but it gives authority to the Speaker to split things out that were not in the budget or in the documents tabled with the budget. Therefore, in both ways, this promise was obviously fulfilled. Provisions were made to stop the abuse that was thought to be occurring on budget bills, as well as abuse in the general course of doing legislation.

In the second case, I will give members an example. Not only has this been put in place and now legislated, but it is part of the Standing Orders approved by this Parliament, and Standing Order 69.1(2) has actually been used as well since that time. It was used at least once, on November 3, 2017. The Speaker split that budget bill into five votes, because there were items that were not in that particular budget. If I remember correctly, although the Standing Order says that an item must be in the budget, the items had been in a previous budget. The Speaker did not agree to this. He then split that vote. Therefore, this provision allows the Speaker to split the bill, and it has been used.

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As I said, there were no provisions for this type of protection previously, but I think it makes our legislative system better. Even with normal legislation, we cannot put a whole bunch of things in one bill that are totally unrelated. A budget bill can be really long, but it cannot include things that are not in the budget documents or in the budget speech.

Since 1888, there had been no provision to protect against this in Parliament. There were times when bills were split, but it was done through politics and not through the Standing Orders. Members may remember the great bell-ringing exercise on March 2, 1982, which convinced parliamentarians to change and split a bill, but it was not done under the authority of any Standing Order.

I just wanted to clarify and get this on the record so that people know how these types of bills get split or not, and what is more appropriate to try and improve the legislation in this Parliament.

• (1250)

Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC): Mr. Speaker, one of the issues we have been dealing with throughout the budget implementation act, which I mentioned earlier but will say again, is that the member for Carleton has asked almost 500 times, either in committee or during question period in the House, when the budget will be balanced.

I will ask the hon. member: when will the budget be balanced?

Hon. Larry Bagnell: Mr. Speaker, I have already mentioned in the House that the Conservatives have already lost that argument. They are right that they have asked 500 times, but it was inappropriate for them to suggest that members of Parliament should know when a budget will be balanced. They could never answer when they did not balance eight or nine out of 10 of their own budgets.

• (1255)

Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, if ever I heard filler in a speech, that was it. I congratulate the member for Yukon.

Omnibus budget bills were brought forward by the former Harper government and now this. There are a number of issues. It is not just whether the matters may relate to finance or the budget. The Liberals promised in their election campaign three years ago that they would not repeat the omnibus budget bills that Mr. Harper brought forward. Yes, a carbon tax bill may be a financial matter, but it was a massive legislative undertaking that merited review unto itself instead of being thrown into the middle of other financial matters that folks in the finance committee might have wanted to discuss. Rationalizing that this is what omnibus bills are just does not address the problem we have with the sitting government.

Hon. Larry Bagnell: Mr. Speaker, my understanding of the promise made was that abusing a budget implementation bill by putting a whole bunch of things in it that were not in the budget itself was inappropriate. The Standing Order that I read in my speech precludes putting a number of things into the budget and the budget documents tabled with the budget. It is not appropriate to put brand new things into a budget implementation bill and that is what has been corrected in this legislation.

As to what is in a budget itself, that is another debate, which I did not address, and it is interesting the member brought that up.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there are many things I could ask my colleague and friend about the budget because I believe it fulfills a great number of commitments that were made in the last federal election. The most important commitment we made was to support Canada's middle class and those aspiring to become a part of it and to look at ways to further develop social programs, and so forth. Those commitments have materialized.

For me personally, a healthy middle class means a healthier, more robust economy and they both complement each other. I wonder if my friend could provide his thoughts on the importance of supporting Canada's middle class.

Hon. Larry Bagnell: Mr. Speaker, when I came to Parliament, it was to help lower-income people in need and some of the provisions we brought forward will bring some of them into the middle class. The first thing we did, as promised, was reduce taxes for the middle class. As has been mentioned many times in the House, the average family will now be about \$2,000 better off.

The things I am proud of are the following: increasing the guaranteed income supplement for the poorest seniors, increasing financial assistance for the poorest students, increasing financial assistance to the poorest families and, in the most recent budget, increasing the income tax credit for working people that will help over two million lower-income Canadians. When money is provided to people who really need it, they spend it right away, which goes into small businesses and boosts the economy.

In Yukon, there is almost no unemployment at this time. It is incredible. On top of all of the benefits for people who really need it and the doubling or tripling of infrastructure that is in almost every community in the Yukon, Yukon is in a great situation.

Mr. Terry Duguid (Parliamentary Secretary for Status of Women, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to speak to Bill C-86, the budget implementation act, 2018, no. 2, and particularly to speak to division 18, which would establish the department for women and gender equality, or WAGE for short. Creating the department for women and gender equality would modernize and formalize the important roles of the Status of Women Canada agency and of its minister and provide a secure base from which to reinforce and expand the work that Status of Women Canada has been doing for decades.

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Canada has had a minister responsible for status of women since 1971, but it was only under our Prime Minister that the first minister fully dedicated to status of women was appointed. Since its early days as an agency, Status of Women Canada has grown into a centre of gender expertise. It has led the way in areas such as gender-based research and gendered policy development and analysis, as well as intergovernmental coordination and international leadership on gender issues.

Through its women's program, the agency has also led the way in providing funding support for equality-seeking organizations across the country that work at increasing women's economic security and prosperity, encouraging women's leadership and democratic participation, and ending violence against women and girls.

Our government has made gender equality one of its top priorities. Transforming Status of Women Canada into a full department reflects the central importance this government places on gender equality. Gender equality, we know, is not a women's issue; it is an issue for everyone. If we get this right, we all benefit. This is not just a philosophical or theoretical observation; it is based on our actual economic performance.

Labour force participation rates of women have grown tremendously over the past few decades from just 22% in 1950 to well over 80% today. Bringing more women into the workforce has been one of the most powerful drivers of our economic growth. In fact, increasing numbers of women in the workforce over the last 40 years has accounted for approximately one-third of the per capita growth in Canada's real gross domestic product. Having more women in the workforce has not only opened up new doors of opportunities for women; it has also driven economic growth, boosted family incomes, and helped more and more families join the middle class. Canada today is a much richer, healthier and more equitable country than it was just a few decades ago.

Despite our progress, that door of opportunity is not yet fully opened. There are still too many barriers to the full participation of women. There are still too many missed opportunities caused by gender gaps in a number of different areas, including education and career options, economic participation and leadership. For example, there is still a substantial gender wage gap in this country. In Canada in 2017, for every dollar a man earned, a woman earned only 88.5¢. This does not tell the whole story because many more women than men work only part-time, largely due to the fact that many women cannot take on full-time employment because of household and family-care responsibilities.

Key sectors in our economy that represent high-quality and well-paid jobs, like the high-tech sector where women make up only a quarter of the workforce, have major labour shortages. We have heard that in the House. We are working to remove barriers to women's participation in these fields so we can fill those jobs and, in doing so, grow our economy and our middle class.

Increasing our efforts to remove barriers and enhance gender equality in this country is not just the right thing to do; it is the smart thing to do to strengthen the middle class and grow Canada's economy. In fact, RBC Economics estimates that if men and women participated equally in the workforce, Canada's GDP could be

boosted by as much as 4% more over the next few years and could partially offset the expected effects of an aging population.

How do we get there from here? For one thing, we start with the basics: budgets. Budgets are about making choices on where we allocate limited resources. Putting a gender and diversity lens on budgeting gives us the ability to understand how our economic decisions affect people differently. When we know that, we can allocate government resources more equitably and more efficiently, benefiting all Canadians.

● (1300)

We presented our first-ever gender statement in a budget in 2017. We are now introducing a new gender results framework, which is a whole-of-government tool to measure how we are doing and to help define what is needed to achieve gender equality as we go forward.

At the same time, we recognize that gender identities are complex. Not all women experience inequality and not all men experience privilege. Binary notions of gender do not work for all Canadians. Race, class, sexuality and ability among other factors all intersect to profoundly impact how gender is experienced in daily life.

With this legislation, promoting gender equality and the advancement of women, including women with disabilities, indigenous women and women in other vulnerable areas such as newcomer and immigrant women, will continue to be the central focus of the new department for women and gender equality. However, the new department will also have an expanded mandate for gender equality, which includes sexual orientation as well as gender identity and expression in response to the unique challenges faced by members of the LGBTQ2 community.

Our government will not shy away from taking strong action on equality, from appointing the first-ever gender balanced federal cabinet, to the first federal minister fully dedicated to gender issues, to the first gender budget launching Canada's first-ever strategy to prevent and address gender-based violence and unparalleled investments in women and girls. Our government is advancing gender equality within Canada and around the world.

Our government understands that gender equality creates economic growth and with the department of women and gender equality wage, we will strengthen our capacity to advance gender equality and grow the middle class through policy, programming and support for equality seeking organizations and community partners.

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•(1305)

Mr. Pat Kelly (Calgary Rocky Ridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to pick up on an answer from the previous speaker and put it to the parliamentary secretary. The previous speaker thought that the question of when the budget would be balanced was not a sensible question and that is was rightly ignored 400 times by the minister.

If this is not a legitimate question, that no government can tell when a budget will be balanced or unbalanced and it should not answer a question like that, why did the Liberals promise, on page 12 of their platform document in the last election, that they would “After the next two fiscal years, the deficit will decline and our investment plan will return Canada to a balanced budget in 2019.” Why did the Liberals run on that plan and does he agree with the previous speaker that it should not matter when the budget will be balanced?

Mr. Terry Duguid: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member was part of the 2015 election where fortunately Canadians gave us on this side of the House a mandate. We made a choice, and Canadians had a choice: balancing the budget at all costs or investing in Canadians. We took the latter approach. We are investing in major ways, \$180 billion in infrastructure that will transform our communities, and municipalities across the country are so pleased with this government; \$40 billion for a national housing strategy that will, among other things, keep women safe and provide transition housing and shelters. I could go on and on with the kinds of investments we have made.

Again, we were not going to balance the budget at all costs and cut benefits to veterans. We were not going to close Status of Women offices across the country as the Conservatives did. We chose to invest in Canadians.

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, as the senior spokesperson for the NDP, one of the things my office deals with very frequently is elderly senior women who are in desperate poverty. They are dealing with issues such as needing to find resources to access health care and to pay for their medication. Sometimes they are trying to find somewhere to live because the cost of housing is growing every day, especially, and not forgettably, in rural and remote communities like the ones I represent. We work with those women. We do what we can for them.

At the same time, I am talking to younger women who are unable to afford day care or they work and at the end of the month, they have maybe earned \$40 to \$60 because the rest of that money goes to child care.

When I look at this, I see the spectrum continuing. These elderly women worked at home, did very important work, but they did not have the opportunity to pay into a pension plan, into their CPP. They are living in poverty. Now we have young women who are getting put into the same cycle, where they are unable to pay into these resources.

Could the member share with the House why this is not addressing that core issue of child care for women and providing the supports they need so they can do the jobs they want to do? When the member talks about adding to the economy and the importance of young women across the country joining that

economy, it is really hard to do when all of their money is going to pay for child care.

•(1310)

Mr. Terry Duguid: Mr. Speaker, I will start with elderly senior women.

It is very interesting. Her colleague from Nanaimo—Ladysmith and I, in fact the entire Standing Committee on the Status of Women, are looking at that very issue as we speak, the situations of senior women in our country. We know there is further work to do, and we are going to work on that together.

I would remind the hon. member that we strengthened the GIS. For poor seniors, many of them women, it is an extra \$1,000 to \$1,700 a year. The hon. member will know that we reversed the Harper government decision to increase the age of eligibility for GIS and OAS, and it is now 65 again. We have strengthened the CPP.

On child care, \$7.5 billion over 10 years is going to realize 40,000 new child care spaces in the immediate future.

Mr. Pat Kelly (Calgary Rocky Ridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is always an honour to rise in this place on behalf of my constituents who sent me here to add my voice to the debate.

I would like to take us back to the election in 2015 and review the Liberals' proposition that they put to Canadians.

The Liberals campaigned on a very specific promise. They ran on a promise to run modest deficits for a maximum of three years and then return to a surplus within the fourth year of the mandate. That was a key promise. It was a point of differentiation between not only themselves and the Conservatives, but also between themselves and the New Democratic Party. Therefore, this was an important piece of the Liberal campaign and was part of the basis upon which they were elected. They have ignored the question of balanced budgets in this bill and continually in this Parliament.

I want to draw the attention of Canadians to the Liberal campaign document. It says, “Real Change: A New Plan for a Strong Middle Class”. There is a nice picture on page 11, with the Prime Minister pretending to operate a crane. On the next page, page 12, it says:

We will run modest short-term deficits of less than \$10 billion in each of the next two fiscal years to fund historic investments in infrastructure and our middle class.

After the next two fiscal years, the deficit will decline and our investment plan will return Canada to a balanced budget in 2019.

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The government took that message to the doors across Canada. It was part of a platform that every one of the Liberal members of Parliament signed on for and took to their constituents. We know they were successful with that message. They put it to Canadians that a small, modest, short-term deficit was necessary in order to fund infrastructure and that it would not be a structural deficit, or how they would fund ongoing program expenditure and general government bloat. They promised to build infrastructure with that deficit money and that the budget would then just balance itself.

Canadians were taken in by that Liberal promise, as well as many others that have been subsequently broken, like their promises on electoral reform, on military procurement, on access to information reform, on strengthening privacy protection, to never use time allocation, which they have done on this bill, and to never introduce omnibus legislation, which this bill is. I could go on.

However, the promise to not return Canada to the bad old days of structural deficits was a promise Canadians must have believed when they voted for the Liberals. I hope Canadians believed the Liberals. I hope Canadians have not become so cynical that they actually assumed the Liberals were lying when they promised a balanced budget. I presume Canadians took them at their word and believed they were planning to run modest deficits the first three years, with a return to balance in 2019.

Setting aside the question of credibility and cynicism in politics, why does this even matter?

The previous speaker told us at length why, suggesting that the Liberals could not balance the budget, that it was not all that important, that all these other things were much more important. However, it matters, because today's deficits will be paid for in the future by service cuts, or the expenditures they are proudly talking about undertaking in years to come will be paid by tax increases, or both. Structural deficits really are an exercise in taking away from the future in order to pay for today. It is intergenerational theft and Canadians do not support it.

Interest on the federal debt is expected to grow quickly to \$37 billion per year, which is almost the amount the federal government transfers to the provinces for health care. Canadians would rather have health care than interest on debt. These deficits are extremely important to programs on which Canadians rely.

The finance minister might not be too concerned about deficits. The Prime Minister, as has been said by others before, is not concerned. He has never had to worry about money and so he does not worry about the money of Canadians.

• (1315)

Now that we are in the fourth year of this government, we still do not have a budget that has balanced itself, and the government has had all the good luck it possibly could have. It inherited a fiscal legacy that was the strongest in the G7, a legacy that was a product of the previous government's economic stewardship, which led Canada through the global economic crisis and its aftermath. It had that hard-won legacy that, admittedly, even previous Liberal governments had contributed to under successive finance ministers. However, it was especially Conservative finance minister Jim Flaherty who handed this finance minister a legacy that he has

squandered. That is a fact. It is not a question for debate. The Liberals were left a balanced budget. The PBO confirmed that the government inherited a surplus that was quickly squandered through the immediate undertaking of additional expenses, pushing Canada into deficit.

The Liberals inherited much more than the sound fiscal management of the previous government, and to be fair, even the government before that. What they also inherited were rising commodity prices. Global commodities were at rock bottom when the government was sworn in, the price of oil, in particular, having collapsed during the last year of the previous government. Prices were at rock bottom and have been rising steadily since. They inherited a global economy that was on the brink of recession when they were elected and has been humming along strongly since. They inherited a booming American economy. They inherited low interest rates. They inherited a housing boom in Canada's two largest housing markets. None of these things were things they should have counted on, yet even with all these advantages, they have not been able to keep their own promise. Take away any one of these advantages, and their fiscal situation will deteriorate very quickly.

Rising interest rates will have a negative impact on Canadians who are already deeply in debt, and they will affect the government's budget as well. Government borrowing competes with private borrowing, driving up consumer interest rates and inflation. The government is not prepared for a shift to historically normal interest rates. Significant portions of the national debt will mature in the next few years, and the minister has not given sufficient answers as to how that would affect Canada's finances.

The end of the real estate boom may hurt economic activity in Toronto and Vancouver. That is going to be a factor in Canada's budget balance. A global recession, another collapse in commodity prices, protectionism or a future worldwide financial collapse, any of these things could happen at any time, and the government has squandered its fiscal capacity to deal with these things through its structural deficit, which it broke a promise to create.

There is nothing in the budget implementation act to address the deficit. There is also nothing in it to get the Trans Mountain expansion built. There is nothing in it to address the flight of capital from Canada. There is nothing in the bill that would give comfort to the thousands of auto workers in Oshawa who have just lost their jobs or the tens of thousands more who are likely worrying that they are next.

There is nothing in the bill to give relief to Canadians concerned about whether they would be able to afford basic necessities that would be made more expensive by the government's carbon tax, even as chosen industrial emitters would be exempted and others would merely be chased out of the country.

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The budget implementation act would do nothing to help strengthen the middle class. In fact, it would do quite the opposite. It telegraphs a future of deficits, debt and capital flight, which would lead to further job losses.

The other thing is that the budget implementation act would not get any energy products to market, as others on this side have suggested. The Liberals promised that TMX would be under construction by this past summer. The summer has come and gone. The money has gone to Texas. There is no pipeline, and that will continue to exacerbate the price discount on Alberta oil, which is threatening to expand and make it more difficult for this government, or a future government, to balance the budget.

With that, I am very disappointed with the act, and I will not be supporting the bill.

• (1320)

Hon. Larry Bagnell (Yukon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have two questions for the member.

The member said that this is an omnibus bill. That is defined as having something in the budget implementation act that would amend something that was not in the budget. Could he mention what he is referring to that is in the budget implementation act but is not in the budget that would make this an omnibus bill?

My second question relates to the discussion a few minutes ago about child care. We had a national child care program under the hon. Ken Dryden in the Right Hon. Paul Martin government. Both the Conservatives and the NDP got rid of that by defeating Paul Martin and bringing in Harper. I hear Conservative members clapping. They must be against child care.

We now have another child care program, which is great. We have an agreement with my riding of Yukon. Now there is another national child care program. Would the member be in favour of the Conservatives getting rid of that national child care program as well?

Mr. Pat Kelly: There is quite a bit there to address, Mr. Speaker. I will start with the first question on omnibus legislation. The Liberal government promised not to introduce omnibus legislation, and we have seen it do exactly that through a number of bills that have been introduced in this Parliament. Some have been broken up by the Speaker.

This legislation, at 800 pages long, is being debated under the guillotine of time allocation. One cannot even realistically dive into each and every piece of it. It is in contravention of the promise the Liberals ran on, one of the many promises they ran on, in the last election.

On the issue of child care, the Martin government was indeed defeated, and it was defeated on a number of issues, including the issue the member mentioned. Perhaps corruption might have been a bigger factor in that election.

The previous government introduced the child benefit, the predecessor of the current program of the Liberal government, because the Harper government knew that parents do not want a national federal program such as the one the Martin government fell on. Parents want choice. Parents want money in their pockets so they can choose how to spend it for their families.

In that election, I recall a Liberal saying that we cannot give parents cash, because they will just spend it on beer and popcorn. Such is the type of arrogance that comes from the Liberal Party and why it was defeated in that election.

• (1325)

Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC): Mr. Speaker, just before the hon. member spoke, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for the Status of Women gave a speech focused on this budget being about gender equity and gender equality. I would suggest to my hon. colleague that if the government is truly looking to create gender equality, its failed economic policies will do that by men and women being equally unemployed.

I want the hon. member to speak specifically about the competitiveness issue in this country and how the failed economic policies of the Liberal government are affecting our overall economic competitiveness.

Mr. Pat Kelly: Mr. Speaker, the member's question goes right to the heart of what I hear when I knock on doors and what I hear in my constituency office when I am back in Calgary Rocky Ridge. Men and women want the financial security that comes with having a well-paying, steady job.

My riding had thousands of high-paying, high-skilled, innovative jobs. Men and women in my riding have worked in the energy industry on the construction side, in engineering and geology and in the manufacturing of components. We have it all in Calgary and Alberta. All of them have been devastated by the events of the last number of years.

Bill C-69 may make it impossible for any pipeline to ever be built in this country. We see the way the government has bungled every pipeline that has come up for public debate, whether it was northern gateway, energy east or the Trans Mountain expansion, which it promised would be under construction during this past construction season but has not happened.

Men and women want to be able to provide for their families and have financial security for their families, and for that they need jobs and economic management, low taxes, a strong economy and investment in Canada.

Mr. Adam Vaughan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development (Housing and Urban Affairs), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have been listening to the debate for several days, and I have heard a number of different Conservative members talk in a positive way about the hyper-inflation and the cost of housing, particularly in Vancouver and Toronto, being something good and something the federal government benefits from.

I am perplexed, as a Toronto resident and as someone who has seen the impact on marginally employed people, people who are in precarious work, first-time homebuyers, and renters in particular, a group of people that doubled in number and doubled in suffering as a result of 10 years of absence of federal policy from the Conservative Party. Why is the runaway housing market, the hyper-speculation and the risk in the housing market seen as a good thing by the Conservative Party, when it has caused so much hardship for so many Canadians?

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Mr. Pat Kelly: Mr. Speaker, I sincerely thank the member for this question. It is a great question. It gives me an opportunity to clarify, if he has misunderstood what Conservatives are saying when we talk about the housing boom or the hyper-inflation of real estate values.

It is not good for Canadians. It is not good for the city of Toronto or the city of Vancouver. It is not good for families who need a place to live. However, it helps the government's bottom line when we have runaway asset inflation and the activity that goes on around that, whether it is from construction or from the taxation on all the transactions that occur with these massive house prices. It helps generate revenue to balance, or in this case not balance, a budget. It certainly does not help Canadians who aspire to home ownership.

Conservatives do not cheer for real estate inflation for its own sake. I merely point out that of all the economic factors that have gone into the revenue side of the government's budgets, it has not hurt them.

• (1330)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Conservative after Conservative has tried to emphasize the issue of deficits. What I would pose to my friend and colleague across the way is that the member reflect on history. Canada is 151 years old, and 38% of that time, Conservatives have been in government. In that 38% of time, they accumulated about 75% of Canada's total debt. In fact, when Stephen Harper inherited the books of the Paul Martin era, there was a multi-billion dollar surplus. Before the recession even began, he had turned it into a multi-billion dollar deficit. By the time we were finished with Stephen Harper, he had added over \$150 billion to our national debt.

My question for my friend is of an obvious nature. Why should the government take advice from the Conservatives, who have failed so miserably managing Canada's debt, let alone that they have been unable to motivate our economy to result in hundreds of thousands of jobs, as we have seen created in the last couple of years?

Mr. Pat Kelly: Mr. Speaker, the member does not need to take advice from us. We can work our way up to that. I will ask the member to start by taking his own advice and reading his own policy document that he ran on. He took it to the doors. He told Canadians that he would balance the budget by 2019. He was not telling them the truth.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour today to participate in this debate on the budget implementation act for another budget by this government, and another progressive opportunity to advance many of the important social initiatives we are seeking to undertake to grow this country and make Canada an even better place to live, invest and work, as we move further forward into the 21st century. Today, I am going to talk about a couple of the elements in this budget that are particularly interesting and important, namely pay equity, the Canada workers benefit and our poverty reduction strategy. I also want to take a bit of time toward the end of my remarks to talk about the price on pollution and how I see that as contributing to our overall economic objectives in this country.

First, pay equity is a great challenge that this country and indeed many parts of the western world, if not more than that, have faced

and struggled with for many years. For decades now, we have been trying to wrap our heads around how we can combat this problem with the various different initiatives that have been brought forward. What we are seeing today, through this budget implementation act and this government's efforts, is a genuine and meaningful attempt to make real change.

The new act would require that federal public and private sector employers who have 10 or more employees establish and maintain a pay equity plan within the set time frames so as to identify and correct differences in compensation between predominantly female and predominantly male job classes for which work of equal value is performed.

The new act also provides for the powers, duties and functions of the pay equity commissioner, which include facilitating the resolution of disputes; conducting compliance audits and investigating disputes, objections and complaints; as well as making orders and imposing administrative monetary penalties for violations of the act. The new act would also require the pay equity commissioner to report annually to Parliament on the administration and enforcement of the new act.

Equal pay for work of equal value is the smart thing to do. As we are seeing, this is not just about doing what is right; this is about creating a policy that will also better enrich our economy. As we heard earlier from one of the parliamentary secretaries, by properly allowing for and making sure that pay equity is enforced so that women are receiving equal pay for equal work, we actually will have the potential to grow the GDP of this country by up to 4%. We think of the staggering effects that would have, especially for a country that already leads the G7 in gross domestic product growth.

Regarding the Canada workers benefit, part 1 of the act would implement certain income-tax-related measures to ensure that an individual who is eligible to receive a Canada workers benefit could receive that benefit without having to claim it. These changes would allow the Canada Revenue Agency to calculate the Canada workers benefit for any taxpayer who has not claimed that benefit. This means that Canadians who qualify for the benefit would automatically be enrolled, thereby ensuring that no worker is left behind. As we have seen, budget 2018 would also revamp the Canada workers benefit by an additional \$500 million per year starting in 2019. Therefore, what we are seeing here is an opportunity to make sure that processes are in place so that each individual who qualifies for this Canada workers benefit would automatically start to receive it. People would not have to go through filing the paperwork, and the hurdles and potentially the red tape involved. Rather than spending their time dealing with those constraints and things that can slow their ability to be out there looking for new employment and new opportunities, we are suggesting that this should be, writ large, something the everyone is entitled to. After all, just because individuals might not have the resources or know how to go about accessing a benefit or, for that matter, even know that it exists, that should not preclude their being able to properly get what they rightfully deserve. That is what this part of the legislation seeks to improve.

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• (1335)

For 2019, the Canada workers benefit would be equal to 26% of each dollar earned in income in excess of \$3,000, to a maximum benefit of \$1,355 for single individuals without dependants and \$2,355 for families, couples and single parents.

The Canada workers benefit will put more money in the pockets of low-income workers and deliver real help to more than two million hard-working Canadians. These are people who need our help and who we come to this place to ensure they are taken care of. Therefore, I am delighted to see this new measure in the budget implementation act. It will automatically, by default, set in motion how people will access what they are rightfully entitled to through this program the government is offering.

We are also seeing in this budget implementation act a poverty reduction strategy, and in particular the setting of targets. I know there has been some criticism over the setting of targets in legislation. However, the reality is that if we are not continually setting out our objectives and then coming back to measure how we are completing and living up to those objectives, there is really no way of analyzing how effective we are. As a matter of fact, I would argue that these targets give the official opposition more ammunition to criticize a government if it is unable to meet them. Therefore, I think this is a very bold and important move not just to be able to hold future governments to account, but also to be able to assess how effective a government is at delivering various different programs and strategies, particularly as they relate to the poverty reduction strategy.

Let me talk a bit about what the strategy proposes. Division 21 of part 4 of the budget implementation act will enact the poverty reduction act, which sets out two targets for poverty reduction in Canada. This act in fact launches Canada's first-ever national poverty reduction strategy. The reason we need this is quite clear. Canada is a prosperous country, yet in 2015 roughly one out of every eight Canadians lived in poverty. Let us think about that for a second. In a country as rich as ours in terms of economic performance and resources, we should not be seeing one in every eight people in our country living in what we would consider to be poverty. The investments made since 2015 to support the social and economic well-being of all Canadians, as well as a new investment of \$22 billion, will help lift 650,000 Canadians out of poverty by 2019, with more expected as the impacts of these investments are realized for years to come. This strategy sets new poverty reduction targets and establishes the federal government as a full partner in the fight against poverty.

The vision is clear. Canada's first-ever poverty reduction strategy is built on a vision that all Canadians should be able to live in dignity. All Canadians deserve to be treated fairly and have the means to meet their needs. Canada's first-ever poverty reduction strategy is built on the vision that all Canadians should have a sense of security and be hopeful that tomorrow will be a better day than today for them, their loved ones, and generations to come.

As I see that my remarks will likely run right up to question period, I want to make sure that I leave time for my colleagues to question me. However, before we get to that, I want to spend a bit of time talking about carbon pricing.

The facts are clear. Despite the fact there might be some out there who still believe that climate change is not real, it is overwhelmingly accepted that climate change is real and a problem that governments, local, provincial, territorial and federal, need to combat. Indeed, we need to work intergovernmentally throughout the world. This is not a challenge that one part of the world is facing, but one that we are all going to face together. Therefore, we all have to do our part.

In the previous reading of this budget implementation act, I read out 54 different regions throughout the world that currently have a price on carbon, and I will not bore the House by reading them again because they are already cited in Hansard if anyone wants to look at them.

• (1340)

For those who ask what the real impact will be on Canada of putting a price on pollution, I would ask what the real impact was on Iceland, Ireland, Kazakhstan or smaller jurisdictions—I will not list them all again—like Poland and Quebec, that is, whether provincial, territorial or national governments. Throughout the world, there is already a price on pollution and it makes perfect sense to price pollution.

If a company builds a product or an end-user uses a product, they have to pay to make that product. If a company—my background is in economics and I always reference widgets—builds widgets, it will need the various components that go into that. If one of those components harms the environment by polluting it, then it makes perfect sense that the company should have to pay for that component that goes into the widgets.

This is why I am very frustrated trying to understand the Conservative Party's argument against a price on pollution, because pricing pollution leads directly into the economic model of the free market that the Conservatives tout all the time. The Conservatives always say that they believe in a free market. Sure, just as that makes sense, everyone should also pay for the components of their products that contribute to pollution when those products are being produced, but one would think, by the way the Conservatives are arguing, that they believe in both a free market and free pollution. Therefore, the market is not totally free, because the polluting part is not considered free in the market sense, but as something that can be done without consequence.

According to the recently released report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, we know we are heading toward dire circumstances by 2030. If we have do not start to dramatically reduce the amount of carbon and pollutants we put into the atmosphere, we will not be able to go back on this. The Minister of Environment and Climate Change said very appropriately during a recent debate on this topic that we are the first generation to feel the impacts of climate change and we are the last generation to be able to do anything about it. Think about that.

It is not just the minister, me, or any one individual who is saying this. This is in a report released by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change that many nations throughout the world contributed to. It basically says that we are the first ones to feel the effects of climate change and the last ones to be able to do anything about it.

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I have two very young children. One is four months old and the other is two and a half. I also have a 14-year-old who is in high school. One of the things that keeps me up at night is wondering what kind of environment and world we are leaving our children. The reality is that if we do nothing about this now, we will be leaving them an environment and a world that will be suffering not only the environmental consequences but also the impacts of weather changes. We are already seeing the changes in weather throughout the world.

We should think about the other social impacts that will occur. Climate genocide is one thing this generation will be accused of if it does nothing. There will be climate refugees, people moving throughout the world to escape the effects of climate change. That will impact the rest of the world. It will impact world order. We know what happens when we start to affect those things: it inevitably leads to war and conflict in various parts of the world.

● (1345)

There are many benefits to a price on pollution. Even if people do not believe any of what I just said, even if they do not believe in climate change and do not believe in the realities of what the intergovernmental report said, they should definitely believe that incentivizing businesses to create new ways of doing things and building new products, investing in renewable energy, and investing in electric cars which are more than doubling in sales globally every year is the way to go.

I have heard my Conservative colleagues quite often tout what we versus other parts of the world are doing. Despite what they might think, I want them to know that China is actually a leader when it comes to renewable energy and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. It is a leader when it comes to bringing new electric vehicles into the marketplace.

We can work on these problems jointly with other countries throughout the world and that is what I implore us to do. By putting a price on carbon we are providing an opportunity not just to green our environment and to create a better environment, but we are providing an opportunity for Canadians through pushing the envelope and looking for new opportunities, new efficiencies and new innovations to drive forward this new economy.

We should be on the leading edge of this. Let us not follow suit to what we are seeing happen south of the border where clearly a lot of the real opportunities are happening in other parts of the world as it relates to innovative programs and projects by the new industry we are creating for the 21st century.

Before I close, I want to talk about one more thing and that is the non-stop rhetoric we continue to hear from the other side of the House as it relates to debt and deficits. The last time that a Conservative government left a surplus was in the 1800s. I find it so ironic how there is this narrative which, to their success, they have been able to build out there and for the large part most people quite often resonate well with it, which is that the Conservatives somehow know how to protect an economy and build up an economy.

In reality, if we look at the last 151 years, 38% of the time that Conservative governments were in power, they racked up 73% of the national debt. How is it possible that we live in this world that they

can tout that they are somehow the saviours of the economy? Out of the last 19 budgets introduced by Conservative governments in the House, 16 of them ran deficits. That includes Mulroney and Harper. Of the only three surpluses that they ran, two of them came on the heels of Paul Martin's \$13-billion surplus and the other one came in 2015, when they had to sell off the shares of GM at bargain prices, cut EI and slash services to veterans, all to produce a phony balanced budget with which they could go into the 2015 election.

Canadians did not buy into that. They saw right through it and as a reality, the Conservatives now sit in opposition. I reject the notion that the Conservatives are somehow the saviours of our economy because the evidence does not support it.

● (1350)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): I realize that everyone is getting excited and during the hon. member's speech there was a little back and forth going on. I want to remind hon. members that we are going by the rules, so hopefully I will be able to hear the question and the answer without heckling.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola.

Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I certainly will try to choose my words carefully because I would like to hear some real answers from the other side and not to inflame them using heated rhetoric.

One, the Parliamentary Budget Officer stated specifically in the report that the budget was balanced. Does the member agree with the Parliamentary Budget Officer?

Two, the member mentioned the idea of free markets. Does he not recognize that Canada and the United States are an interconnected market? We can see from some of the decisions that are being made on both sides of the border and how important trade flows are that it is an integrated market. The B.C. NDP put in their budget presentation that they are worried about an elevated carbon price causing carbon leakage which would push activity and gas to the United States which would then leave us with higher taxes, more regulations, less economic activity and more greenhouse gas emissions worldwide.

Does the member understand that a free market without some conditions where there is a level playing field between our two jurisdictions does not make his so-called price on carbon a reality because it puts us into a less than competitive position? I would like to hear the member specifically refer to the dynamics between Canada and the United States on carbon leakage.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Mr. Speaker, I will speak directly to that linkage between the Canadian and U.S. economies.

Statements by Members

Yes, our economies are linked together. We share an economic relationship with another country, probably unlike any other two countries do in the world, yet at the same time, we are able to advance our own objectives and our own policies that make good sense. We have linked economies with the United States, yet Canada leads the G7 in GDP growth. The U.S. does not. Although we might be linked, there are differences, and there are opportunities to create differences that clearly go to our ability to grow our economy outside the exclusivity of being linked to the United States.

The member started off by saying that what I was proposing was heated rhetoric. On the contrary, what I gave was pure fact. I gave facts about the budget and facts about the last 19 budgets introduced by the Conservatives.

The Conservatives would lead us to believe that they had to run deficits because the times were tough. Well, no. If we look back at the last 150 years, it had nothing to do with circumstance and everything to do with Conservative policy.

• (1355)

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the member made an interesting speech. I especially appreciated the loudness of his voice at the end that let us know how serious he was about what he was saying.

I agree with the member that pay equity is really important. We know that when we make sure that women are getting paid the same as a man for the same work that it is good for the economy, it is good for the women and it is good for all Canadians.

It has been 42 years that women have been fighting for pay equity and now in the bill, they are being asked to wait another four years. I would like the member to share with us why he thinks it is acceptable for women to have to continue to wait.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Mr. Speaker, let us not forget that the NDP promised to balance the budget in 2015. The NDP wants the northern European lifestyle on the U.S. taxes, and it is just not going to happen. The reality of the situation is that programs take time to bring on and implement.

I am extremely proud of this government's direction when it comes to pay equity. The member would know, because she voted in favour of my private member's bill that there are opportunities for women to get involved in jobs that traditionally were not given to women.

We need to do more, and we should always strive to do more until we reach that goal of equity.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, in defence of the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands raising his voice, I would say it is because he understands that the climate crisis is urgent and we need to do more.

The member put out there that Bill C-86 has targets for poverty reduction built into legislation. However, unlike the U.K. and unlike New Zealand, we do not have targets for greenhouse gas reduction and we do not have our plan in legislation. Would he agree with me that it is time we ramped up our ambition and put it into the law?

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Mr. Speaker, I greatly appreciate that question from the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands. Both of us

spoke very passionately in the recent emergency debate on the intergovernmental report on climate change.

I always see the value in putting targets and benchmarks into policy and legislation, because it is an opportunity to be able to assess how a government has done. Quite frankly, I think it would be very bold for a government to do it, because it would create a scenario where it could be held to account later on when whoever the opposition parties may be at the time have the ability to pinpoint and say that the government did not meet what it set out to do, and they are holding the government to account. I always think it is important to put benchmarks into policy and legislation.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): The hon. member for Kingston and the Islands will have four minutes coming to him when the debate on this bill continues.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*Translation*]

JEAN-DENIS DIONNE

Mr. Ramez Ayoub (Thérèse-De Blainville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I was deeply saddened to learn of the passing of Jean-Denis Dionne, one of the pillars of the water polo community in Quebec and Canada.

Mr. Dionne was one of the founders of the Hydres Club in Sainte-Foy, Quebec. He was president of the Quebec Water Polo Federation and represented Quebec within Water Polo Canada as vice-president and director.

[*English*]

Mr. Dionne was a strong supporter of the inclusion of women's water polo at the Olympic Games. Having played water polo at the national level for several years, I was able to benefit from and see the importance of his work.

[*Translation*]

To honour his lasting impact, the Quebec Water Polo Federation created the Jean-Denis Dionne Award, which recognizes outstanding contributions by administrators of the sport in Quebec.

He leaves behind a significant legacy to the world of sport. On behalf of the Canadian water polo community, I would like to extend my deepest condolences to Mr. Dionne's friends and family.

* * *

[*English*]

WHALE-WATCHING INDUSTRY

Mr. Robert Sopuck (Dauphin—Swan River—Neebawa, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after nearly 18 months without an operational rail line, rail freight service has resumed for the town of Churchill. This is excellent news that will help lower the costs of food and goods for the people of Churchill and the surrounding area.

Statements by Members

However, just as the community is starting to get back on its feet, the Liberal government is trying to kill Churchill's lucrative tourism industry. Beluga whale-watching tours are a critical component of Churchill's tourism industry. Beluga populations are healthy, and an estimated 60,000 belugas migrate to the region. It is clear that the whale-watching industry has had no negative impacts on the beluga whale population.

The Liberals' proposed whale-watching regulations could affect 200 jobs and up to \$10 million of economic activity for Churchill, a community that is already suffering economically. I call on the Liberal government to give a complete exemption from these regulations for the whale-watching industry in the Churchill estuary. This would ensure that the tourism industry can continue to thrive and support the entire community of Churchill.

* * *

● (1400)

HOCKEY

Mr. Marwan Tabbara (Kitchener South—Hespeler, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to wish the Cambridge roadrunners girls' peewee A hockey team good luck at the Canada-America hockey tournament in Lake Placid, New York, over the next three days. The tournament is a classic clash of hockey titans, Canadians versus Americans.

Our community and I will be proudly cheering them on. I had the pleasure of meeting the players and their dedicated coach, Dave Moore, at the Hespeler Memorial hockey arena in my riding of Kitchener South—Hespeler.

These young women have all the things that make an incredible hockey team: heart, focus and determination. I know the team members will represent Canada well, and that they will remind the American hockey teams that hockey is our game.

Go Canada, go.

* * *

HARRY LESLIE SMITH

Ms. Irene Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in 2013, Harry Leslie Smith wore the poppy for the last time, saying this:

I will until my last breath remember the past and the struggles my generation made to build this country into a civilised state for the working and middle classes. If we are to survive as a progressive nation we have to start tending to our living because the wounded: our poor, our underemployed youth, our hard-pressed middle class and our struggling seniors shouldn't be left to die on the battleground of modern life.

A veteran of the Depression and the Second World War, Harry saw first-hand the futility of fighting for anything other than democracy and social justice. He took his last stand to the next level, touring to support refugees of war and speaking truth to power with an unwavering voice.

Harry took his last breath yesterday. We wish him safe journey.

May we all live to see the day Harry's vision for the world is a reality.

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF SOLIDARITY WITH THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

Mr. Chandra Arya (Nepean, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today is the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. The date of November 29 was chosen by the United Nations in 1977 because of its meaning and significance to the Palestinian people.

Even after 71 years, we still have several generations of our Palestinian brothers and sisters living in refugee camps. Our government has restored funding to the agencies involved with helping women and children. We have taken a firm stand on the issue of Jerusalem. However, I am first to acknowledge that there is lot to be done. We do not have peace in sight.

Canada recognizes the Palestinian right to self-determination and supports the creation of a sovereign, independent, viable, democratic and territorially contiguous Palestinian state as part of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace settlement.

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WEST LINCOLN MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

Mr. Dean Allison (Niagara West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to share some great news happening in my riding of Niagara West.

As a former president of the West Lincoln Memorial Hospital Foundation, I am excited to say that the West Lincoln Memorial Hospital is finally going to get the funding it needs to be rebuilt.

Yesterday, Premier Doug Ford announced a \$500,000 grant to begin the planning of the construction. He also announced another \$8.5 million in infrastructure improvements, which are absolutely essential for the hospital to remain viable. This also means that services like obstetrics and surgeries will remain.

Our communities of Lincoln, West Lincoln and Grimsby have received a much-deserved and much-needed new hospital. I want to thank all the mayors, past and present; board members, past and present; as well as the community volunteers who have worked tirelessly on this project.

I would also like to thank my provincial counterpart and good friend, Sam Oosterhoff, for his hard work and dedication to this file. I would also like to thank Premier Doug Ford, Minister Christine Elliott and Minister McNaughton for their great recognition that this was much needed for this hospital.

It is a great day for my riding and I am overjoyed to share this news with the House.

* * *

[Translation]

BORÉAS TECHNOLOGIES

Hon. Denis Paradis (Brome—Missisquoi, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on November 9, I visited Boréas Technologies, a company in Bromont, to announce a \$2-million investment through Sustainable Development Technology Canada.

Statements by Members

This investment will be used to adapt new haptic technology, which use the sense of touch to recognize objects that appear on cellphones and other electronic devices.

I met Simon Chaput, the 30-year-old founder and CEO of Boréas Technologies, who really impressed me with his ambition and vision. Simon, who graduated from Harvard in 2017, could have settled anywhere, but he decided to start his company in Bromont.

Bromont is fortunate to have a high-tech park that is attracting innovation and entrepreneurs. Businesses like Boréas Technologies, IBM, General Electric, Fabritec and CGP Expal are extremely important to the vitality of Brome—Missisquoi. I want to thank them for what they are doing for our region.

* * *

• (1405)

[*English*]

CLOVERDALE—LANGLEY CITY

Mr. John Aldag (Cloverdale—Langley City, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, tis the season to spread joy and think about how we can give back to our communities. In my riding of Cloverdale—Langley City, this generous spirit is proudly on display.

At Lord Tweedsmuir Secondary School, students, staff and alumni recently reached a milestone, having made 2,000 blood donations in the last 12 years.

The Salish Secondary school launched its first-ever toy drive. Community members are invited to donate unwrapped gifts. The Cloverdale Library, the Cloverdale Recreation Centre and Pacific Community Church are also accepting donations.

In Langley, the Christmas Bureau is providing gifts and food hampers to hundreds of children and families through the support of donations from local families, businesses and organizations.

I would like to commend these schools and organizations for their hard work and generosity and encourage everyone to consider how they can give this holiday season.

Happy holidays, merry Christmas and a joyous new year to all.

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PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the current Liberal government's failures are never ending. Our air force is still waiting for new fighter jets, our navy is still waiting on delayed ships and our army does not have enough rucksacks and sleeping bags for our troops.

We are not the only ones saying it. The Auditor General and Canada's top defence analysts all agree that the Liberals are making up problems and playing political games to cover up for their incompetence.

Instead of doing the right thing and fixing this mess, the Liberals are wasting time and energy prosecuting Vice-Admiral Mark Norman. Reports indicate the leak of classified shipbuilding information was not from Vice-Admiral Norman at all, but from a bureaucrat who passed a mother load of documents to a lobbyist.

All the delays and the dithering from the Liberals on defence procurement are just irresponsible. It is a literal slap in the face to the brave men and women who serve us in the Canadian Armed Forces.

* * *

LOBSTER FISHERY

Mrs. Bernadette Jordan (South Shore—St. Margarets, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as you well know, everyone in southern Nova Scotia knows there are four seasons: spring, summer, fall and lobster.

Dumping day marks the beginning of the season when over 1,700 fishers in areas 33 and 34 will go out in the roughest and worst conditions to catch the best lobster in the world, which will be exported to markets across the United States and Asia. This billion dollar industry is the backbone of our rural economy and has supported our coastal communities for generations.

Now more than ever, we must ensure we are supporting them. We need to continue making necessary investments in our Coast Guard and small craft harbour network to ensure they are safe. I encourage all fishers to ensure they wear their PFD.

With that said, I would like to encourage members of the House to join me in wishing our fishers a safe and successful season. This Christmas, save a turkey; buy a South Shore lobster.

* * *

[*Translation*]

ONTARIO'S FRANCOPHONIE

Mr. Dan Vandal (Saint Boniface—Saint Vital, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Manitoba's Conseil jeunesse provincial will be holding a rally this Saturday to support Ontario's Francophonie. I am very proud of this important youth-led initiative, because our youth carry the torch for our community, and they are engaged and concerned.

They are concerned about recent events in Ontario, New Brunswick and my province, Manitoba, where the provincial government recently eliminated the position of assistant deputy minister responsible for the Bureau de l'éducation française and other translation jobs. This is a worrisome trend that we must all condemn.

[*English*]

I invite all of those who support our official languages to join us at old St. Boniface City Hall this Saturday morning at 11:45.

[*Translation*]

At noon, the Franco-Ontarian flag will be raised as a sign of solidarity. From one generation to the next, we will build our future in French together. This has to be done by youth and for youth. We must not give up.

Statements by Members

•(1410)
[English]

THE ECONOMY

Ms. Leona Alleslev (Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has arrived in Buenos Aires for the G20 summit, where leaders of the industrialized world will discuss international financial stability. The timing of this summit could not be more critical for Canadians, as our own economic security is increasingly at risk.

This week alone, we Conservatives led two emergency debates, one in response to the crushing job losses from the closure of the Oshawa General Motors plant and the other to demand immediate action to address the crisis in Alberta's energy sector, where over a 100,000 jobs have already been lost. The Liberal government has failed those industries. They have failed Canadians.

At the summit, the Prime Minister must sit down with President Trump and have the punishing national security tariffs on Canadian steel and aluminum exports to the U.S. removed. Canadian jobs will not survive much longer. The Prime Minister must act. Canada's economic future hangs in the balance.

* * *

HIV-AIDS

Hon. Hedy Fry (Vancouver Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if anyone doubts that one person can really make a difference in this world, I have a story to tell my colleagues of such a person. Joan-E or Robert Kaiser, a Vancouver drag queen, entertainer and actor, is a long-time advocate for persons with HIV-AIDS.

For over 20 years, she has hosted weekly gay bingo nights to raise money for the Friends for Life Society, an organization that provides support programs to individuals with HIV-AIDS and hepatitis C. During that time, she managed to raise over \$700,000, which is an extraordinary accomplishment for one person.

With World AIDS Day upon us, let us all be inspired by Joan-E and pledge to do our part, however small, to end the stigma of HIV and to improve the quality of life of those affected with this chronic, insidious disease.

* * *

OPIOIDS

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my constituent's daughter was an active, engaged straight A student. When she was 14, she underwent four surgeries. The surgeries left her in much pain.

To manage the pain, her doctors prescribed OxyContin, and with each surgery, the dosage increased. The pain persisted, but one day the doctors just stopped prescribing the meds.

Now addicted to opioids and still in pain, this young woman found herself buying street drugs to manage, is homeless and struggling to survive. My constituent lives in fear that her daughter will die of an overdose.

Sadly, this is not an isolated story. Clearly, the opioid crisis is a national health emergency. In the U.S., federal authorities have

already secured criminal pleas and over \$600 million in fines, damages and other costs from Purdue Pharma for misbranding OxyContin with the intent to defraud and mislead.

I am calling on the government to launch an investigation into the role drug companies may have played in fuelling the opioid crisis and seek meaningful compensation.

It is time for the Liberals to take on big pharma. Families deserve answers and accountability.

* * *

ENERGY INDUSTRY

Mr. Blaine Calkins (Red Deer—Lacombe, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday Canada's Conservatives forced an emergency debate on the crisis facing Alberta's energy industry, a crisis brought about by the Prime Minister who has said numerous times he wants to phase out Alberta oil.

By cancelling the once approved northern gateway, killing pipelines to the east, banning tanker traffic on the west coast, bungling Trans Mountain and imposing his carbon tax, the Liberals have heaped devastation upon devastation on Albertans.

There are over 100,000 unemployed energy workers in Alberta. Oil is selling at \$11 a barrel and continues to plummet, while world prices have recovered. Businesses have closed, investment has fled and families are finding it harder to make ends meet. This is the reality with which Albertans are faced.

Finally, the Prime Minister has admitted that the energy sector is in crisis. What a revelation. Albertans know better. The Liberals are not Alberta's saviours. They caused this crisis and their disdain for Alberta could not be more evident.

However, my fellow Albertans need not despair. It can all be fixed in 2019 by electing Jason Kenney as premier and the Leader of the Opposition as prime minister.

* * *

THE ECONOMY

Ms. Yasmin Ratansi (Don Valley East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight the fall economic statement and the impact it will have on Canadians. Our plan of investing in people is working.

[Translation]

Since 2015, Canada's economic growth has hovered around 3%, the highest rate in the G7.

*Oral Questions**[English]*

Our unemployment rate at 5.8%, is the lowest in 40 years. Our wage growth is outpacing inflation. We have created 550,000 new full-time jobs and approved 30,000 infrastructure projects. This is good news for Canada and for my riding of Don Valley East.

In 2015, we inherited an environment of from the previous government of gloom and the people of Canada voted for hope.

[Translation]

The fall economic statement shows that our government has the capacity to strengthen the middle class and ensure its stability.

[English]

We will keep investing in Canadians.

ORAL QUESTIONS

• (1415)

*[English]***MEMBER FOR BRAMPTON EAST**

Mr. Mark Strahl (Chilliwack—Hope, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have learned that the gambling debts of the Liberal MP for Brampton East came to light as a result of a police wiretap. The wiretaps were part of an OPP investigation into “particularly shady guys” suspected of money laundering and terrorist financing. When did the Prime Minister’s Office first learn about this serious investigation involving a sitting Liberal member of Parliament?

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it was last week that we were informed, and the member has told us that he is addressing certain challenges and receiving treatment from a health professional. We hope he receives the support that he needs.

Mr. Mark Strahl (Chilliwack—Hope, CPC): Mr. Speaker, media reports indicate that the gambling debts of the Liberal MP for Brampton East were connected to a larger investigation involving laundering drug money destined for an extremist group in the Middle East. With an investigation touching on drugs, money laundering and international terrorism, it is simply not believable that no one in the government was made aware of this serious investigation, so I ask again: when did the Prime Minister or his office first learn about this serious crimes investigation involving a Liberal MP?

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it was last week we were informed.

Mr. Mark Strahl (Chilliwack—Hope, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is simply unbelievable that the Prime Minister and his government were unaware of a major crimes investigation involving a Liberal member of Parliament, an investigation involving drug money, an investigation involving international terrorism. This is an international incident involving national security. Does the Prime Minister really expect us to believe that an investigation of this nature would not have been red flagged to his office? When did he or his office first learn of this serious criminal investigation into a sitting Liberal member of Parliament?

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I have mentioned, it was last week that the member told us he is addressing certain challenges and is receiving treatment from a health professional. We hope he receives the support he needs.

The member knows very well that the government does not direct investigations of this nature.

[Translation]

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L’Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am very worried that the Liberal government does not seem to be taking security matters seriously. The OPP was investigating a shady guy suspected of money laundering and terrorist financing when its wiretap revealed that the Liberal member for Brampton East had accumulated significant gambling debts. The RCMP even asked the OPP about the large amounts of money that the Liberal member was gambling with at the casino.

When did the Prime Minister find out, not from the member himself, about the RCMP’s investigation into a member of his own party?

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member should know that the RCMP operates independently of government. The member informed us last week that he is addressing certain challenges and is receiving treatment from a health professional. We hope he receives the support he needs.

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L’Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that member is still a member of the Liberal caucus. However, today, it is clear that the RCMP and the Ontario police were aware of the gambling debts run up by the Liberal member for Brampton East, which surfaced as part of a larger investigation into the laundering of drug money destined for an extremist group in the Middle East. Surely the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, the national security adviser or someone in this government must have been told about this investigation involving a Liberal government MP.

When were the Prime Minister and his cabinet informed of this investigation?

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again, the member should know that the RCMP operates independently of government. The member in question informed us last week that he is addressing certain challenges and is receiving treatment from a health professional. We hope he receives the support he needs.

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AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

Ms. Ruth Ellen Brosseau (Berthier—Maskinongé, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the news out of Oshawa is devastating. GM has shown contempt for workers. What is worse is that the Liberal government should have known that GM would soon be closing its doors. Rather than supporting Canadian families, the Liberals threw billions of dollars at rich corporations, like GM, without any guarantee that those corporations would maintain jobs.

Oral Questions

Why do the Liberals continue to put the interests of rich corporations ahead of the well-being of Canadian workers?

• (1420)

[English]

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, GM's decision to close its Oshawa plant is extremely discouraging and our thoughts are with the women and men who are affected, their families and their communities. We have heard that this is part of GM's global restructuring plan and may impact workers in the U.S. and globally. This is extremely troubling news. We feel for everyone who is impacted by this decision.

Right now our priority is auto workers and their families. We are working with all partners to support our auto workers, their families and Oshawa during this difficult time.

* * *

[Translation]

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Ms. Ruth Ellen Brosseau (Berthier—Maskinongé, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal government needs to stand up and fight for workers.

Yesterday, Dairy Farmers of Canada called on the Prime Minister not to sign the USMCA until the U.S. oversight of our dairy system has been removed. This is about our food sovereignty.

[English]

This clause will have devastating and crippling consequences on our industry here in Canada.

I have a simple question. Will the Prime Minister listen to Canadians and make sure that the oversight clause is removed quickly?

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague is fully aware that we have strongly supported the supply management system in this country. We made sure that the American attempt to destroy our supply management system did not succeed. We also understand that dairy farmers have some problems and we are going to make sure they are fully and fairly supported.

We will continue to make sure that we support the supply management system in this country.

Ms. Tracey Ramsey (Essex, NDP): That is not an answer for dairy farmers in Canada, Mr. Speaker.

Liberals say they are on track to sign the USMCA tomorrow but they do not even know what we are signing onto. Wording is changing and the Canadian interpretation and the U.S. interpretation are not lining up. No wonder the Prime Minister does not even want to attend the signing ceremony, when we do not even know what the text is.

Canadians know one thing for sure. If we sign with destructive steel and aluminum tariffs in place, we are losing our best chance to eliminate them.

The reasons not to sign this deal are stacking up. Will the Prime Minister stand up for Canadian jobs and not sign this shifty agreement?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Tourism, Official Languages and La Francophonie, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our primary goal since the beginning has always been to get a good deal for Canada and for Canadians. We held for a good deal and we got a good deal.

This agreement will be good for our economy, good for Canadian families and good for our middle class. It will preserve jobs, foster growth, expand the middle class and support people working hard to join it.

* * *

AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I just came from Washington, where Canada is being known for its concessions right now, and that is what that deal is about.

The decline of the automotive sector, including General Motors' most recent cutthroat tactics, has become routine business in Canada. Under successive Liberal regimes, Canada has sunk to 10th in automotive manufacturing. With half a million jobs lost already, nothing seems to move the government to urgency.

Yesterday, the Prime Minister said he is considering a plan despite being handed one a year ago by his automotive adviser, ironically funded by workers now being fired.

Could the minister explain why the Prime Minister has done nothing over the past year—

The Speaker: Order. The hon. Minister of Employment.

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member opposite knows better.

From day one, we have taken steps to make Canada's automotive manufacturing sector more globally competitive and innovative. We have proven our support for innovation in the auto sector because we know it drives economic growth and it creates opportunities for Canadians.

Under our government, Canadian operations have received more than \$5.6 billion in investments, creating and maintaining tens of thousands of good, middle-class jobs.

Going forward we have a plan for Canada to be a global leader in making cars of the future, automated, connected and clean.

* * *

BORDER SECURITY

Hon. Candice Bergen (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today, we learned that the mess the Prime Minister created at the border will cost Canadians more than \$1.1 billion, and that does not even include the millions of dollars it is going to cost the provinces. That is over \$1 billion that will not be spent on the priorities of Canadians, priorities like helping our seniors, our veterans or actual refugees whose lives depend on them being able to come to Canada.

Oral Questions

When will the Prime Minister own up to the fact that we have a big problem at our border and when will he fix it?

• (1425)

Hon. Bill Blair (Minister of Border Security and Organized Crime Reduction, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada has a long and proud tradition of providing protection to those who need it most by providing refuge to the world's most vulnerable people. The suggestion that the global migration of tens of millions of people fleeing persecution is the result of a tweet is kind of silly.

We have a plan. We have invested \$173 million in ensuring that Canadian laws are upheld and that the security of our country is maintained. The plan is working. We have seen a significant reduction over the past several months in the number of people presenting themselves irregularly at our border—

The Speaker: Order. The hon. opposition House leader.

Hon. Candice Bergen (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): The Prime Minister's tweet was not only silly, it was actually pretty stupid, and it is causing a lot of problems at our borders.

In addition to the problems, Mr. Speaker, the crisis is causing huge delays for immigrants and refugees who are actually following the rules and want to come to Canada legally.

With a \$1.2-billion price tag, and actual refugees being forced to the back of the line, what is it going to take for the current Prime Minister to realize that the crisis at the border, which his tweet created, needs to be fixed?

Hon. Bill Blair (Minister of Border Security and Organized Crime Reduction, Lib.): I will take this opportunity to clarify a misconception promulgated by the member opposite.

Mr. Speaker, those who are seeking asylum in this country, who have asked for the protection of Canada, are processed through an entirely separate system than those who are waiting in other streams of migration. There is no interference in those processes.

It is very important to recognize that we have actually made enormous progress, under our current Minister of Immigration, on improving response times and processing times. The system is working well.

Mr. Larry Maguire (Brandon—Souris, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals have failed to manage our Canadian border and the price tag is staggering. By the end of next year, the Liberals will have spent \$1.1 billion of taxpayers' money to deal with illegal border crossers and that does not include any provincial money. Why is the Prime Minister spending more money on illegal border crossers than on getting our homeless veterans off the streets?

Hon. Bill Blair (Minister of Border Security and Organized Crime Reduction, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, for all the rhetoric and hysteria that is now emerging about irregular migration, it is important to understand who these people are. For example, nearly 40% of the people who have presented themselves at our borders seeking asylum are children. Canada's response is to uphold the rule of law to ensure that our processes are fast, fair and final, as well as efficient, and we deal with those individuals to ensure they have adequate housing and shelter and are treated with the humanity that Canadians expect of us.

Mr. Larry Maguire (Brandon—Souris, CPC): Mr. Speaker, these are numbers that come from the independent Parliamentary Budget Officer of Canada. Therefore, truly the entire refugee system in Canada is in a crisis and there is no end in sight, regardless of what the minister says. If \$1.1 billion and a six-year wait time is not enough to close the loophole, what number would it take before the Prime Minister realizes the Liberals have to do something to stop this crisis?

Hon. Bill Blair (Minister of Border Security and Organized Crime Reduction, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, after several years of significant cuts to both staffing and funding for the agencies responsible for managing this, the CBSA, IRCC and IRB, we are restoring the capacity of those institutions, agencies and departments to deal with this issue. The plan is working. As a result of our reinvestments, we have created real efficiencies in how these people are being processed, and we are working diligently to find new and better ways to improve efficiency in the system so that we may uphold Canadian law, Canadian values and—

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

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I had to laugh when I heard the minister talk about cuts we made. We did not make cuts. We rationalized because the border was under control and there were no problems.

Then there was that prime ministerial tweet, which has cost us \$1.1 billion to date, according to the Parliamentary Budget Officer, who has done his homework.

That amount does not even include the \$600 million absorbed by Quebec and Ontario.

One of these days, they are going to have to stop blaming us for everything that goes wrong. The report reveals the truth, and it is exactly what we have been saying.

When will the Prime Minister take responsibility, do his job, and fix the problem?

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Intergovernmental and Northern Affairs and Internal Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, \$400 million worth of cuts is some rationalization.

The cuts resulted in delays at the border and longer wait times. We made constructive investments to ensure border security and fulfill our international human rights obligations.

This might not be all that important to my colleague, but members on this side of the House care very much about border security and are committed to meeting our international obligations.

• (1430)

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, is it an international obligation to have 32% of asylum seekers buy a plane ticket from Nigeria to New York and then take a bus to get to Roxham Road? That has nothing to do with any international obligation.

Oral Questions

So far, this has cost \$1.1 billion in federal money, not to mention the provincial contribution, and it is not over. The problem is that these people have to stop coming here illegally.

Will the government take responsibility and fix this problem?

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Intergovernmental and Northern Affairs and Internal Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as my hon. colleague knows full well, that is exactly what we are doing, and that is why the number of asylum seekers has gone down. My colleague should think about his own obligations before he starts citing statistics. The Conservatives' rhetoric on asylum seekers is troubling.

It should be noted that more than 40% of the people crossing Canada's border are children. The penny-pinching of Mr. Harper's Conservative government, which cut \$400 million from border security, resulted in backlogs. We are addressing those problems.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: I would ask the hon. member for Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier not to yell when someone else has the floor.

The hon. member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley.

* * *

[English]

MEMBER FOR BRAMPTON EAST

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, there are two very important ways to mislead, either by the misrepresentation of facts or by the omission of important facts.

Yesterday, I asked the Prime Minister very important and very specific questions about exactly when he and his office first learned that the member of Parliament for Brampton East was under RCMP investigation. He refused to fully answer the question. This is the same tragic pattern that Liberal prime ministers follow whenever facing scandal.

To the Prime Minister, who promised to be different, when did his office first learn that his MP was under police investigation?

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I have clearly stated, and as the Prime Minister also stated, it was last week that the member informed us that he was addressing certain challenges and is receiving treatment from a health professional. We hope he receives the support he needs.

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, repeating the same scripted non-answer only raises the suspicion of Canadians that the Liberal government is hiding something. The Prime Minister promised to set the bar on ethics high. He said that we “must avoid conflict of interest, the appearance of a conflict of interest”.

The Liberal MP for Brampton East was appointed to the finance committee by the Prime Minister, where he asked troubling questions of senior law enforcement officials about how to avoid detection. This raised red flags with the RCMP.

How do Liberals expect us to believe they saw nothing to worry about and that the media somehow know more about this scandal than the Prime Minister's own office does?

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, that member is a seasoned elected official and he should know very well that the RCMP operates independently of government.

* * *

CARBON PRICING

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, when I asked the Liberal parliamentary secretary for the environment why his government was exempting large industrial corporations from its carbon tax, he replied that if they had to pay the tax, we “could potentially have jobs leave and it will do nothing for emissions.”

It turns out for once that the Liberal parliamentary secretary is absolutely right, because the two largest export sectors in Canada, energy and autos, which are not exempted, are now seeing jobs leave just as he predicted.

Will the Liberals extend the exemption to protect the jobs of all Canadians?

Hon. Catherine McKenna (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is extremely disappointing that the party opposite would politicize the loss of jobs at GM. It is a very disappointing situation.

We will always stand up for workers, but I would encourage the member opposite to go to GM's website, where it supports putting a price on pollution. Maybe the Conservatives should figure out that it should not be free to pollute.

We need to stand up for the environment. We need to stand up for the economy. We need to stand up for our kids.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, well, if GM really did support the Liberal carbon tax, why is it not staying around to pay it? It is a very simple question. There will be no carbon tax on GM, because it is leaving and it will not have to pay the carbon tax. It is leaving behind the workers who will have to pay the carbon tax and other businesses that will have to pay the carbon tax. However, the wealthy CEOs are always happy to leave and to leave the costs behind for everyone else.

When will the Liberals start standing up for workers and consumers and give them a break from this costly Liberal carbon tax?

● (1435)

Mr. David Lametti (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again, it is unfortunate to see the politicization of this economic decision that has affected a number of countries, including the United States and South Korea.

We are standing up for Canadian workers. We are examining all possibilities. Indeed, GM retains a very large footprint in Canada, and as a government we are investing in the auto sector across Canada, particularly in Ontario, to maintain high-quality jobs and to make sure that we are ready for the car of the future.

[Translation]

THE ECONOMY

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the problem is that the Liberal Party's plan is not working. Investments in Canada are disappearing like snow on a sunny day.

While Canadian investment in the U.S. is up by 66%, American investment in Canada has dropped by a massive 50%. Overall, private sector investment has fallen off a cliff in this country. That is what the so-called Liberal plan is doing for Canada.

Why does the government continue to stubbornly push this measure, which will hurt our investors?

Mr. David Lametti (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what the hon. member just said is patently false.

We are investing in the automotive industry in Canada. With an investment of about \$400 million, we have been able to attract \$5.6 billion in investments since taking office. It is therefore false to say that we are no longer attracting investment.

Through the strategic innovation fund, we are creating opportunities for Canadian technology and for Canadian workers and their families.

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that is some more wishful thinking by the Liberals.

The result is that 2,500 people lost their jobs in the auto sector this week and 3,000 others lost their jobs in the aerospace sector two weeks ago.

Let us talk about the wishful thinking of the Liberals, who claim that budgets balance themselves. I will give this government a chance to tell us when the budget will finally balance itself.

Mr. Joël Lightbound (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is important to remind my esteemed colleague that in 2015, during the election campaign, we were debating whether Canada was in a recession or heading into one.

That is the legacy that the Conservative government left behind, a legacy of policies that failed by virtually every measure. There is no word strong enough in either French or English to describe just how badly they failed on growth, job creation and export development. As for the social deficit, the Conservatives never lifted a finger to reduce inequality in Canada. Instead, they made it worse.

We will take no lessons from the previous government and the Conservative Party. Our record speaks for itself.

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OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Mr. François Choquette (Drummond, NDP): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, our leader, Jagmeet Singh, was very pleased to have the opportunity to attend a meeting of all party leaders to discuss the situation that Franco-Ontarians are facing.

Everyone agreed that Doug Ford's decisions are a threat to the empowerment of Ontario's francophones. However, where are the

Oral Questions

new measures to protect the rights of Franco-Ontarians? That is what everyone is waiting for.

What will it take for the Liberals to publicly announce that they are willing and able to provide 50% of the funding to build a French-language university in Toronto?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Tourism, Official Languages and La Francophonie, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for his question.

We had a very good meeting yesterday with the Prime Minister and the opposition party leaders. I attended this meeting, which was held entirely in French. We can see that 50 years later, the Official Languages Act is having a positive impact.

With respect to the French-language university, we have always said that it is a very good project, and we took it into account when we were developing our official languages action plan. It is now up to Ontario to ask that it be made a priority. We are always willing to work with Ontario.

* * *

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach (Salaberry—Suroît, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in recognition of the fact that our planet is facing no greater battle than the fight against climate change, over 230,000 people have signed the Pact for the Transition.

This deeply inspiring, non-partisan movement calls on those who sign up to make an individual effort to protect the Earth and demands that the federal government do its part to fight climate change.

Our leader, Jagmeet Singh, signed the pact today and has pledged to do everything he can to honour that commitment.

When will the minister share her whole-of-government plan for the environment?

● (1440)

Hon. Catherine McKenna (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her hard work in the fight against climate change. We must tackle climate change, and we do have a plan.

We have a plan to eliminate coal and invest in renewable energy, to put a price on pollution and to make historic investments in public transit, green infrastructure and clean technology. We have a lot of work to do.

I am happy that we can work with the NDP, but it would be better if the Conservatives joined us too.

Oral Questions

[English]

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Ms. Kim Rudd (Northumberland—Peterborough South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Williams Treaties First Nations have been fighting in court for more than 25 years to redress injustices involving compensation, land and harvesting rights dating back to 1923. Our government understands that negotiation, rather than litigation, is the best way to right historical wrongs and settle past grievances. Out-of-court negotiations began in March 2017.

Can the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations update the House on the efforts made by our government to accelerate reconciliation with the Williams Treaties First Nations?

Hon. Carolyn Bennett (Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Northumberland—Peterborough South for her advocacy.

Earlier this month, I was honoured to celebrate with the Williams Treaties chiefs, community members and the Government of Ontario the settlement of all of these longstanding claims. Achieved through dialogue and in partnership, it includes financial compensation, recognition of treaty harvesting rights, and entitlement to add additional reserve lands.

Canada and Ontario apologized for the negative impacts of these treaties. As Chief Kelly LaRocca said, “this settlement agreement marks the beginning of healing for our people.”

* * *

THE ECONOMY

Mr. Colin Carrie (Oshawa, CPC): Mr. Speaker, since the Liberals took office, we have seen the biggest decline in Canadian energy investments in 70 years. Because of excessive taxes and regulations, investors no longer see Canada as a good investment.

However, the impacts of the Prime Minister's policies affect every sector. This was made clear when General Motors decided to stop production at our award-winning plant in Oshawa. These policies jeopardize thousands of good-paying Canadian jobs.

Why is the Prime Minister choosing to impose taxes and regulations that will deter investment in our economy, and provide no hope for workers in Oshawa? Where is his plan?

Mr. David Lametti (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again I repeat that our hearts go out to the men and women who have been affected by the GM closure in Oshawa.

As the Conservatives well know, this decision was part of GM's global restructuring plan, affecting their operations across the border and around the world.

I would point out to the hon. member that we have doubled the number of jobs created in the auto sector over the last three years. We have done more in three years for the auto sector than the Conservatives were able to do in 10 years. We have attracted billions of dollars in investment, \$3.3 billion in the auto sector in our first three years.

Mr. Jamie Schmale (Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in a recent ranking of 80 energy producing

jurisdictions, B.C. dropped to 58th and Alberta dropped 29 spots to 43rd. Respondents blame the high costs of regulatory compliance, taxes and energy.

Now, Ontario is feeling Liberal economic mismanagement. In its fourth straight month of decline, the manufacturing sector is at its slowest pace in two years.

Why is the Prime Minister heading down the road of higher taxes, increased energy costs, and burdensome regulations that will only further deter investment?

Mr. David Lametti (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again, we will take no lessons from the other side on attracting investments in our manufacturing sector.

We took the old automotive innovation fund, which was underused in the Harper years because it was so hard to use, and created a new strategic innovation fund that we are applying across a variety of sectors, but in particular in the manufacturing sector in Ontario, and in other parts of the country.

We have invested in a supercluster in southwestern Ontario that looks precisely at advanced manufacturing. We are doing a great job at promoting our manufacturing—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Lakeland.

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NATURAL RESOURCES

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on June 17, 2014, Conservatives approved the northern gateway pipeline to export to the Asia-Pacific.

On November 29, 2016, the Liberal Prime Minister cancelled the northern gateway pipeline. He had a choice, but he killed that pipeline outright, which could have prevented the current price discount on Canadian oil.

When the Liberals were elected, three companies planned to build pipelines in Canada. The Liberals chased them all away.

Will the Liberals immediately withdraw their “no more pipelines” Bill C-69?

● (1445)

Mr. Paul Lefebvre (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are focused on getting our energy sector up and running, and investing in our energy sector.

Oral Questions

That is why, at this moment, the Minister of Natural Resources is in discussions with indigenous communities in B.C., to make sure that the Trans Mountain expansion pipeline moves forward in the right way, something the Conservatives do not understand and never got. For them, it was only a suggestion to actually have discussions with indigenous communities.

We know that the economy and the environment go hand in hand. We know we must have meaningful consultations with indigenous communities to move forward. That is exactly what we are doing.

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals killed northern gateway and energy east, the two pipelines to new markets, and they failed to get a single shovel in the ground for Trans Mountain. They created this crisis.

Now, the Liberals are passing the “no more pipelines” Bill C-69, which will do exactly what that name says. It will make sure that no new pipeline is ever proposed or built in Canada again. Premiers, the private sector, economists and experts all agree.

If anything the member just said were true, he would scrap Bill C-69 today. Will he do it? Will he get rid of the “no more pipelines” Bill C-69, yes or no?

Mr. Paul Lefebvre (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we need Bill C-69 for industry to know before they start a project what the rules and regulations are, and to make sure that when they are investing, the rules are clear.

The previous government would play games and have no record to show for it. In 2006, basically, 90% of our oil went to the United States. In 2015, guess what? Ninety per cent of our oil was still going to the United States. We will take no lessons on how to do it from the previous government.

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PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Ms. Cheryl Hardcastle (Windsor—Tecumseh, NDP): Mr. Speaker, what is the point of rushing through accessibility legislation if the government is not going to put its money where its mouth is? The Liberals keep failing Canadians who live with disabilities. In the fall economic update, there is no mention of new obligations, let alone funding for the CRTC to maintain its existing responsibilities. This is unfair, and it is insulting to Canadians who are waiting for implementation of Bill C-81.

Why will the Liberals not take their responsibilities seriously and ensure that institutions like the CRTC are accessible to everyone?

Ms. Kate Young (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Science and Sport and to the Minister of Public Services and Procurement and Accessibility, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our goal is to make accessibility a reality across federal jurisdictions, so that all people, regardless of their abilities or disabilities, can fully participate and be included in society.

Bill C-81 will help us reach that goal. This legislation represents a significant, historic advancement in federal disability rights legislation. Our government will provide \$290 million over six years to further the objectives of the new legislation once it is given royal assent.

I am proud that our government has delivered on this important mandate commitment.

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INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Ms. Georgina Jolibois (Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, one year ago the Prime Minister said everyone deserves a safe and affordable place to call home. Northern communities do not believe it because most of them still do not have year-round highway access, and people still live in overcrowded homes that are falling apart or full of mould.

The Liberals keep neglecting northerners. Why do they not invest the billions needed now to close the housing gap on reserves and in northern communities?

Hon. Jane Philpott (Minister of Indigenous Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for raising this incredibly important issue.

We have made major investments to increase infrastructure on reserves, as well as for indigenous Canadians who live off reserve. We have invested an additional \$200 million a year in first nations housing. We are working with the Assembly of First Nations on a strategy. We have invested \$500 million over the next 10 years for Métis and an additional \$400 million over 10 years for Inuit. We are building houses.

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CARBON PRICING

Mrs. Kelly Block (Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the transport minister claims he has never heard any concerns about the Liberal carbon tax, yet we know the National Airlines Council of Canada has said, “[I]ntroducing a national carbon tax would exacerbate Canadian aviation’s already severe competitiveness problems,” and the CEO of WestJet has said, “They need to be very careful that they don’t kill an industry that is so important to economic growth.”

Does the minister still claim he has never heard these concerns?

● (1450)

Hon. Catherine McKenna (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what Canadians want to know is whether the party opposite read the UN climate report. Do they understand that climate change is real? Do they understand the economic impact?

Oral Questions

There was just a report in the United States by climate scientists and by federal U.S. agencies that said the U.S. is at risk of losing 10% of its economy to the impacts of climate change. We also have a \$30-trillion opportunity of clean growth.

I wish the party opposite would understand that climate change is real, that we need a serious plan, and that we need to take action to grow our economy and protect our environment. What is the member's plan?

Mr. Matt Jeneroux (Edmonton Riverbend, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member will get her chance to ask questions in 10 months.

It seems that every other member in this House is hearing about the negative effects of the carbon tax, except the Liberal front bench. The CEO of the Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters said, "The federal carbon pricing system as it is structured further weakens our investment position." The Canadian Trucking Alliance said, "The federal system creates competitive issues between Canadian and U.S. carriers".

Does the transport minister still claim he has not heard these concerns?

Hon. Catherine McKenna (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to ask again whether the party opposite understands just how serious climate change is. Does the party opposite understand the \$30-trillion economic opportunity of climate action? We need to act. We need to do it because it is the right thing to do for our environment. It is the right thing to do for our economy. It is the right thing to do for our kids.

Everyone wants to know: What is the Conservative Party's climate plan?

Mr. Matt Jeneroux (Edmonton Riverbend, CPC): Mr. Speaker, families in my community are not polluters. The St. John's Board of Trade, the Chamber of Marine Commerce, multiple municipal associations, the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business and the National Airlines Council of Canada are all stakeholders who have publicly said the carbon tax will hurt their businesses.

Will the transport minister start listening to the concerns of Canadian businesses, or does he still claim he cannot hear them?

Hon. Catherine McKenna (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we can do both. We can grow the economy and we can tackle climate change. We are doing it. Our emissions are going down and we are growing the economy. With Canadians, we have created more than 550,000 jobs. Ours is the fastest-growing economy in the G7, and we are taking serious action to tackle climate change.

I am extremely proud that next week I will be going to the climate negotiations in Poland, where we are going to take action with the international community to tackle climate change. We owe it to our environment. We owe it to the economy. We owe it to our kids.

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[Translation]

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Mr. Jean Rioux (Saint-Jean, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, now more than ever in Canada, we must stand up to defend and strengthen our two

official languages. Canadians understand that it is important to protect our rights and they know that their government must protect our national identity.

Can the Minister of National Defence talk about the measures being taken to ensure that the men and women of the Canadian Armed Forces are able to operate in an environment where both official languages are equally valued?

Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the fact that I do not speak French does not diminish my commitment to bilingualism.

As promised in our "Strong, Secure, Engaged" defence policy, we restored full university status to the Royal Military College Saint-Jean. We are giving ourselves the tools we need to recruit the top francophone talent in Quebec and elsewhere in Canada.

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● (1455)

[English]

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC): Mr. Speaker, New Zealand is the latest of Canada's security allies to do the right thing and ban Huawei from its 5G networks, yet the Liberals refuse to put the security of Canadians first and do the same. Giving the Chinese government access to our 5G network is both irresponsible and wrong.

When will the government join our allies and say no way to Huawei?

Mr. David Lametti (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government is open to investment that will grow our economy and create good middle-class jobs, but never at the expense of our national security. When it comes to telecommunications services, we promised Canadians we would improve the quality, coverage and price of their services, no matter where they live.

Clearly, 5G is an emerging technology that plays an important part in our meeting that promise and responding to the explosion of consumer and industrial demand for faster and higher-capacity mobile networks. However, we follow the advice of our public security officials, and we will work only with partners who pass muster with them.

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PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, six months after flooding devastated their community, the people of Grand Forks are still recovering from the impacts of that flood. With winter setting in and the next potential flood only six months away, they are extremely anxious to get a firm commitment of support from the federal government.

Oral Questions

Can the government commit to working with the people of Grand Forks and the Boundary to support their recovery and mitigation efforts through infrastructure and public safety programs?

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Government of Canada always stands ready to support provinces when they are working with local communities to deal with the aftermath of natural disasters. The provinces and municipalities have the first line of responsibility to determine what is necessary, but they call upon the Government of Canada to assist them, including with the disaster financial assistance arrangements, and the Government of Canada will always, in every case, be there.

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NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. Nick Whalen (St. John's East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians understand the importance of high-growth mining companies in supporting middle-class families and helping us transition to a clean economy. I hear from resource exploration companies that greater investment certainty would ensure that Canada attracts more of the finite pool of resource exploration dollars available globally.

In light of the fall economic statement, could the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources update us on recent actions the government is taking to protect Canada's position as a top destination for exploration and mining?

Mr. Paul Lefebvre (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for St. John's East for his really hard work here in Ottawa.

In the fall economic statement, our government expanded the mineral exploration tax credit for five years. This extension will provide junior mining companies and investors with greater certainty, which is vital for the future of mines and will create good, middle-class jobs for Canadians, including in northern Ontario.

We are bolstering the sector's competitiveness and making sure Canada remains a world-class destination for mining investments. We stand firmly behind the sector and the hard-working Canadians it employs.

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[*Translation*]

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Hon. Steven Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what happens when it comes time for the Liberal Prime Minister to stand up for Canada? Radio silence. New Zealand has taken a stand and banned the use of equipment from Chinese-owned Huawei in its 5G network because it poses a significant risk to national security. Our Five Eyes allies are doing the same, including the United States and Australia.

We know that the Prime Minister admires China's dictatorship, but will he ban Huawei from our 5G network and stand up for Canada's interests for once?

Mr. David Lametti (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Lib.): Mr.

Speaker, we have never compromised national security and we never will.

Canada has a strong track record when it comes to protecting and enforcing our security. We have experts and we are going to work on that.

Investments are very important and we are open to global investments that will contribute to our economy and growth. The 5G network is an important technology and we are investing in it. However, we will ensure—

The Speaker: The hon. member for La Pointe-de-l'Île.

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FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL RELATIONS

Mr. Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Parliamentary Budget Officer has proven that the federal government totally underestimated the cost of the wave of migrants, and we are only talking about federal spending. Quebec is the one covering the big costs: education, housing and social assistance. Ottawa set aside \$50 million for the provinces. Ontario alone is asking for \$200 million, and Quebec has received 12 times as many migrants as Ontario.

When will Canada stop laughing at Quebecers and compensate us like everyone else?

• (1500)

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Intergovernmental and Northern Affairs and Internal Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I assure my colleague that we are in talks with the Government of Quebec. I was in Quebec City last week. I met Minister Simon Jolin-Barrette, and we had a positive discussion. We will continue to work with the Government of Quebec to make sure that we cover the reasonable costs associated with this irregular migration. Quebec has been a leader and a great partner for Canada. We value its co-operation and we will respect its commitments.

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INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the government wants to sign the free trade agreement with the Americans tomorrow, but no one has even seen the final version. Dairy producers are worried because the latest version of the agreement gave the Americans oversight of our dairy system.

Since the Liberals have made a habit of betraying Quebec farmers, we cannot trust them and will certainly not give them a blank cheque.

Can the Prime Minister confirm that this provision has been removed, or has he once again gone back on his word?

[*English*]

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government has defended our supply management system from the strong American attempt to dismantle it. Our poultry, eggs and dairy farmers provide the highest-quality products for Canadians at a reasonable price, and keep the rural areas strong.

Routine Proceedings

We understand there will be an impact on the farmers, and we are committed to fully and fairly supporting them to make sure the supply management system continues to expand through the centuries.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Marilène Gill (Manicouagan, BQ): Mr. Speaker, on Friday, the government will be signing the new free trade agreement with the United States and Mexico. That is happening tomorrow, yet there is still no firm commitment from the government about compensation for our dairy farmers.

The government has abandoned them three times in a row, in its agreements with North America, the Pacific region and Europe. It must take responsibility for these three betrayals.

Will it make a formal commitment to fully compensate our supply-managed farmers for their losses under these three agreements—

The Speaker: Order. The hon. Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food.

[*English*]

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague is well aware that we are the party that implemented supply management, and we are the party that is going to defend it. It is important to note that the Americans wanted to destroy our supply management system, and our negotiators and government made sure that did not happen. We also understand that there will be an impact on our farmers, and we are committed to fully and fairly supporting them. We have and will continue to support the supply management system in this country.

Ms. Jenny Kwan: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Yesterday I moved a motion in this place, and it appeared that members from both the government and the official opposition sides had not supported the motion. However, it is now known that the appearance of opposition was completely unintentional. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, if you seek it, I think you would find the unanimous consent of the House for the following motion. I move:

That, the House recognize that 81 years ago Imperial Japanese army forces raped an estimated 20,000 to 80,000 Chinese women and girls and approximately 300,000 people were killed; that, after the Nanjing massacre, the military sexual slavery system of the Japanese military expanded rapidly, and an estimated 200,000 women from Korea, the Philippines, China, Burma, Indonesia and other Japanese occupied territories were tricked, kidnapped or coerced to work in brothels to serve as “comfort women” to the Imperial Japanese army; that western eye witnesses in Nanjing described the atrocities as “hell on earth”; that the House of Commons, in 2007, unanimously passed a motion in recognition that the Imperial armed forces of Japan used women as sex slaves during the Second World War; therefore, in the opinion of the House, the government formally acknowledge this by declaring December 13 of each year as Nanjing massacre commemorative day in Canada.

•(1505)

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Speaker: Now I believe the hon. opposition House leader has the usual Thursday question.

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BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Hon. Candice Bergen (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, if the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons could please tell this House what we will be looking at for the rest of this week and next week, that would be appreciated.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this afternoon, pursuant to the order made Tuesday, November 27, we will debate the 66th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs.

We will then finish the debate on Bill C-86, the second budget implementation bill, at third reading.

Tomorrow morning, we will start the second reading debate of Bill C-87, an act respecting the reduction of poverty.

[*English*]

On Monday, we will commence debate at second reading stage of Bill C-88, concerning the Mackenzie Valley.

Last, next Tuesday shall be the final allotted day in the supply cycle.

The Speaker: Pursuant to order made on Tuesday, November 27, the House will now revert to the rubric “Motions”.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*English*]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

Mr. Robert-Falcon Ouellette (Winnipeg Centre, Lib.) Mr. Speaker, I move that the 66th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, presented on Tuesday, June 19, be concurred in.

[*Member spoke in Cree*]

[*Translation*]

I would like to share my time with the member for Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River.

I just said in Cree that I am extremely proud to be here and that we are all related. It is a way of saying hello to everyone. This greeting is not only for my fellow Canadians, but for all people with whom I have a connection. It also tells all people and all creation that we are together.

Routine Proceedings

[English]

Language and culture are extremely important. They are not distinct. Indigenous languages have been dying now for over 150 years. They have been ignored for generations and actively suppressed by governments, but I am proud to say that we are entering a new age, when this will be no more. We will be getting a fighting chance to ensure the survival of indigenous languages.

When I was first elected to the House of Commons, I had a dream, a dream that a grandmother, from her reserve, could turn on the television and watch the great debates of Parliament in her indigenous language, whether it was Cree, Anishinabeg, an Iroquoian language, Innu or any language across Canada. It is extremely important that the dream be realized, but we face grave difficulties, because there is no central authority to enable that grandmother to have the television on. Even though we have CPAC in French and English, it does not exist in indigenous languages.

In places like Little Pine, Moosomin, Mosquito Grizzly Bear's Head, Sweetgrass, Poundmaker and Red Pheasant First Nation, where my people are from, people have been talking for many years about their desire to see indigenous languages, such as the Cree language, heard and spoken in this place, the people's place. If Canada is to fulfill the dream we have for each other, if we are to fulfill the vision laid out for Canadians in our Constitution and our charter, then the full welcoming of indigenous languages into this House is long overdue. I think every party in the House can agree that if we are to truly be a great nation, all people should know that this is their nation, whether they have been here only one day or since time immemorial, since the rivers have flowed and the grasses have grown.

I would like to thank the members of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs who spent innumerable hours fighting for indigenous languages in this House, the great hon. members for Yukon, St. Catharines, Halifax, Laurentides—Labelle, Winnipeg North, Brampton North, Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame, York Centre and Kitchener Centre and the now Minister of Seniors. These members, who are not indigenous, spent countless hours fighting for indigenous languages. Members from the loyal opposition as well as the third party also spent countless hours fighting for indigenous languages, even though there might be little or no benefit to them, to their families, to their personal histories or to their old vision of what Canada might have been. Nonetheless, they stood up for each and every one of us in Canada.

When I was first elected in 2015, I went to see Annette Trimbee, at the University of Winnipeg. We sat down for a lovely meeting, and she said there were a few things she needed help with. One was funding, but there was also a desire at the University of Winnipeg to expand language training.

When I was a professor at the University of Manitoba, I spent many years trying to increase the amount of language programming. The University of Winnipeg and Annette Trimbee were particularly interesting, because they wanted to combine it with modern technology and data. However, they lacked a large amount of metadata to feed the algorithms to ensure that they had adequate translation so that the computers would actually be able to properly

translate indigenous languages. There are a lot of children's books, but they are often not written in a living language.

● (1510)

I would like to thank Wab Kinew who was the previous associate vice-president for indigenous relations at the University of Winnipeg. I would also like to thank Dr. Currie, the dean of arts; Dr. Glenn Moulaison, who also invested a large amount of personal time to learn indigenous languages. I would like to thank Dr. Jacqueline Romanow, who offers credit courses in Cree and Ojibwe. The language instructors in the department include Darren Courchene, Annie Boulanger and Ida Bear.

The department also supports an intensive two-week learn to speak Ojibwe program. The program is designed to teach beginner and intermediate Ojibwe and involves classroom and field work. The field work is held at the Medicine Eagle Camp and includes traditional teaching on medicine, beading and drumming. Funding for this has been provided by Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada and Indigenous Services Canada.

There is also University of Winnipeg undergraduate student Cameron Lozinski, who is currently developing an app to make his ancestral language, Swampy Cree, more accessible.

Dr. Lorena Fontaine, academic indigenous lead at the University of Winnipeg completed her Ph.D. on aboriginal language rights in Canada. She was working with the Manitoba Aboriginal Languages Strategy, Red River College, with Rebecca Chartrand, the University College of the North, the University of Manitoba and the Manitoba provincial government to develop a certification program for aboriginal language speakers who are not teachers. She has also been an aboriginal language rights advocate for 12 years both nationally and internationally.

The university has also been bringing in faculty, students and the public to learn from, for example, Dr. Anton Treuer, professor of Ojibwe at Bemidji State University, and Octaviana Trujillo, professor of applied indigenous studies at Northern Arizona University.

Community programming continues to go on at the University of Winnipeg's Wii Chiiwaakanak Learning Centre, which provides options to the community to learn Ojibwe. Weekly classes are held free of charge for all ages, taught by Aandeg Muldrew. Aandeg is a linguistics student at the University of Manitoba, where he is also a sessional instructor for Ojibwe.

This is extremely important. All of these individuals have had a role in trying to get our languages to survive. There is currently no large-scale or government agency which would ensure that there is a central type of standardization, so that when we stand in the House of Commons, we would have an agreed-upon word for what it means to be a member of Parliament, *otapapistamâkew*. If we can get the Parliament of Canada to allow us to have greater translation, to have interpretation with interpreters from across Canada for the Cree language, working together, coming up with the actual specific terms and making indigenous languages living languages, like the French and English languages are, this would ensure that they can survive into the future so that my children will have the opportunity of actually turning on the television and being proud.

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This all started not only with a conversation with Dr. Annette Trimbee, but when I stood up in this House to make a member's statement over a year and a half ago, I spoke only in Cree about violence against women for the Moose Hide Campaign, whose button I wear proudly on my lapel, and there was some laughter in the chamber because no one could understand what I was saying. I raised a question of privilege asking you, Mr. Speaker, whether my rights had been violated. You looked into the Standing Orders to discover if my rights had been violated or not and you determined that it was up to the House to decide. You took the sage decision to ask the procedure and House affairs committee to investigate and come up with a report to use the processes that we have in this place to come up with the right decision.

As well as thanking other members in this House, I must thank you, Mr. Speaker, for taking that courageous decision to push this issue forward. If you had not done so, Mr. Speaker, I would have been very disappointed. Hopefully, your actions will allow my children's children to have the opportunity of speaking an indigenous language, which I think is the greatest gift you have given to this place in your time as Speaker. I look forward to reading the rulings you have made in the book that will come out once you are no longer Speaker. This decision, I believe, will be the very first one. It will be extremely important to the history of our nation and to what we have demonstrated we are able to do in this place.

I would like to thank you, Mr. Speaker, in Mi'kmaq, *wo la la li uk*, in Cree *xsay, ekosani*, in Anishinabe, *meegwetch*. I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

[Member spoke in Cree]

[English]

• (1515)

The Speaker: May I say it is an honour to hear in this place the languages that have been spoken here in this land for thousands of years.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Desnethé—Mississippi—Churchill River.

Ms. Georgina Jolibois (Desnethé—Mississippi—Churchill River, NDP): Mr. Speaker,

[Member spoke in Dene]

[English]

I am curious. Today is a really remarkable day in moving forward, as we are building bridges and moving in the right direction. I understand that my colleague started off his speech with his language, and then stopped and delivered the rest of his speech in English. Can he explain why?

Mr. Robert-Falcon Ouellette: Mr. Speaker, the House of Commons only allows translation into English and French. However, it is my dream that one day in the future, when we tune into CPAC on the television, and as we have more indigenous members from across the country who are elected to the people's House, we can watch it in Cree, that a grandmother can watch the great debates of our Parliament. Also, young children will be able to hear that language in the background and know that it is important, that it is not a forgotten language and it is not something which is not

worthwhile but is spoken and heard on TV and the Internet, and it has value. It has value to them and their self-esteem, and it will lift our people up and raise them so our young people can be successful and reach their full potential.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham (Laurentides—Labelle, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the recommendations in the 66th report of PROC are specifically written in a way to allow and encourage members of the House of Commons who are not indigenous to learn those languages and use them in this place. I wonder if the member has any comments on the importance of that, as we have seen from our colleague from Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Soeurs in Montreal.

Mr. Robert-Falcon Ouellette: Mr. Speaker, actually, it was quite interesting when the member for Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Soeurs gave a speech in Mohawk. It was interesting to note that when I placed my video online of me speaking Cree, no one took much notice at first. A few people were interested. However, when a non-indigenous person took the time to speak Mohawk, people became very excited, and there were hundreds of thousands of views of that video. It made a lot of people quite proud, because it was not just an indigenous person trying to stand up in the House of Commons for his or her own language; it was others doing it for them.

The member has spent considerable hours learning the Mohawk language. He has been taking exams monthly and spending considerable hours on learning the language, not every day, but as much as he possibly can with his duties here in the House of Commons. It is a great thing when other MPs take the time to learn someone else's language, and in essence, the way people see the world and how they think, and to learn a culture. It shows a great openness and truly an open spirit of a nation-to-nation ideal.

• (1520)

[Translation]

Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet (Hochelaga, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Hochelaga was an indigenous village.

It is very symbolic to hear indigenous languages being spoken in the House of Commons of Canada. This is a huge step in the right direction.

My colleague spoke about languages that are disappearing and about older and younger people who sometimes no longer speak these languages. He also said that some people were teaching indigenous languages to others. The federal government could be helping elders in the community to teach languages to younger community members. I wonder if my colleague would agree.

Does he see a way that the federal government could help promote indigenous languages in indigenous communities?

Mr. Robert-Falcon Ouellette: Mr. Speaker, that would certainly help Canadians and indigenous peoples learn their own languages. It would also send a strong message that these languages matter.

This week, we heard debates on the pride that francophones have in their language, especially on this side of the House. The same is true for indigenous peoples, but the resources and teachers are often not there.

That is why it would be good to create a need for translators and interpreters who work in these languages right here, in the House. This would have the effect of spurring the development of university curriculums so that such services could eventually be offered across Canada. Over time, more and more people will want to be trained in teaching indigenous languages. This will give young people a chance to learn these languages as young kids. This would be a great source of pride.

[*English*]

Ms. Georgina Jolibois (Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River, NDP): Mr. Speaker,

[*Member spoke in Dene*]

[*English*]

Today is a big day for indigenous languages in the House of Commons. I am going to be splitting my comments in half today. First I will be speaking in English for the benefit of my colleagues, and afterward I will be making comments in my first language, Dene, which I will soon be able to speak more freely in this chambers.

I am very happy with the findings of the procedure and House affairs committee report on the use of Indigenous languages in the House. I would like to give a special thanks to the members of the procedure and House affairs committee for their hard work and commitment. Adopting Indigenous languages into House business is no easy task, but because of the members, we are now one step closer to equal recognition.

[*Member spoke in Dene*]

[*English*]

As I have said many times, I am a Dene woman, and I grew up on a trap line in northern Saskatchewan. The large majority of people in my riding are Dene or Cree, first nation and Métis, and many people speak more than one language. The diversity of languages across the riding is awesome, yet challenging.

I recently had the privilege of attending the First Nations' Language Keepers Conference in Saskatoon, hosted by the Saskatchewan Indigenous Cultural Centre.

At the conference, I heard from educators like Julia Oullette, who teaches Cree to youth, using physical actions to get the kids moving around while they are learning. I heard from entertainers like Brian Waskewitch, who uses puppets to engage with small kids in Plains Cree, using language they will understand.

I also heard from the youth directly. Davis Horse from Thunderchild First Nation lives in a Cree-only household and encourages a traditional lifestyle for youth across Saskatchewan. I also met with Cameron Lozinski who is developing a smart phone app with his elders to help more young people access his language.

If I have one takeaway from my experience at this conference, it is that we must provide leadership and act as role models for young indigenous youth who want to speak their languages. First nations, Métis and Inuit languages are thriving across Canada, contrary to popular belief.

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I am glad to see that the committee's report agrees that the House should build our capacity to speak our languages. Communicating with our constituents in the languages they speak is so important. Adopting this report may seem small, but it will have a significant impact in our communities, in our schools and in our homes.

We will be better able to speak about the issues that matter to them, like education, access to health care and northern infrastructure. An informed democracy is a strong democracy and adopting this report is a step in the right direction.

At this time, I am switching to my first language.

[*Member spoke in Dene*]

● (1525)

[*English*]

I just delivered a similar presentation in Dene.

At this time, for all Canadians from coast to coast to coast, we have this opportunity to acknowledge the indigenous languages across Canada, in the place of the federal government and in the House of Commons. We are able to speak in our languages and showcase our first language, which in my case is Dene. In my riding, I have Cree, three dialects, the Métis, the Michif, and other indigenous languages. It is a very significant step in the right direction. We are building bridges and reconciliation is beginning to occur.

Therefore, from the bottom of my heart, I want to thank all my friends on the committee, all members of Parliament and the government officials who helped make this happen.

You, too, Mr. Speaker, helped make it happen, so thank you from the bottom of my heart.

[*Member spoke in Dene*]

[*English*]

● (1530)

Mr. David de Burgh Graham (Laurentides—Labelle, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I sincerely hope today is the last day we have to hear indigenous speeches in the House without the use of translation.

The opportunities are in this report. Should the member wish to speak in this way the next time, she will be able to inform the Table and interpretation will be provided. It is very sad to hear the interpreters' booth go silent when we are listening to a speech. I would have loved to have heard everything the member said in real time. This is more of a comment than a question.

I very much appreciate her pushing us to do this, to have participated in the study and to have demonstrated the importance and need for it in the House today.

Ms. Georgina Jolibois: Mr. Speaker, when I started, I was able to deliver my version of my presentation in English. Then I delivered a version of my presentation in Dene. Unfortunately, the translation in Dene is not word for word. If I went word for word, it would be really confusing even for me to try to communicate.

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I have the ability to think in Dene and the ability to think in English. I tried to look at the issue where the translators would be able to translate today. However, from this day forward, we can make that request and translators will be made available. Then the member will be able to hear that.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet (Hochelaga, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I noticed that when my colleague spoke in her language, her gestures were different. Language is intimately related to an individual's personality and culture.

I studied anthropology. When someone sets out to study a people they are unfamiliar with, they begin by studying vocabulary. Vocabulary reflects and describes a person's world. For example, Inuktitut has several words for snow because the people live in an often snowy world. Personally, I know just a few words for snow.

This is a good first step toward preserving indigenous languages and cultures. I would like my colleague to comment on that.

• (1535)

[*English*]

Ms. Georgina Jolibois: Mr. Speaker, I am extremely fascinated by languages and hear Dene speak in their languages. When we speak our languages, we have a good sense of humour and we laugh a lot. When we speak English, we have a tendency to be a little more serious, because we are worried about making a mistake. I am so concerned about the way I speak English, but I am comfortable when I speak in Dene.

[*Member spoke in Dene*]

[*English*]

What we do is we look at translating how to soften the tone so we can engage and have a little humour attached to it so everybody can feel comfortable in communicating with one another.

When I was in Saskatoon, I heard from Cree-speaking Nakota, Dene and the other two languages in Saskatchewan. It was fascinating to hear young people speaking in Cree, Nakota and their languages. They are able to communicate in their first language.

Therefore, I am very fascinated by languages, the way we translate, how to make that happen and how we can grow more in Canada.

Hon. Candice Bergen (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to have the opportunity to speak today to the 66th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs on the use of indigenous languages in House proceedings. I will be sharing my time with the hon. member for Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston.

It has been very good to hear my colleagues from both sides of the House speak to this already. It is very interesting. Personally, I am very inspired and encouraged by what I hear. My speech may be a little different, but it is wonderful that we can each bring our own perspective. My grand daughter's father is of Mennonite descent and her mother is Anishinaabe. I am so pleased to be able to share that heritage and so many wonderful things with my grand daughter.

I am also fortunate to have lived in Grand Rapids, Manitoba for a number of years. I learned at that time some wonderful church hymns in the Cree language. I will not be sharing those today, but it was a wonderful language and wonderful to be able to learn and share that language.

The report we are discussing today calls on us to decide on an appropriate balance between the use of indigenous languages in House proceedings and the ability of all members to comprehend those interventions. In principle, simultaneous interpretation of all indigenous languages sounds like it is a well-intentioned aspirational concept, but it is important that we be fully alert not only to many of the good consequences and good effects of this, but also maybe to some of the unintended consequences that could come of it.

I worry that unintended consequences will follow if we adopt the committee's report specifically as written. For starters, let me explain why. There are a dozen languages other than French and English spoken in Canada by more Canadians than all speakers of indigenous languages combined, namely, Spanish, Mandarin, Cantonese, Punjabi, Arabic, Tagalog, Italian, German, Hindi, Urdu, Portuguese and Russian. If we were to treat each indigenous language separately, and there are more than 60 of them, I could add yet another dozen languages that are more commonly spoken in Canada than Cree, the most common indigenous language.

As a result, as members we may find ourselves with new demands by constituents from among these 24 linguistic communities, or others, to speak for them in their language in the House. Today, I can say that Canada's official languages are spoken and readily understood in Parliament, with a small indulgence for modest pieces of other languages that members speak in this place from time to time. However, if interpretation facilities are in place for non-official languages, over time parliamentarians may be harder pressed to explain why interpretation is not also provided for other languages spoken in the House of Commons that may represent a large number of Canadians.

Another concern resulting from the law of unintended consequences with regard to the recommendations to arrange for interpreters is that Canada simply does not have a lot of people right now at the ready to become interpreters and to interpret speeches for us. According to the 2016 census, there are some 400 Canadians with a knowledge of indigenous languages who work in the interpretation and translation field. Considering that translators and interpreters do very different work, the Translation Bureau has an inventory of just 115 indigenous language interpreters on file. I understand that only three of them live in or are close to Ottawa. The rest live and work in communities across Canada, and often at quite a distance from Ottawa.

Consider the interpreters' time that would definitely be required. Though we might only be asking someone to come here to interpret a 10-minute speech, that might require them to dedicate two or more days to a single assignment, considering the travel required. That is time away from their providing important and necessary support in their home communities, support that is crucial to many Canadians' interactions with medical, government and legal services. I am thinking back to my time living in Grand Rapids, a very isolated community where these services could very much be used.

To satisfy this report and, truthfully, a few of us politicians here in Ottawa, who I am not saying should be disregarded, I do think that the needs of other Canadians and indigenous Canadians across the country should be put before our needs. That said, in order to satisfy our request, we would be asking what few interpreters there are to abandon their clients for days at a time. We run a serious risk of throwing into disarray those important services, potentially endangering many Canadians. That is a significant and legitimate concern, and it is one that I hope we have not overlooked.

• (1540)

Another concern is that despite the available pool of interpreters, most of them are simply not experienced at interpreting to and from French, which is another part of this. That would prompt the need for some of us to turn to what is called “relay interpretation”. Let me explain.

If we have someone speaking Cree that would need to be interpreted into English, then that English interpretation would need to be rendered into French. If we think of the expression “lost in translation”, which is a real phenomenon, that is likely what we could see happen with the use of relay interpretation.

Compounding this is subsection 4(3) of the Official Languages Act, which requires our debates to be recorded in one of the official languages and to be accompanied by a translation in the other official language. In fact, this could be unconstitutional.

Subsection 16(1) of the charter provides the following:

English and French are the official languages of Canada and have equality of status and equal rights and privileges as to their use in all institutions of the Parliament and government of Canada.

Relay interpretation might not honour these constitutional guarantees of equality of status and equal rights.

Those issues were a matter of concern earlier this year in the other place, when a report of the Senate's internal economy committee presented the views of its advisory working group on parliamentary translation services. I am going to quote from that report:

...the lack of high quality translation and interpretation services for the Senate also affects the rights of Canadians...the Senate has a constitutional duty to make services of equal quality available to the public in both official languages. Words matter; the Senate must do what it can to ensure that no matter what language is originally used, its publications and broadcasts reflect the very best translation and interpretation available so that all Canadians have equal access to the entire context of the debate and to its nuances.

If the equality of Canada's official languages is genuinely important to us, these unintended consequences, and more, should offer all of us pause. Of course, we are not talking here about the right to use an indigenous language in the House.

We are firm believers in the freedom of speech. The right of members to speak out in this chamber on behalf of their constituents is paramount. Speech goes to the very purpose of this institution. Its in the name, “Parliament”.

A very workable plan has been laid out, and I am going to quote the Speaker. He said:

...if members want to ensure that the comments they make in a language other than French or English can be understood by those who are following the proceedings and are part of the official record in the Debates, an extra step is required. Specifically, members need to repeat their comments in one of the two

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official languages so that our interpreters can provide the appropriate interpretation and so that they may be fully captured in the Debates.

I think this is a sensible and balanced approach that would minimize the unintended consequences while honouring the equality of the official languages.

This approach is done in the Legislative Assembly of the Northern Territory, an Australian jurisdiction where close to 20% of the population uses at least one of the territory's 100-plus aboriginal languages daily. Closer to home, in Yukon, the territorial legislature allows the use of English and French and what are called “Yukon aboriginal languages”, but there are no interpretation facilities.

I guess I would just wrap up by saying that we do believe that resources like these would be better used to help promote and support the indigenous peoples' languages. I understand the spirit of this report. I think we all support the spirit of this report, but I think there are more efficient ways we can accomplish the desired goals than by what has been laid out in the report.

• (1545)

Mr. Robert-Falcon Ouellette (Winnipeg Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is my belief that parliamentarians have a constitutionally protected right to use an indigenous language in Parliament. Subsection 35(1) of the Constitution Act, 1982 states, “The existing aboriginal treaty rights of the aboriginal peoples of Canada are hereby recognized and affirmed.”

Do languages actually fall within these provisions? Professor Karen Drake has written about indigenous language rights in Canada pre-existing the Canadian state, and that these rights have not been extinguished and are still present. Others, like David Leitch and Lorena Fontaine, have been working toward launching a constitutional challenge, arguing that under subsection 35(1), the federal government not only has a negative obligation not to stifle aboriginal languages, but also a positive obligation to provide the resources necessary for the revitalization of those languages.

There are many sub-steps and different ideas that relate to this, especially within a decision in *R. v. Van der Peet* case that, “To be an aboriginal right an activity must be an element of a practice, custom or tradition integral to the distinctive culture of the aboriginal group claiming the right.” I believe that indigenous languages meet that constitutional requirement.

It is a very interesting argument concerning French and English, but indigenous languages are in fact the original languages of this land and deserve just as much respect. I understand that there are many people from around the world who have come to Canada and who speak other languages. If we looked, for instance, to other parliaments, such as in New South Wales in Australia—Australia was mentioned by the hon. member—it has introduced aboriginal language legislation to ensure the protection of the indigenous languages there, and the ability to hear those languages within the chamber and the provision of services relating to these languages.

Hon. Candice Bergen: Mr. Speaker, we are in full agreement here. I agree that no one's right here to speak should ever be stopped. We all have a right to speak and to reflect our constituents' wishes, as well as our own thoughts.

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However, we also all have a right to understand what is being spoken. What we are trying to do is to find the best way to do that, so that what I say in whatever language I choose to speak can be understood by each one of my hon. colleagues who are here duly elected by their constituents. What we are really aiming to do is to find that solution.

This report by the procedure and House affairs committee was reached in a real spirit of unity. It was done very well, and that is what we are looking at. Even though there may be parts of the report that we do not necessarily agree with, we agree with the spirit of it, that members should be allowed to speak and be able to understand what is being spoken. We definitely are all on the same page and we can find a solution.

Ms. Georgina Jolibois (Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, what I would like to do at this time is make a comment and ask a question in English and then translate it into Dene so my constituents who speak Dene can hear what I am saying.

The comments I heard just now from the Conservative Party are the strength of colonialism and the strength of dismissing and destroying indigenous languages. The Conservatives promote that. As an indigenous Dene-speaking woman, my ancestors were born here first, where my homeland is. The Conservatives want me to dismiss that, because they want me to cater to them. For all of the youth and elders who have come before me and who will come after me, today is a most significant day toward moving forward. However, there is one remaining party that wishes to promote colonialism and that breaks my heart.

Having said that, as a Dene woman who was born in northern Saskatchewan, and who grew up on the trapline, I spoke Dene as a first language, and we are still promoting that. I have a constitutional right to speak in Dene, because my ancestors were here first.

[Member spoke in Dene]

[English]

I ask the member this. Why is she against the arguments surrounding our ability to speak Dene, Cree or other indigenous languages? Why are the Conservatives denying our rights?

• (1550)

Hon. Candice Bergen: Mr. Speaker, I am very insulted by what I was just accused of. I am going to choose to take the high road. I want all of us in this House to be able to speak the language that we choose. Then, if we would like to be understood by everyone, we can say it in either English or French so it can be translated.

I sometimes think that instead of proposing a legitimate counter-argument the easy thing to do is call names. I find that very saddening, and disrespectful to this place.

I think we can continue this discussion and find a positive solution that will honour all Canadians, from every linguistic background, our first Canadians and new Canadians. That is our heart's desire, and that is the spirit contained in this report.

Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Portage—Lisgar for generously giving me half her time and the opportunity to speak on this subject. I was a member of the procedure and House affairs committee that

dealt with this issue. I have some prepared remarks, but I am going to depart from them for the first part of my comments. It appears to me that a narrative has already been started that the procedure and House affairs committee proposed a system under which indigenous languages would be treated as being equal in debates in this place to French and English. Nothing could be further from the truth.

To point out just how great the restrictions are, which are placed upon indigenous languages by the procedure and House affairs committee, I am going to read from the recommendations in its report. There were only two recommendations. The second recommendation deals with expenses associated with being a user of indigenous language. The first one, and the one being discussed here so far is, "That the use of Indigenous languages be recognized in the House of Commons according to the process set out in this report" on page 25-26.

Page 26 of the report states:

...the Committee recommends that members [who wish to use an Indigenous language] be required to give reasonable notice in writing to the Clerk of the House of Commons of their intention to speak in an Indigenous language during a future sitting of the House or committee meeting. In practice, this notice requirement would be similar to that which exists in the Senate of Canada. In the Senate, reasonable notice is not defined; instead, the intention of the term "reasonable" is to provide for flexibility in finding available and qualified simultaneous interpreters. In the case of the House, prospectively, reasonable notice for Indigenous language use would include the time required to obtain interpretation services and make technical arrangements. In addition, the Committee acknowledges that the technical requirements for the use of Indigenous languages in the Chamber differ from those in House committees [where it would be yet more complicated].

To be clear about this, under the proposals made by the procedure and House affairs committee, if members want to speak an indigenous language in the House of Commons, they are going to have to give substantial advance notice. Time will be required to contact a translator, have that translator come to the House of Commons and have them provide the translation. If it is for committee, a separate translation booth would need to be set up because there are no adequate facilities for the use of a third language, or the relay language process, in our committee rooms right now. We know this because the procedure and House affairs committee itself had to go through this process, and it could not be done expeditiously.

All of this is by way of saying that if anybody thinks that the procedure and House affairs committee proposed a utopia in which people would stand up and speak an indigenous language with the same facility and immediate translation happening right now between French and English, they are sadly mistaken. If anybody criticizes my colleague and House leader for suggesting that we need to deal in a practical way with the situations that will arise all the time, where someone wants to stand and speak extemporaneously or on a debate that has arisen on short notice, something where we cannot bring a translator in from wherever that language is spoken in the country, then they need to know that using a system like the one my colleague suggested, which the Speaker suggested first, is the way to deal with this.

Routine Proceedings

The person who is speaking the indigenous language speaks the indigenous language and then provides the translation into French or English. There is no other way we can think of to do it, and we racked our imaginations trying to think of other ways of doing it. There is no other practical way of allowing spontaneous participation to occur in this place. When a set piece is coming up, it is great, we can move to what the procedure and House affairs committee suggested. However, what my colleague suggested, what the Speaker suggested, about facilitating this is a reasonable solution.

It is also reasonable for the Speaker to do as he did today, which is to show some flexibility on the time when someone is using an indigenous language, so they can express themselves in both those languages, whether they use the indigenous language first, or as today, they speak in English or French and then go to the indigenous language. That is all my colleague was suggesting. That is a reasonable approach. There is no reason to attack my colleague, who has the best of intentions, who cares so deeply and who has, my goodness, a family that includes people who are speakers of an indigenous language.

• (1555)

To say this is some kind of colonial-mindedness is just wrong. The fact is, there is tolerance and openness throughout Canadian society, regardless of partisan divide, and turning this issue into a partisan issue when we had a report that all members of the House with good intentions participated in with good intentions, is just inappropriate.

We are discussing the 66th report of the procedure and House affairs committee. I want to discuss some significant practical facts. As members are no doubt aware, I wrote a book on Canada's official languages some 25 years ago. It came out in December of 1993. Here we are at the 25th anniversary since that was done. I did have a bit of an interest at the time, and I was therefore eager to add to my knowledge of Canada's indigenous languages when we had these hearings.

One of the things that is clear is that while we can talk about indigenous languages as a single group or concept, the reality is there are some indigenous languages that are spoken by a significant number of people, enough that they are not considered by linguistics experts to be in danger of extinction in the short run. Six of our 60 indigenous languages fit into this category. They are Cree, Dene, Innu, Inuktitut, Ojibway and Oji-Cree. Of those, Inuktitut is the standout. Its numbers are actually growing, partly because of the large birth rate up in Nunavut, and in part because of the environment. Being far away from English and French language centres has to some degree provided a natural layer of protection that was not afforded to other languages.

The remaining languages, although equally precious, to be clear, are in much greater danger, and there are practical difficulties associated with finding translators for some of those. On the other hand, the likelihood of having a speaker of one of the less-widely spoken languages in the Commons is considerably less than, for example, the virtually 100% chance that we will always have an Inuktitut speaker in the House of Commons.

I will go to the point about how seriously my party takes language rights in Canada, because we have been attacked today. I am going to make this point by turning to official language use and its history

in Canada. The use of official languages in our parliamentary institutions has been an issue since 1791, when the Constitutional Act 1791 was passed. In January of 1793, there was debate in the legislative assembly of Lower Canada in which French was adopted as one of the official languages of that institution. With the British North America Act, or Constitution Act 1867, as it is now called, George-Étienne Cartier and Sir John A. Macdonald ensured that both French and English would be languages of this institution.

The translation bureau of the federal government was set in place under the government of R.B. Bennett, a Conservative prime minister. The Translation Bureau Act was enacted in 1934 and remains in effect to this day. In 1958, John George Diefenbaker brought in simultaneous translation to this place. Before that, when a member spoke in French, unilingual English members had no idea what that person was saying, and the reverse. That was opposed by many members, including many Liberal members. However, it was the right thing to do. Similarly, the most recent version of the Official Languages Act was passed by the government of Brian Mulroney.

On the issue of indigenous participation, I just want to point out that everyone knows that indigenous Canadians were deprived of the right to vote. They were given that right in 1960 by Diefenbaker's government. There had been an earlier attempt in 1885, under Sir John A. Macdonald's government, to introduce what they called the electoral franchise act, which gave indigenous Canadians the right to vote. That was opposed by parliamentary Liberals at the time. In 1898, that right was taken away.

There are no parties here who can say we have all been angels throughout our history on this subject. However, on this subject right now of trying to do what we all can to assist indigenous Canadians in being full participants in every aspect of Canadian life, including debates here, all parties stand on morally equal ground. We merely disagree on the practicalities of how best to achieve that common goal.

• (1600)

Mr. Robert-Falcon Ouellette (Winnipeg Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when we saw the report, I was very moved by it. I accept that every party was putting forward their full desire, in a good way, to build the Canada we all deserve. I thank the hon. member for his hard work. I remember being at committee as a witness and having him ask me questions.

There is a certain practical nature to this and we are starting something. This is not utopia, as was mentioned. There are practical issues that need to be delved into as we move forward, such as giving two days or reasonable notice. I understand that. As we move forward, is there an interpreter available? There cannot be a question of privilege, if an interpreter is not available. We cannot waste time at the House.

However, as time moves forward, as these services develop, as perhaps members are elected who have a desire to speak one of the more common indigenous languages, then I suspect as we become more accustomed to how we go about that, as we come up with procedures that work in this place and as customs become unto our own, it will become easier and easier to offer indigenous languages.

Routine Proceedings

This is truly a day to start and, in my heart, is a day to celebrate and rejoice about the work we have done in common cause.

• (1605)

Mr. Scott Reid: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member made more of a comment than a question. I will take the advantage of developing the theme he expressed as follows.

There are widely spoken indigenous languages in Canada: Cree, Ojji-Cree, Inuktitut and several others, the “big six” that have over 10,000 speakers each. There are also many languages of fewer speakers. I do not think there should be, in principle, a distinction between them. One is not more valuable than the other. It is simply a statistical likelihood that we will have certain individuals here.

There are also practical difficulties that get greater and greater with respect to getting a suitable translator for some of the less widely spoken languages. On the other hand, no one just shows up in the middle of a Parliament unless he or she becomes a member through a by-election, which means we have some warning as to who the speakers are.

The second point I want to make in this regard is on the language of use, not whether the speaker is indigenous. It seems reasonable to me that if we were to have, for example, non-indigenous people representing an area with an indigenous population and if they were trying to give a set speech, we ought to try to accommodate it. If they were doing so in a manner that was off the cuff, they would be expected to try to provide some kind of translation. This seems reasonable to me. It is all about equality.

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my question is for my friend who I have known for some time. He and I share, I think, a significant amount of respect for each other. I hope that is true from his perspective as well.

I represent a riding in northwestern British Columbia, Skeena—Bulkley Valley, of which 35% to 40% of the people living there are indigenous Canadians from many groups, Tsimshian, Haida, Wet'suwet'en, Gitksan and so on.

I want to talk about privilege, which is a word that we sometimes thrust upon those who are wealthy or born to high status. He and I enjoy an equal privilege of being non-indigenous English speakers, with English being our native tongue. When we move through the world, we are able to enjoy a world in Canada, certainly in Parliament and around the country in which our language is very often understood. That puts us at ease because we can fully express ourselves with our questions and concerns.

Many do not have that privilege, particularly indigenous Canadians. We must understand that our country cannot be its complete self until there is some effort to reconcile what was imposed upon indigenous peoples, in particular the issue of language. The inability to express ourselves in our native tongue, as the expression is, limits our ability to be effective in the world, diminishes our power in the world.

I would think that getting over these technical challenges to allow the people's House to finally reconcile this imposition of a colonial structure upon indigenous peoples would be something that all of us would welcome rather than find reasons to resist.

Does the hon. member understand this notion and does he understand the importance of this, not just to people here but, more important, to many millions of Canadians across the country?

Mr. Scott Reid: Mr. Speaker, I could respond by just saying, yes, but I will make a point. There is not enough time for me to ask him a question about the status of languages, whether they are endangered or robust. I am unfamiliar with the details in his riding with regard to those languages.

All of these languages are as important to those who speak them, those who were born into them and those who can most fully express themselves as the more widely spoken languages. That goes without saying. The member is right that they bring no particular economic advantage, but they are as rich in terms of the literature, the heritage and the history they bring with them. Once people are part of a culture, it is not something where they can say they will rewrite the record to put themselves in a more advantageous position.

Who could not have sympathy with such a situation? Who could not say we should do all that we can? However, all that we can do has to be dictated by what we practically can do. That is the only caveat I would put on this. I agree 100% with the perspective that my hon. colleague, who I respect very much, is expressing.

• (1610)

Mr. David de Burgh Graham (Laurentides—Labelle, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time.

It gives me particular pride to rise on the 66th report from the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, and the importance of adopting this report on time for its recommendations to be in place for our imminent move to West Block.

Growing up I was taught, as all Canadians have been at least since the Official Languages Act was brought in, that Canada has two official languages, representing the two foundational nations of the country we call Canada.

Canada, of course, we were taught was an Indian word meaning home. I say Indian deliberately and without an accurate translation of “Canada” in this context because that is how we were taught. It was something that never made a lot of sense and as a kid I accepted the facts as they were presented to me, but I always had a twinge of doubt.

Somehow the English and the French, two western European powers, had founded Canada. However, I asked myself questions as a kid. Why was there an Indian reserve called Doncaster number 17 almost walking distance from my house? What was being reserved? What did the Indians call it? What were these Indians we had been taught ever so vaguely about if not foundational to Canada? If there was a word Canada, what was the rest of their language? If I lived in Canada, why did I not speak Canadian?

Routine Proceedings

England speaks English. France speaks French. Korea speaks Korean. Japan speaks Japanese. I did not know anything about African languages. Quite frankly, we still are not really taught about how that continent got its borders and countries or how incredibly vast Africa actually is. We were not taught anything about its numerous languages, and having that knowledge would probably only have further confused my childhood-self in my quest for understanding the missing nations in Canada, because we were never really taught about colonialism either.

My father Joseph, who has since become very learned in indigenous issues and the real history, and that is not what we were taught in school but what actually happened, told me as a child that his grandfather, Alphonse Paré, a mining engineer and later Canadian cavalry officer in the First World War, spoke four Canadian languages: French, English, Cree, and Ojibwe.

They were, my father taught me, the trading languages of his day, and acting in his capacity as a mining engineer in Timmins, itself a city named by him for his uncle Noah Timmins, he did quite a bit of trading in Northern Ontario. However, he felt no need, no obligation, to pass these additional languages on to his nine children for reasons I will never know.

Just to confuse matters, Alphonse's wife, my Welsh great-grandmother Lucy Griffith, was born in Australia, and their middle daughter, ski champion Patricia de Burgh, Pat Paré, my grandmother, was born in Ireland while her father fought on the front lines in France, directly resulting in my own middle name of de Burgh.

At the same time, I learned that on my mother Sheila's side, my Istanbul-born grandfather, Expo '67 engineer Beno Eskenazi, spoke Ladino, for which he edited the Sephardic Folk Dictionary in the 1990s precisely in order to preserve that dying language, as well as Turkish, Greek, French, and English.

My grandmother, Goldie Wolofsky, spoke Yiddish, English and French. Her own grandfather, Hirsch Wolofsky, was the publisher of *der Keneder Adler*, Canada's first daily Yiddish newspaper. Often I could hear my grandparents speaking to each other in Spanish and Ladino, similar enough languages to be able to communicate, but both languages I did not understand. Incidentally, my grandmother and my mother, both born and raised in Montreal, were not permitted to attend French school as they were Jewish.

These languages were not passed on to me, and I wondered why. In high school, I took German classes specifically to be able to understand Yiddish, a language related to German in the way Ladino is related to Spanish. Unfortunately, I never found anyone to practice even German with, let alone someone to convert this knowledge to Yiddish. Therefore, to this day, I speak neither German nor Yiddish, though I can exchange a few basic sentences in the former.

While three generations ago Yiddish was the third-most spoken language in Montreal, after French and English, its speakers today are small in number. Part of my own culture, part of my background, has been largely lost.

My wife Mishiel is from Mindanao, an Island fraught with civil war in the southern Philippines. Her home town of Isulan has faced two fatal bombings this summer alone. She speaks Hiligaynon, Cebuano, Aklanon, Tagalog and English.

The Philippines were occupied by the Spanish starting in the early 16th century. The country is itself named for the reigning Spanish King at that time, King Philippe the Second.

In the nearly seven years since we met for the first time at the flame in front of Parliament Hill, I have wanted to learn about her culture, their culture, prior to the arrival of the Spanish. In my efforts, I have found precious little information. While there are over 40 languages spoken today across the Philippines, most are heavily influenced by both the Spanish occupation and the subsequent American influence following their takeover of the territory at the end of the 19th century, with the 1898 Treaty of Paris.

Knowing the cultures that built who we are, who our ancestors were, who our children are is not something to be taken lightly. We are each the product of where our ancestors have been, who they were and what they have done.

Many in this place have met my daughter, Ozara, as, among her many visits to the Hill, she has been here for Halloween dressed as a parliamentary page, the Speaker of the House and, most recently, a commercial-rated pilot. Not bad for a four-year-old kid, one who I hope will grow up knowing two things: first, that there is nothing in the world that she cannot do if she chooses to; and second, where she comes from through as many generations as we can discover.

When she turned one, we tried to figure out how many languages the grandparents of her grandparents are known to have spoken, and it is very likely that there are at least some languages spoken by them of which we are not aware.

- (1615)

Down the Paré line, Ozara is a 14th generation Quebecker, but she comes from many lines, from many countries. We know for sure that between us, we have ancestors, at minimum, from Australia, Canada, Ireland, France, Scotland, Spain, Poland, Ukraine, Russia, Turkey, the Philippines and Wales, which is, incidentally, the same size as my riding.

Over just the past three generations, her direct ancestors spoke at minimum Aklanon, Cebuano, Cree, English, French, Greek, Hebrew, Hiligaynon, Kinaray-a, Ladino, Maguindanaon, Maranao, Ojibwe, Polish, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog, Turkish, and Yiddish. Of those 19 languages, her parents, Mishiel and I, speak six, having lost 13 others along the way, and English is the only language we have in common. In my family, we have lost an average of about four languages per generation.

All of this is to say that my clarity on the whole issue of our true original languages was lacking well into my adult life. To say I fully understand it now would be a bit of a stretch.

On June 8, 2017, my friend and colleague from Winnipeg Centre rose on a question of privilege, because he had intended to speak his own cultural language, Cree, in this place and wished to be understood. The Speaker's ruling two weeks later on the topic said that this was not a question of privilege under current procedures and practices, but three months later, he wrote a letter to PROC suggesting that we take a closer look at the matter.

Routine Proceedings

As a member of PROC since my arrival in this place, I said to myself, “Damn right I want to look at this topic. Who am I to tell people from this land that they cannot speak the languages of this land in Parliament, of all places?”

We often mention that we are on unceded Anishinabek lands, but we do not talk about ignoring unceded languages or disregarding unceded cultures. They are unceded in the same way. They were not given; they were taken away.

Now, to be clear, MPs can speak any language they want any time they want in this place. There is plenty of precedent, and *House of Commons Procedure and Practice* even addresses the issue directly. The real practical issue is to be understood. In the record, *Hansard* will simply say, “The member spoke in language X” and, if provided, include a translation after the fact.

Recently, the member for Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Sœurs rose in the House and gave an entire statement in the Mohawk language, one of several indigenous languages used as unbroken code throughout the Second World War.

He said:

On this day, the eighth day of November, we will all bring our minds together and pay our respects to the indigenous peoples who enlisted in the Canadian Armed Forces.

Let us think of them and let us remember those who fought and died in the great wars.

Let us pay our respects and let us honour those who died for us so that we could live in peace.

Let our minds be that way.

Let us remember them.

I can think of no greater irony or demonstration of our failure in this regard than that a statement by a Caucasian, delivered in this place in Mohawk, thanking indigenous soldiers for their service to defend our democracy, may only be understood a day later through a written submission, as even with a text provided, our interpreters could not tell us what was being said in a very Canadian language. These languages deserve to be understood in this House, and report 66 lays out a path to start getting us there.

I probably have some small amount of indigenous blood myself. My family being documented in Quebec since 1647, it is quite likely. The fact that I do not know for sure speaks volumes about the importance we have placed on documenting such information. It is not this possibility that motivates me. It is the fact that so many Canadians and so many people in colonized countries all over the world do not know where they are from, and as a result, who they truly are.

I know that I am the product of an enormous number of languages and cultures from all over the world that I know little to nothing about, and I personally regret that. It is not right for us to not do everything we can to preserve cultures important to the people who come from them and languages important to the people who use them.

It is doubly not right to not include languages foundational to our country in the one place that is supposed to represent everyone and everything about us. We have the option here, today, to adopt PROC report 66, which gives us a road map, a plan, a beginning to start to

think about solving these issues here in the House to offer indigenous-language speaking members the opportunity to both speak and be understood in this place.

We are generations late in doing so, but with the move to West Block and the technological changes already in place in that building, it is time to act, to not delay any further. For members who do not agree, I encourage them to take it up with their caucus, itself not a Latin word but rather an unceded word from the Algonquin languages.

It is not my intention to allow my daughter to grow up not knowing this history, not recognizing that this country we call Canada, as we know it, was built on top of unceded indigenous lands, unceded indigenous cultures and unceded indigenous languages.

It is said that in North American indigenous cultures, one's value is measured not by what we have but by what we give. On that basis, these cultures and the people who represent them have infinite value, for they have given everything.

We must adopt report 66, and we must do it today. Some things can wait no longer. In case some are wondering, the Mohawk call Doncaster reserve number 17 Tioweró:ton, meaning, roughly, where the wind begins.

• (1620)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault (Sherbrooke, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her remarks in the context of this important debate.

From what I have heard today, I get the sense that members who want to speak their mother tongue will soon have access to simultaneous translation.

I would like to know if the member thinks this step in the right direction might encourage more members from indigenous communities to run for office and become MPs. They would know they can express themselves in their mother tongue in the House and be understood by all members when they speak their first language.

Does the member think this kind of progress will encourage more members whose mother tongue is an indigenous language to run for office?

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: Mr. Speaker, I hope so, but it is hard to say for sure.

That being said, giving people the opportunity to speak in their mother tongue or the language of their ancestors that they put the time and effort into learning can only advance the representation of indigenous people in the House. We know that indigenous people are massively under-represented here.

What my colleague from Sherbrooke said is absolutely right. It is important to give indigenous peoples, one of the founding nations of our country, the opportunity to speak their language here in order to encourage them to participate in our country's governance.

Routine Proceedings

[English]

Mr. Marc Miller (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, during the member's speech, he alluded to code talking. It is important to remind this House that when the U.S. needed indigenous languages, we spared no resources in ensuring that they were used. Indeed, they were used as unbreakable code, unbreakable to the Japanese and the Germans, when Canada and the U.S. needed them most. Therefore, I find it a bitter irony when I try to grasp the objections of the Conservatives. They say that their argument does not turn so much on rights or reconciliation but more on resources and money. I still question their motives, but I believe them at face value.

It is a bitter irony that these languages, which are fragile 73 years later, are threatened with extinction, in some cases, because of omission and the direct action of governments and government-related institutions. It would be a bitter irony that, in part, their being wiped out would be contributed to simply because resources were an issue.

These are fragile languages. If we take the example of the number of friends I have who speak Mohawk or Kanyen'kehà:ka, there are about 100 of them. That is the equivalent of 10 million English speakers. In 2019, we mark the International Year of Indigenous Languages at the UN. If the Conservatives do not believe in rights and reconciliation, surely they believe in respect, surely they believe in effort and surely they believe in lifting languages to the state where they need to be in this era.

On that note, I would like to ask the member opposite if he could talk about the minimal effort this report is requiring to lift these languages to the state we need to lift them, as the member opposite said, to recognize ourselves as the country we portray abroad.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: Mr. Speaker, I am quite privileged that the member for Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Îles-Des-Soeurs is not, in fact, on the opposite side of me politically.

When we hear about code-talking languages being used as unbroken codes during the war, I would like to finally be able to break those codes and understand them here in this House. I think it is really important that we get there.

There is one party in the House that is opposing this change on, frankly, technical grounds. I heard two speeches that did not make any sense at all. This offers us a road map for the four speakers in this House who speak one of these languages. There are four. That is all there are. We are not talking about 60 people speaking 60 different languages every single day in this place. This would offer them the opportunity to bring their language, their culture, and the history of this country into the place that is supposed to represent each and every one of us. I think we cannot wait any longer to do this.

• (1625)

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for sharing his time. I am somewhat reluctant to take this space today, because this was a spot intended for my very good friend, the member for Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou, who is delayed. He and my friend from Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River have been championing this process for, in some cases, many years. We are going to be

robbed of the wisdom of my friend from Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou. I will make a poor replacement, but I will do my best to talk about this incredibly important opportunity, perhaps a historic opportunity, for us in the House of Commons to be on the right side of history for once.

This place we occupy has been the symbol of the country, the good and the bad. Decisions made in this Parliament have deeply affected indigenous peoples for many generations, too often to their great cultural, spiritual and economic detriment. We have an opportunity to do something good. It is not going to solve everything. It is going to be an answer to some important things.

I will read from article 13 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. It states:

Indigenous peoples have the right to revitalize, use, develop and transmit to future generations their histories, languages, oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems and literatures, and to designate and retain their own names for communities, places and persons.

Section 2 of article 13 is important to this debate, because the House adopted this UN declaration. It says:

States shall take effective measures to ensure that this right is protected and also to ensure that indigenous peoples can understand and be understood in political, legal and administrative proceedings, where necessary through the provision of interpretation or by other appropriate means.

This is that place. If we are going to honour the House of Commons passing the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which was also pushed forward by my friend from Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou, then we have to act.

Many of us have heard the Prime Minister and many politicians talk about reconciliation. In the place I come from and represent in northwestern British Columbia, the first question people often ask is what that means. "Don't tell me, show me." Reconciliation can be defined in many ways and is often ill-defined or not defined at all. I believe in demonstrating what it might be.

I spoke to my Conservative colleague earlier about what one small aspect of privilege is. As a non-indigenous, English-speaking person, I can move about the world and perform my duties to the best of my ability in my mother tongue, without hesitation or pause, to express my thoughts and feelings to the best of my ability. There is no barrier between me and that expression, whereas so many people do not have that privilege. Indigenous people, in particular, have had that ability supplanted, oppressed and taken away categorically and systemically by the state. That is one of the facets of colonialism.

People can brace at that word and say it is ancient history. The fact is that this country, Canada, which we so love, will remain incomplete in its aspirations until we are able to address some of the fundamental errors we made.

These are long struggles. These are struggles that bridge generations. In our lifetime, we witness languages move from threatened to endangered to extinct, and we somehow believe that we bear no responsibility for this.

Routine Proceedings

Arguments are put forward as we discuss this small but important change in how the people's House, this House of Commons, conducts its business. We hear resistance. We hear reasons bordering on excuses: there are technical challenges in accommodating the three or four speakers who might use those interpretation services; there are cost concerns for a federal government that spends north of \$330 billion a year; or we would not want to deprive some community of its interpreter, as if providing interpretation work for indigenous speakers would somehow hurt indigenous interpreters. It is ridiculous.

We need to not be looking for excuses to say no but understand and compel ourselves to say yes to this report and yes to the change in the House of Commons.

• (1630)

I have an incomplete list here, but in northwestern British Columbia I have had the privilege of hearing Haida, Tsimshian, Gitksan, Nisga'a, Wet'suwet'en, Tahltan, Tlingit, Carrier, Heiltsuk and Nuxalk spoken at what we would call parliaments, when the people gather, when the people feast, when the people celebrate and honour those they seek to hold up, and when people are doing business in the northwest of British Columbia. At those feast halls, parliament is held for the Haida, the Tsimshian, the Nisga'a and on down the list.

I should have started my speech with something I have never said in this House.

[Member spoke in Wet'suwet'en]

[English]

I should have said that for people to listen to me here today. My family and I occupy Wet'suwet'en territory. Our house is in Wet'suwet'en territory, and I am a *nedo*, or a white guy, who happens to live alongside many friends of the Wet'suwet'en nation. They have welcomed me and my family in ways I cannot properly express without getting even more emotional than this debate feels to me already here today.

However, the generosity I have witnessed in trying to bridge the gap between non-Wet'suwet'en and Wet'suwet'en has been breathtaking in its scope and in people's determination to treat me as a resident of the territory and accept me as a representative of the Crown, this place, in Wet'suwet'en and other territories. This generosity, considering all the terrible things people who stood in my place in generations past did to indigenous peoples, is humbling and remarkable.

Certainly on the west coast, but also in other places, we hear politicians begin their speeches by saying that they are pleased to be here on unceded territory. Sometimes I am in the audience and wondering what that actually means. Is it just a phrase that gets put into a speech for politicians to say and then move on to say the things they were going to say anyway? Is it that when we recognize unceded territory we recognize something more? We say that these territories were not ceded, that the imposition of a colonial legal language and morality system has never been recognized or accepted, and that we require indigenous people to move through these systems in order to achieve basic rights, meaning and title, and

to fight year after year against various iterations of the government, of the Crown, at the Supreme Court?

Recently, I heard a story that is important, from a former colleague who was here during the repatriation of our Constitution here in Canada, done by former prime minister Trudeau. There were negotiations with the NDP, of which Ed Broadbent was the leader at the time. We had, in principle, accepted the Constitution as it was written. Unfortunately for Mr. Broadbent, but fortunately for us, his caucus resisted. This is the plight of being the NDP leader sometimes, I suppose.

There were certain sections that the caucus at that time, in the early eighties, insisted be included. One was for the rights of women to be declared in the Constitution, and the other was section 35. Mr. Broadbent had to go back to Mr. Trudeau and say those rights needed to be included.

There was clear resistance from this institution to including section 35, regarding indigenous rights and title, in our Constitution, which includes things like language in the rights that people bear.

What are we talking about here today? We are talking about the rights of indigenous people to stand in this place and express themselves without the barrier of having to move through somebody else's language. We are talking about their right to move and express themselves through their language. We have the ability to do this.

For those who say it is too technical or there might be costs we cannot even imagine, I say this should have been done generations ago. Let us be on the right side of history. Let us not allow these things to stand in our way, because we can do this.

This Parliament in 2018 can make this small but important expression to people, not just to indigenous people but to non-indigenous Canadians, to say that this is what the people's House looks like and this is what the people's House sounds like. If it does not move in this direction, Canada cannot be the country it hopes and professes to be.

• (1635)

Mr. Robert-Falcon Ouellette (Winnipeg Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is extremely important for people to see themselves in the institutions of the nation-state. I have heard many elders say they are not Canadian citizens. As indigenous peoples, we were only allowed to vote in the 1960s.

It is still very difficult. As politicians, when we go out into the rest of Canada to speak with our fellow citizens, many of whom are indigenous, we hear that they do not feel part and parcel of this nation, and that they feel ignored. The action we are taking in this Parliament today is going to go a long way to ensuring that everyone feels included and that we create the nation that we truly deserve for each and every one of us.

Government Orders

It was mentioned in the debate earlier that there could be a shortage of interpreters. In fact, if this institution of Parliament required more interpreters, it would create an industry where more people would have the potential for employment. They would be looking for employment and would see the opportunity and the value of learning their language to such an extremely high level that they can do interpretation at the same time as someone else is speaking. That is an extremely wonderful development.

With that, I would like to throw out a challenge. Next week, the Assembly of First Nations will be meeting in Gatineau for their annual general assembly. I would like to hear translators at those gatherings as well, not only here in Parliament. I would like to hear all indigenous leaders trying to use our language as much as we can. We have to demonstrate leadership, not only here but everywhere, each and every day, so our children know it is important.

Mr. Nathan Cullen: Mr. Speaker, let us put to the side this so-called barrier of saying there simply are not interpreters to fulfill the role we would require as Parliament, because that is not what the committee heard. That is not the testimony. It would be paternalistic to suggest to indigenous Canadians, “This is better for you. We don't want to hurt you by asking for more interpreters to be made available.” That would be ridiculous.

Let me go to this place, because this is my family's experience. I come from Irish heritage. My mother knows just a smattering of Gaelic, because her mother and her grandmother were unable to speak Gaelic at school or in their communities without being punished and beaten by the British governments who occupied their land at that time. My mother is able to pass to me a few Gaelic expressions, and that is it. That is the world view that I am able to express in such a small way. I feel so impoverished by that, because could it not have been better?

These are excuses. To say interpreters are unavailable or that this would cause harm to indigenous people somehow is not only wrong, but also, I would argue, paternalistic.

Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have had the honour of visiting Skeena—Bulkley Valley, and I know what strong indigenous communities there are there.

I want to share two powerful experiences I have had with indigenous communities. This past summer, I had the honour of travelling with my colleague, who represents northern Saskatchewan, to a very indigenous community, both Métis and Cree I believe. In that gathering and in between, it was not English that was being spoken. I could hear my colleague speaking her language, Dene. It was a beautiful moment, because we are most powerful when we speak our language.

I also want to share that when I went to a gathering of the Dene people in Fort Providence, a small community in Northwest Territories, I lost count of how many interpreters were there. Indigenous communities are used to having interpretation, even among themselves.

I wonder if my colleague can speak further to the absurdity of the suggestion that there would be difficulty in finding interpreters of these beautiful indigenous languages that Canada is grateful to have.

Mr. Nathan Cullen: Mr. Speaker, it is something to see. I have had the privilege of living in other countries and seeing people who attempted to express themselves to me in their version of English. Then, as they switched into their native tongue, I saw the flourishing, the stature and the opening up.

In the communities I represent in northwestern British Columbia, my great privilege is to watch that happen virtually every time I go home. I get to attend ceremonies, be with people and witness the expression and the openness of being able to be there.

I so look forward to the speeches that will come if we pass this resolution. I look forward to the day I will see colleagues speak indigenous languages in their full manner and full expression, and with the beauty and richness of those languages. We should not have to wait any longer for that.

•(1640)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

An hon. member: On division.

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

(Motion agreed to)

[Translation]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): 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 Saanich—Gulf Islands, Indigenous Affairs; the hon. member for Abitibi—Témiscamingue, Telecommunications; and the hon. member for Regina—Lewvan, Steel Industry.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

BUDGET IMPLEMENTATION ACT, 2018, NO. 2

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-86, A second Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on February 27, 2018 and other measures, be read the third time and passed, and of the amendment.

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke. I look forward to her speech.

Government Orders

Bill C-86, a second act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on February 27, 2018 and other measures, is 854 pages long. Today we are being asked to examine it despite the fact that, several years prior to the Liberals sitting on that side of the House, they repeatedly denounced omnibus bills and budget bills that were so long. It is not easy for parliamentarians to study a bill such as this.

I am the official opposition critic for agriculture and agri-food, so I want to look at what is in Bill C-86 for agriculture and agri-food.

• (1645)

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I am reluctant to interrupt the best Conservative speech I have heard this year, but can we use the budget document itself as a prop?

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): On that point of order, I can give the hon. member my interpretation.

Hon. members, when giving a speech, have the right to consult the budget bill. As the Speaker, I cannot really determine their ability to find what they are looking for. I would have to leave it to the individual.

The hon. member does have, from what I can gather, about six minutes and 37 seconds left. I am hoping he will find what he is looking for quickly and be able to give us the information he is trying to find.

I will let the hon. member continue with his speech.

[Translation]

Mr. Luc Berthold: Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind my hon. colleague that what I am trying to find in this 854-page bill are any sections that mention agriculture or agri-food.

Since this omnibus bill will affect farmers, it seems to me that the government should have mentioned agriculture somewhere in these 854 pages. I hope you will allow me to continue looking with my colleagues.

I just skimmed through one-eighth of the bill and I still have not found anything on agriculture or agri-food. I will therefore continue looking.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): The hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby.

Mr. Peter Julian: Mr. Speaker, I get what my colleague is doing; I do. This is a massive omnibus bill. I have illustrated that myself in the House.

The reality is that the government's steamroller approach will give very few MPs the chance to speak to this bill. I know that NDP members have a lot to say on its flaws.

I question the point of turning pages for six minutes when there are so many other things to talk about in this bill.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): It is a point of order and may even be a matter of debate, but I will allow the hon. member to continue his speech. I would like to hear what he has to say.

I imagine that after a while the document he is using might be considered a prop, which may pose a problem. I am sure that the hon. member is not here to win an academy award for his show.

I will allow the hon. member for Mégantic—L'Érable to continue.

• (1650)

Mr. Luc Berthold: Mr. Speaker, thank you for allowing me to continue. Common sense often means silence, that silence is golden and that deep pain is silent. Musicians understand the value of silence as do certain religious orders. Silence is a form of expression.

I would say that this government has been so silent on agriculture and agri-food that, 120 pages in, I have yet to find anything about agriculture and agri-food in this bill.

I would like to look a bit further to see if there is anything for farmers or ranchers. Maybe we will manage to make some sense of this 854-page budget for farmers and ranchers.

I will go a bit faster by taking more pages at a time. I will go by division, which might make things easier.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): The member for Abitibi—Témiscamingue on a point of order.

Ms. Christine Moore: As agriculture is also an important matter for my riding, I can tell my colleague that I have looked at the entire budget and it contains no measures for agriculture. He can stop looking and get on with his speech. That will be simpler.

Mr. Luc Berthold: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague very much for doing some research for me. I, too, did some research beforehand to see if there were any. I even searched the electronic document using the French words "*agriculture*" and "*agroalimentaire*" and their corresponding English terms "agriculture" and "agri-food", but to no avail. However, technology can sometimes let us down, and so, for the benefit of my constituents, I wanted to check to see if this important document, Bill C-86, a second act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on February 27, 2018 and other measures, mentioned agriculture and agri-food.

I take my NDP colleague at her word. I do not do so often, but, today, I will. I agree with her. There is absolutely nothing about agriculture and agri-food in this document. That is what I was implying with my silence. It is sometimes worth taking a moment of silence to think and reflect. I would have liked the government opposite to do just that before introducing a 854-page bill, which does not mention or have any measures for agriculture and the agri-food sector.

I will obviously be voting against this bill and I promise to do so in silence.

[English]

Mr. Scott Simms (Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I resist rising but I will anyway. I want to talk about that massive void of a speech.

Government Orders

Nevertheless, I have been here for 14 years and have witnessed many budget implementation acts come and go, some good and some bad. I would like to take a moment to reflect on all of the positive commitments over the years that the Conservatives made in their budgets, promised and fulfilled through their budget implementation acts. I would like to reflect on those for a moment.

There was a bridge in my riding. No, it was not in the implementation act. The gazebo was somewhere else. It was very expensive.

I am good. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[Translation]

Mr. Luc Berthold: Silence is golden in his case, Mr. Speaker, and words do not mean much.

Since I was unable to talk about the measures pertaining to agriculture in this 854-page omnibus bill, I will talk about the deficit that we spoke about when we debated the Liberal government's most recent economic update. The Liberals were supposed to balance the budget by next year, but instead they are racking up deficits. Let us remember the promise that they made in 2015. They said they would run small deficits and balance the budget in 2019. Unfortunately, when the Liberals talk, it costs a lot of money. I would therefore be happy if they talked a little less.

• (1655)

Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault (Sherbrooke, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I do not know whether I should commend my colleague on his speech because he used the House's time to say nothing. Many of my colleagues on this side of the House would have liked to have had that time to talk about the bill.

I am wondering whether the people of Mégantic—L'Érable were proud to see their MP rise in the House to rifle through the bill and say nothing about such an imposing bill. Perhaps when he returns to his riding, he can ask his constituents what they thought about such a hollow speech. The people of Mégantic—L'Érable would surely be very pleased to have a voice in the House and have their opinions made known, something that my colleague unfortunately did not do today.

My question is simple. Why did the member not read the bill before coming to the House? That would have saved some time.

Mr. Luc Berthold: Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member had listened to my speech he would have known that I did indeed take the time to ready the bill, as I said.

I searched the electronic document. I did everything I could to try to find something about agriculture and agri-food, but I found nothing.

I am very proud of what I did because it shows that the government is doing absolutely nothing for the 300 dairy farmers, or the farmers and ranchers in my riding.

As for speaking time and the number of times I have spoken in the House to talk about the people of Mégantic—L'Érable, I would be curious to know how much speaking time I have been granted compared to the hon. member for Sherbrooke. I have talked a lot more for the people of Mégantic—L'Érable than he has for the people of Sherbrooke.

[English]

Mr. Pat Kelly (Calgary Rocky Ridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, when my colleague was going through this enormous budget document, did he find anything about the year the Liberals will balance the budget?

[Translation]

Mr. Luc Berthold: Mr. Speaker, if you gave me a bit of time and allowed me to do so, we could go through this 854-page document together to try to find the date and year when the budget will balance itself. However, as I have already made my argument and since my silence was worth 1,000 words, I will not start over.

That said, I would like the Liberals to remember one thing: agriculture and agri-food are important and when the time comes to adopt measures for farmers it is too bad that the Liberals choose silence over action.

* * *

[English]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there have been discussions among the parties and if you seek it, I believe you would find unanimous consent for the following motion. I move:

That, notwithstanding any Standing Order or usual practice of the House: (a) when proceedings are interrupted pursuant to Standing Order 81(17) on Tuesday, December 4, 2018, all questions necessary to dispose of the opposition motion be deemed put and a recorded division be deemed requested and deferred until Wednesday, December 5, 2018, at the expiry of the time provided for Oral Questions; (b) immediately after the opposition motion is disposed of, the Speaker shall put, without debate or amendment, every question necessary to dispose of any motion in relation to Supplementary Estimates (A) and for the passage at all stages of any supply bill based thereon; (c) any recorded division already deferred or which would ordinarily be deferred to Wednesday, December 5, 2018, immediately before the time provided for Private Members' Business, shall be taken up immediately after the proceedings on the supply bill; and (d) if all deferred recorded divisions are concluded before 7 p.m., the House proceed to the consideration of Private Members' Business, otherwise the House proceed directly to adjournment proceedings.

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.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

* * *

• (1700)

BUDGET IMPLEMENTATION ACT, 2018, NO. 2

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-86, A second Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on February 27, 2018 and other measures be read the third time and passed, and of the amendment.

Government Orders

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as the federal member of Parliament for Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, I welcome this opportunity to inform Canadians about the deteriorating state of the nation's finances. It is clear, as evidenced by the fall economic update, just how out of touch the member for Toronto Centre as finance minister is with the concerns of ordinary, hard-working, middle-class Canadians.

A Conservative government believes in clean air, low taxes and a healthy economy. A clean environment and well-paying jobs are only possible when taxpayers are treated with respect. The out-of-control deficit policies of the Liberal Party stifle competitiveness and job-creating investment. A sustainable environment and a sustainable economy are only possible with a sustainable government.

The deficit budgets of this government are not sustainable. The government is not sustainable. We cannot spend more than we take in. This Liberal obsession with running huge budgetary deficits will only end badly. They always do.

The last time Canadians heard rhetoric about modest deficits was when the prime minister's father was on his throne. There is a reason Trudeau senior is known as the king of deficits. He started the cycle of spending more than what is collected in taxes. It was only supposed to be a temporary measure. He was the one who brought in the hated Liberal NEP, the national energy policy. Just like his father, the current Prime Minister was greeted by protesters when he visited Alberta.

The NEP was the first policy to load a carbon tax onto fossil fuels. Energy in the form of hydroelectricity was exempted from the NEP taxes that were collected to pay for Liberal bad spending. Today, the headline in the *Financial Post* reads "...we're facing a made-in-Canada energy crisis". There is no doubt about it. This crisis was planned.

There is hope. At the end of senior Trudeau's reign, in the process of kicking the Liberals out of office, Canadians elected the most Conservatives to Parliament since Confederation in 1867. That led to the new Conservative government of the day starting the hard work of bringing the nation's finances back into order by balancing the current account deficit left from the previous government. That still was not enough.

Jean Chrétien, who at least understood that we could not spend more than we have forever, took the drastic measures known as the "decade of darkness". In the process of slashing 60,000 public service jobs, programs and services were cut. Cuts in health care transfers meant hospital wait times increased. People in my riding were forced to go without a family doctor, thanks to the Liberal budget cuts. The budget was eventually balanced by the Liberals on the backs of ordinary Canadians. Deficit budgets do have consequences.

While the Conservatives took the political heat to bring in a consumption tax, the Chrétien Liberals campaigned against it before embracing it. During the Conservative government of Stephen Harper, they voted against our lowering the GST; the Liberals liked it so much as a revenue source. A carbon tax is a consumption tax.

My riding of Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke is home to Garrison Petawawa, which is now Canada's largest army base.

Before I was elected as the local member of Parliament, the future of the base was uncertain. That changed when the Conservatives were in government. Rather than balance the budget on the backs of our soldiers, Conservatives took a balanced approach, lowering taxes to increase revenues, putting more people back to work while using any surpluses to pay down the deficit and stabilize services to Canadians. The decade of darkness of the Liberal budget cuts was particularly harsh for women and men in uniform. Running continual budget deficits does have consequences.

The decision by the Liberal Party to play politics with military procurement is similar to what is happening today with the naval frigate replacement and the jet replacement programs, which would result in the unnecessary loss of lives in Afghanistan a decade later. The decision by the Liberal Party to cancel the EH101 helicopter to replace the then 40-year-plus-old Sea King helicopter meant Canadians would be forced to travel on roads in Afghanistan mined with improvised explosive devices. Those same terrorist bomb-makers, like Omar Khadr, are rewarded with multi-million dollar payoffs while our veterans, who were injured by those bombs, wait for justice.

● (1705)

Without strategic lifts, soldiers died on the bomb-laden roads. It was not until the Harper Conservative government purchased new Chinook helicopters that the death count dropped. I pray for the soldiers and their families that the decision to put off buying the proper equipment for our soldiers will not result in the unnecessary loss of life again.

We owe it to our soldier to provide them with the proper equipment when we ask them to go into harm's way. Budget deficits have consequences.

The bad news contained in Bill C-86 and the budget deficit increases contained in that legislation is the Liberal policy to load today's economy with future tax increases that will burden our children.

The debt burden for our children will be our burden first, as the federal carbon tax starts in a little more than a month. Every Canadian who understands anything about running a household knows that good times do not last. Our parents and our grandparents saved during the good times because they had lived through bad times.

Why does the federal government insist on huge deficits, spending dollars we do not have, by borrowing billions of dollars? The answer is "carb-a-geddon".

Canadians may have heard of *Apocalypse Now* or the term Armageddon and understand what is meant by carb-a-geddon. Carb-a-geddon, the meltdown of the Canadian economy through carbon taxation, will reveal itself as the federal government begins to collect these new consumption taxes. These taxes are set to increase automatically every year.

Government Orders

The finance minister was forced to admit, after he delivered his economic statement, the budget would never be balanced as long as his party held power. Secret documents prepared by the finance department confirmed the truth about carbon taxes. They hurt Canadian families. The Liberals' refusal to release these documents to the Canadian public confirms they have something to hide. Carb-a-geddon is real.

The worst part about carbon taxes is that taxing carbon dioxide in Canada does not help the environment whatsoever. The environment is a cloak the government wears for every bad policy. Adopting carbon taxes in Canada actually raises global carbon emissions by offshoring economic activity from relatively environmentally-friendly places like Canada to places with lax environmental laws.

Data from the World Bank reveals that China and other developing countries produce far more carbon dioxide than do western nations. China is currently building hundreds of new coal-fired plants, which will ensure its CO₂ emissions continue to rise for decades to come.

Every factory like GM, pushed out of Canada because of the Liberal carbon tax, will actually increase global emissions dramatically, and this will continue to be the case for decades to come.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has declared that for a carbon tax to be effective in saving the climate from its apocalyptic warming, the carbon tax would have to start at least at \$135 a tonne and rise to \$5,500 a tonne by 2030. The Liberals' carbon tax currently starts at \$20 and rises to \$50. Projections now show that Liberal commitments in 2016's Paris climate agreement will not be met unless the carbon tax is at least \$200 a tonne to start.

Under the Liberals' carbon tax pricing scheme, additional taxes will be charged to fuel up our autos or heat our homes, with a charge on non-renewable fuels for fuel producers, distributors and importers. Large industrial emitters of pollution, big business, are exempted from the new carbon tax scheme.

A carbon price of 4.42¢ per litre will apply to gasoline as of April 2019 and will rise by 11¢ per litre by April 2022. While the Liberal Party intends to provide an election bribe in some form of rebate, the rebates represent about 30% of the carbon tax the federal government will collect, as far as we know today.

Pretending this new carbon tax grab has anything to do with "fighting climate change" is just a gimmick to raise taxes.

• (1710)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I give the member across the way full marks. She is probably the most consistent member in the Conservative caucus. She does not let the facts get in the way of what she believes is a good speech.

She started off by talking about the deficit. Everything is negative; every aspect of the House, every aspect of the Liberal fibre is negative in the member's opinion. Over the years, that is what I have heard from the member across the way.

Let me just shine a little sunlight. There is reason to feel good. We could talk about tax breaks for Canada's middle class. We could talk about that special tax on Canada's wealthiest. We could talk about the enhancement of the guaranteed income supplement. We could talk about the enhancement of the Canada child benefit. What about pensions, the CPP? There are so many wonderful things that have taken place in the last three years. The sky is not falling.

Let me ask the member a specific question. The member was so concerned about the deficit. Canada is 151 years old, and 38% of that time the Conservatives have been in government. During that time, almost 75% of the debt was because of Conservatives. For Stephen Harper, the member's idol, the amount was \$150 billion.

Why should Liberals listen to what Conservatives have to say about deficits?

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: Mr. Speaker, by definition, a deficit or a debt is a minus sign in the books, on the balance sheet.

Insofar as sunshine goes, I do not know how we are going to spread sunshine to the 160 people at Sandvik who are losing their jobs in the spring, or the 2,500 people who are losing their jobs at GM and do not know how they are going to pay their bills.

Perhaps after we are done tonight, after he has spoken volumes and asked questions, I will show my fan across the way what he can do with his sunshine.

Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I think if Canadians needed any evidence at all of just how the government is sticking its head in the sand, there it was in the comments of the parliamentary secretary before he asked his question.

We have an economy that is dealing with strict competitiveness issues. We have aluminum tariffs, steel tariffs. We have people losing their jobs. We have this country going in a different direction than our competitors when it comes to regulatory and tax regimes. It is not all sunny in the land.

The hon. member just spoke about a company in her riding where 160 jobs are going to be lost. How is that sunny?

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: Mr. Speaker, the Liberal carbon tax is built on the assumption that most Canadians are sufficiently gullible or easily fooled to let a few dollars in carbon tax bribes deceive them into accepting this big government planned assault on their lives, their jobs and their prosperity.

As a result of reckless borrowing, last year alone the Liberals spent \$23 billion on interest payments to wealthy bond holders. That is what this is really all about. The Liberals are creating a crisis. Interest rates are going to increase. However, their friends, the one percenters who hold all the debt, are going to be sitting very pretty. Meanwhile, everyday Canadians are going to pay more, owe more, and will never see the sunlight themselves.

Private Members' Business

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): It being 5:15 p.m., pursuant to order made on Tuesday, November 27, 2018, 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.

•(1715)

[*Translation*]

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 (Mr. Anthony Rota): All those in favour of the amendment 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 yeas have it.

And five or more members having risen:

[*English*]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Pursuant to the order made on Tuesday, November 27, 2018, the division stands deferred until Monday, December 3, 2018 at the ordinary hour of daily adjournment.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I suspect that if you were to canvass the House, you would find unanimous consent to see the clock at 5:30 p.m. at this time so we could begin Private Members' Business.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): The House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' business as listed on today's Order Paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[*Translation*]

ENDING THE CAPTIVITY OF WHALES AND DOLPHINS ACT

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP), seconded by the member for Drummond, moved that Bill S-203, An Act to amend the Criminal Code and other Acts (ending the captivity of whales and dolphins), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

She said: Mr. Speaker, I am honoured this evening to speak to Bill S-203 at second reading stage. This bill would put an end to the captivity of whales and dolphins.

This bill already has quite an interesting history in the other chamber. It was introduced in the Senate by Senator Wilfred Moore, from Nova Scotia, who is now retired. After the senator retired, the bill received the support of Senator Murray Sinclair.

[*English*]

I am very honoured to have this bill in my hands to take through the House. However, I would like us all to regard this bill as being in our collective hands. It is best that we not see this as a partisan issue or for anyone's particular credit. It is about time that we took the actions that are put forward in this legislation.

We have learned a lot about whales and dolphins over the decades. It happens that one of the pivotal stories that changed how humans have thought about whales had a link to my own riding. There is a story of a whale, an orca that was wrongly named Moby Doll, instead of Moby Dick, because when humans first took this whale into captivity, they wrongly assumed that they had a female whale. This story goes back to the effort to kill the whales to study them back in the 1950s. Killer whales are carnivores. They will eat seals but are extremely friendly toward human beings and not a threat in open water.

Saturna Island is one of the perfectly gorgeous small islands that I am honoured to represent here. I represent Saanich—Gulf Islands, Saanich being the anglicized word for WSÁNEC nation. These islands are the unceded traditional territory of indigenous peoples. The islands were scattered and in WSÁNEC traditional creation myths, the islands themselves had life and had been peopled and had been scattered. One of those scattered islands is Saturna, which to this day has the most astonishing land-based whale watching one can experience.

In any case, the scientists and other people from Vancouver aquarium came up with the idea of capturing and killing a whale. They harpooned the killer whale, held it for a period of days and realized that the whale was intelligent. The taking of Moby Doll was the beginning of scientists' realization that whales are not big fish. Rather, the whales reminded them of ourselves. The whales are sentient beings. In the Sencoten language, I was mentioning that we are all related. In Sencoten language, the phrase for human beings is the "human people" and the word for whale translates as the "whale people". We are very connected.

That connection with whales has led science in different directions. Moby Doll did not survive. They did not know how to feed it. It was already injured. However, we learned a lot from that one contact. We learned that whales are our relatives. They are sentient beings and they are intelligent

Over the years, this has led us to greater research. What are the needs of whales? They are social creatures. We now know that the southern resident killer whales in the Salish Sea are acutely endangered. However, we have also learned a lot about what their needs are in the wild. They need a lot of space. They need to be able to swim in the wild. They have social needs. They have physical needs and bio-physical needs. They need to be in the wild. In the meantime, our fascination with them is for an obvious reason. They are fascinating.

● (1720)

The keeping of whales in captivity has become a form of entertainment. However, the science increasingly makes us understand that what might seem to be simple entertainment and a simple pleasure is actually animal cruelty, because these animals cannot be held in a swimming pool without significant cruelty and real pain and a loss of social contact and normal activities. As the science points out, cetaceans suffer from confinement, isolation and health problems. Confinement reduces their life span, their calves have much higher mortality, and the deprivation to their senses constitutes trauma, and when they are moved from place to place, kept in captivity or bred in captivity and separated from their calves, they suffer.

We saw this in the wild this summer when one of the southern resident killer whales in the Salish Sea gave birth to a dead calf or one that died immediately thereafter. That mother whale pushed that calf through the waters for 17 days while grieving. Even scientists who wanted to say they could not anthropomorphize this or assume that the whale was actually grieving realized, when this has gone on for 17 days, that the mother was grieving the loss of her calf. Imagine those kinds of sentient, emotional connections and then deciding to keep whales and dolphins in a swimming pool, thinking they would be fine.

We have taken steps in this country very recently, thanks to the former minister of fisheries, currently the Minister of Intergovernmental and Northern Affairs and Internal Trade, who shepherded Bill C-68 through the House. It is now before the Senate. It quite rightly, and for the first time, banned the capture of whales in open water. However, what Bill C-68 does not do is deal with this additional large risk of keeping whales in captivity, breeding them in captivity, selling them, importing them and having a trade in whales and dolphins. That is what this bill would end. The bill would end the keeping of whales and dolphins. This step has already been taken by the United Kingdom, Italy, New Zealand, Chile, Cyprus, Hungary and Mexico. They have either banned or severely restricted the keeping of whales in captivity.

I also want to acknowledge the leadership in this regard of the Vancouver Aquarium. That aquarium, by the way, has a phenomenal science program. I love touring it and talking to its scientists. They are doing a lot of the heavy lifting on issues like plastics in our oceans, but they kept whales in captivity for entertainment and have pledged to stop doing that. They have said they will stop voluntarily.

This bill is supported by numerous leaders and marine scientists, including the Humane Society internationally and in Canada; The Jane Goodall Institute; Animal Justice; and the former head trainer at

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Marineland, Phil Demers, who has appeared at press conferences with members in this place.

Whales are still being kept in captivity in Canada. We do not want to put the one institution that keeps whales in captivity out of business. There are lots of other ways to maintain a tourist attraction with the great facilities present in that institution. There are display and trained seal operations, one can imagine. I think of the Cirque du Soleil. We used to think circuses needed animals, that we needed to see an elephant lumbering through, and we now know that one of the most successful, economically profitable, off-the-charts successful circus is Cirque du Soleil.

● (1725)

[*Translation*]

Cirque du Soleil does not use a single animal; only humans. The circus is nevertheless quite famous and has been very successful. The same is possible in Marineland, in Ontario. They could have a kind of Cirque du Soleil that would actually be a circus of the sea.

[*English*]

I am not going to give professional tourist advice, but I want to make it really clear that this is not about shutting down a tourist attraction. This bill is about ending animal cruelty. We cannot pretend anymore that we do not know this is cruelty. That is very clear from scientists around the world, and I am really pleased to know that this bill has so far been supported and seconded officially by members of the other parties in this place.

This is why I hope we can make this a non-partisan effort and collectively and collaboratively end keeping whales and dolphins in captivity, phase out and end the trade in whales and dolphins and ensure that Canada joins other progressive countries from around the world in protecting our whales in the wild. That must be done. We have three species right now of critically endangered whales: the right whales in the Atlantic, the belugas in the Saguenay and, as I have mentioned, the southern resident killer whales of the Salish Sea.

Much more needs to be done to protect whales in the wild, but we cannot as a country continue the practice of holding these animals of intelligence and with complicated communication systems. Their ability to communicate songs over wide distances in the open ocean is impossible when they are kept confined essentially in swimming pools. No matter how much affection may appear between a trainer and a whale, these animals are being kept in ways that harm them, that kill them and that deny them their ability to be what they are: magnificent creatures, leviathans. One of the great texts of the Bible to describe a non-human species is the description of leviathan, one of God's great creations. Masters of the oceans, they cannot any longer be kept in captivity.

[*Translation*]

To all my colleagues in all parties in the House, I say that it is time to put an end to this cruel practice of keeping whales and dolphins in captivity. This must stop immediately.

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• (1730)

[English]

Now is the moment that we begin the second reading process of this bill. Please, I urge my colleagues, let us get it expeditiously to committee. Let us get it expeditiously back for report stage and third reading. Let us ensure that when we go back to our electorate in each one of our ridings across the country, we are able to say that we did one thing this year that we are really proud of. Let us say we ended the practice of keeping whales and dolphins in captivity, that we did something our children want us to do, that we did something for the wild beings of this planet.

In honour of Senator Wilfred Moore, I would like to end my remarks by saying that it is time we free Willy.

Mr. Scott Simms (Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to first congratulate the member on a speech that provided a perfect dismount near the end: free Willy, indeed. That is Senator Moore she is referring to, I am assuming. He was a fine colleague and incredible person. I miss him.

I remember watching a documentary some time ago, and very few people in North America probably did not see it. It was aired on CNN. It is called *Blackfish* and is about the situation in the south with the orcas or the killer whales. It is so illustrative of just how difficult this is. There is so much involved here. The member aptly described it as a big fish in a small bowl, essentially. The behaviour of some of these mammals is incredible. It was very enlightening for me and, obviously, for millions of people right in North America.

One aspect of that was the markets. I think about wholesale retail, if I can use that as an analogy. We know the places around North America where people take their kids to watch these mammals perform. Where are the most egregious markets by which they get these mammals? The practices, I am assuming, have been cruel in many cases; that has been documented. How would this bill affect that? I do not want to single out any countries here, but nevertheless, there is quite a market in this and it seems to be a viciously cruel way of taking these very young animals.

Ms. Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, Newfoundland and Labrador also has spectacular whales in its offshore, the humpbacks and minks. We are a country with three oceans, so we have a wide variety of whale species here.

The member is quite right. The taking of whales from the ocean and putting them into captivity is cruel. The trade does involve countries like China. We have heard rumours about the belugas currently held at Marineland, and there are over 22 belugas there. There is speculation and concern it may be getting ready to sell them and trade them to China.

The international trade in whales is a profitable one and whales die in the process.

Again, the hon. member raised the documentary movie *Blackfish*. I think that was Senator Moore's inspiration for bringing forward Bill S-203. He was so deeply disturbed by the story of Tilikum, the captive orca, that he wanted to ensure Canada was not part of this trade. It is simple legislation as far as it goes. It is clear, it would do the right thing and it would do them for the right reasons.

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands and I both represent regions of the Salish Sea, both very much informed by our constituents. They talk about the need to protect whales, to take our responsibility as citizens, now that we know the impacts on these highly social species. It is important for them to be able to dive deeply, to be able to communicate with each other. We know the social and feeding needs of the species. It is increasingly abhorrent to have them in captivity.

When my two nieces, Rachel and Breanna, were very young, the cool thing to do was have a birthday party at the aquarium. Now they and their friends say, “no way”, that this would be the worst birthday party they could ever go to. They are much more interested in going to aquariums, the kind of Ripley's Believe It or Not. As a result, the stocks of Sea World and so on have dropped as the appetite has left.

I am curious about my fellow parliamentarian's sense of the public support she has had for the eventual phase-out of keeping whales in captivity.

• (1735)

Ms. Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, my colleague and I share a lot of causes that relate to protecting the Salish Sea.

The level of public support for protecting whales is just off the charts. I get a lot of letters from school groups and thousand of letters in support this.

It was an effort to get the bill through the Senate. It was lost for a long time at committee in the Senate. Thousands of Canadians worked with Senator Moore and then Senator Sinclair to get the bill through the Senate. It was a struggle that took years. We must meet the expectations of Canadians from coast to coast to coast and ensure the bill passes expeditiously in this place.

Mr. Sean Casey (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak to Bill S-203, an act to amend the Criminal Code and other acts, also known as the act for ending the captivity of whales and dolphins, or as we have heard, the *Free Willy* bill. It was introduced in the other place by the hon. Senator Wilfred Moore on December 8, 2015, and following his retirement was carried by Senator Sinclair.

The bill proposes amendments to the Criminal Code, the Fisheries Act and the Wild Animal and Plant Protection and Regulation of International and Interprovincial Trade Act. Because I only have 10 minutes, I will refer to that statute from here forward as WAPPRIITA.

The goal of these amendments is to end the captivity of cetaceans; that is, whales, dolphins and porpoises in Canada. Indeed, the stated objective of Bill S-203 is to gradually reduce and eventually do away with the practice of holding whales, dolphins and other cetaceans captive in Canadian facilities.

Bill S-203 proposes amendments to the Criminal Code that would make it an offence to hold cetaceans in captivity. It proposes an amendment to the Fisheries Act that would prohibit the capture of a cetacean in order to take it into captivity. Finally, Bill S-203 proposes to amend the WAPPRIITA to prohibit the import of cetaceans into Canada and the export of a cetacean from Canada.

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[Translation]

Bill S-203 is a response to growing public concern about the well-being of cetaceans. We now have a greater understanding and awareness of the nature of these animals and the living conditions they need to be happy and healthy. There is clearly growing support for the protection of whales and other marine mammals in Canada and around the world.

[English]

Since its introduction, Bill S-203 has undergone significant changes. Our colleagues in the other place, particularly through the consultations and study done by the standing committee, have sent us a bill that deserves our full consideration.

Bill S-203 also now includes provisions that affirm the rights of indigenous peoples, many of whom feature whales as a central part of their culture and traditions.

In order to enable certain critical conservation and research activities to continue, Bill S-203 includes provisions that would create exceptions where an animal is in need of rescue or rehabilitation. Cetaceans currently in captivity at Marineland and the Vancouver Aquarium would also fall under the exception clauses; that is, these facilities would not be closed down, leaving animals that have never known another home with no place to be cared for.

We are surrounded on three incredibly wide-ranging coasts by spectacular oceans. These waters are home to 42 distinct populations of whales.

[Translation]

All of these animal species and many more are facing major threats. Global warming has affected water temperatures, and that is affecting the food supply. Illegal, unreported, unregulated fishing, accidental by-catch and entanglement in commercial fishing nets, declining food availability, noise pollution, habitat pollution and even collisions all pose a threat to cetaceans.

• (1740)

[English]

The conservation and protection of marine mammals in the wild, including cetaceans, has become a whole-of-government priority in Canada. This priority has been underscored by the increasing threats facing three endangered species of whales, the southern resident killer whales on the west coast, the North Atlantic right whales on the east coast, and the St. Lawrence estuary beluga in Quebec.

The government's commitment to recovering and protecting Canada's whale species is reflected in the support provided through the \$1.5 billion oceans protection plan announced by the Prime Minister in 2016, the \$167.4 million whales initiative announced as part of budget 2018, and the recent announcement of \$61.5 million for measures in support of the southern resident killer whale.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada has been coordinating with other federal departments and provincial and territorial governments to advance other initiatives, including reducing vessel strikes and entanglement of the North Atlantic right whale, reducing contaminants affecting the St. Lawrence estuary beluga, and introducing

amendments to the marine mammal regulations that establish minimum general approach distances for whales, dolphins and porpoises in Canadian fisheries waters.

Bill S-203's focus is on the capture of wild cetaceans for the purpose of keeping them in captivity as an attraction, and the ongoing holding and/or breeding of cetaceans in captivity. As I have said, there are only two facilities in Canada that hold cetaceans in captivity, Marineland in Niagara Falls, Ontario and the Vancouver Aquarium in British Columbia.

Marineland is a commercial facility that has approximately 60 cetaceans, including beluga whales, dolphins and one orca or killer whale. The vast majority of cetaceans held at Marineland are belugas.

The Vancouver Aquarium is a not-for-profit facility. It has only one cetacean at its facility, a 30-year old Pacific white-sided dolphin that was rescued from the wild and deemed non-releasable. Earlier this year, the Vancouver Aquarium announced that it would no longer display cetaceans and would focus instead on its work on conservation and rescuing stranded and injured whales and dolphins. The Vancouver Aquarium works with Fisheries and Oceans Canada to rescue and rehabilitate marine mammals in distress.

The Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard only issues licences for the capture of a live cetacean when the purpose is for scientific research or rehabilitation. In the past 10 years, only one such licence has been issued for the rehabilitation of a live stranded Pseudorca calf. It has been a matter of public policy for more than two decades that wild cetaceans not be captured and placed in captivity unless the goal is to rescue, rehabilitate and release them.

Provincial and territorial legislative regimes in this area continue to evolve. In 2015, Ontario banned the buying, selling or breeding of orca whales. The province also amended the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act to increase protection for other marine mammals held in captivity.

[Translation]

This bill was debated in the other place, so we have debated the amendments to the Fisheries Act that the government introduced in the spring and summer.

My colleagues may have noticed that some of the amendments put forward in Bill C-68 would achieve the main goal set out in Bill S-203: ending the captivity of cetaceans. Bill C-68 would do that without impeding the government's ability to do important scientific research.

Bill C-68 also includes provisions that protect the rights of northern indigenous peoples to export cetacean products, such as narwhal tusks.

Private Members' Business

● (1745)

[English]

Bill C-68 would prohibit capturing a cetacean with the intent to take it into captivity. Exceptions are made for the minister to authorize an exception if a cetacean is injured, in distress or in need of care.

The bill also proposes a regulation-making authority with respect to importing fish, including cetaceans. This regulation-making authority would allow the government to determine the circumstances under which a cetacean could be imported to or exported from Canada. For example, these movements may be permitted for purposes of repopulation or conservation. They may be prohibited if the intent is to display cetaceans in aquariums. These regulatory tools could also enable the government to authorize the import and export of cetaceans to sea sanctuaries should those facilities be established in the future.

The former minister of fisheries, oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard has acknowledged that the amendments to the Fisheries Act proposed in Bill C-68 as they pertain to keeping cetaceans in captivity were inspired by Bill S-203, and in particular the bill's sponsor, retired Senator Wilfred Moore.

There is no doubt that this government and Canadians from coast to coast to coast support the ban on the captivity of cetaceans for the sole purpose of display. That is why I look forward to supporting this bill to committee and participating in the debate that will occur there and hearing from witness testimony.

Mr. Robert Sopuck (Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise to speak on Bill S-203.

I am opposed to this bill. The bill is fundamentally flawed. I was interested to hear the previous two speakers conflate this particular bill with environmental conservation and the conservation of whales. This has nothing to do with conservation or the environment.

Any population ecologist worth their salt only considers the numbers of individuals who are in the population. With this particular bill, even though the previous speakers tried to conflate it with environmental protection, the only thing that counts are the numbers of cetaceans that are out there, the population size.

This bill will do nothing for the conservation of cetaceans or, indeed, the understanding of the natural world. This particular bill, in my view, is an emotional reaction to a problem that simply does not exist.

In terms of cetaceans, I know that the government is always pointing out the problem populations, and quite rightly so, the southern killer whale, the Atlantic right whale, the belugas in the St. Lawrence. I am pleased to say that in Manitoba, off the Churchill estuary, we have a population of beluga whales of 55,000 individual animals. Studies have shown that population is stable and/or increasing.

Obviously, interacting with cetaceans in the wild is desirable, but many Canadians simply do not have the opportunity to do so. I was interested in the parliamentary secretary's comments about the Arctic and narwhals. I think I am one of the few people in this House, apart from the member for Nunavut, who has actually seen narwhals and

experienced their beauty in the wild. It is something that very few people will see. They are remarkable creatures.

Many Canadians, however, do not have the opportunities that people like myself or those in the science community have had. Viewing cetaceans in captivity may be the only opportunity for many to understand cetaceans. Again, if the only place a person from an urban area who does not have a chance to get out in the wild and view cetaceans can learn about cetaceans is in captivity, obviously there are communication tools that various facilities will use to inform the visitors about cetaceans, cetacean conservation and the issue of the endangered species, for example. These are very important communications tools.

Regarding Ontario, I have been advised that there was a lengthy public debate in Ontario, which included the creation of an independent and international scientific advisory panel. They produced a very comprehensive report. There was the creation of a technical advisory group, composed of stakeholders from across the country. There were public hearings. I have been advised that provincial legislation has been passed that expressly permits keeping marine mammals in humane care, and creates and implements stringent regulations regarding the care and treatment of marine mammals.

The member for Saanich—Gulf Islands talked about the issues of animal cruelty and so on, and it reminds me of the debate we had on Bill C-246. The slippery slope is alive and well when it comes to this type of legislation. Who knows where it will lead, to rodeos or medical research? Who knows where this will lead once a bill like this is passed?

In terms of Marineland, again the founder of Marineland, John Holer, who is sadly now deceased, spoke to the Senate committee on May 16, 2017. Some of the takeaways from his testimony were that Marineland employs over 100 people year round and 700 during the operation season; Marineland has employed over 50,000 people in its 56 years of successful operation; Marineland does not seek or rely upon any public funding; Marineland annually commits approximately \$4 million a year to advertising, reaching more than 15 million people across Canada and the U.S.; and Marineland attracts close to a million visitors yearly to the Niagara region.

Obviously, the entire regional economy benefits from this tourism opportunity. Also of tremendous importance, thousands of special needs children, at least 3,500 per year, visit Marineland through special programs, including events like Autism Day.

What is important is looking at the population of cetaceans. I go back to the point that this particular bill has nothing to do with environmental conservation. Nobody should be led to believe that it does.

However, the humane holding of cetaceans in captivity, following veterinary-approved codes of practice, is a conservation tool that can be used to educate Canadians about cetaceans.

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•(1750)

I recall, for example, the great debates that we had on Bill C-246, the animal rights bill, a private member's bill that a Liberal member of Parliament tabled. Thankfully, a number of people in the government caucus voted against that bill, despite the protestations of the member who introduced the bill that it would not affect any of the animal-use communities.

The animal rights movement is clever in how it pushes forward legislation or policy change. The process is to start with something that seems innocent and then keep going and going, and pretty soon who knows what will be banned? For example, once we ban cetaceans from captivity, what is next? Let us look at beluga whales for example.

There are 55,000 beluga whales in the Churchill River estuary during the summer months. They are hunted by Inuit people from Arviat further north. Taking a few and putting them in captivity would mean nothing to the population of beluga.

Right now, however, polar bears are allowed to be held in captivity. Winnipeg has a world-famous, multimillion dollar polar bear exhibit. The number of polar bears is less than half that of beluga whales. What is next? This can go on and on.

Some people have a real antipathy towards zoos in general or animals in captivity, but this is how these campaigns start and this is the reason I will be actively opposing this legislation.

In terms of cetaceans, and as someone who has been to the Churchill River estuary and seen beluga whales, I have also been fortunate enough to see narwhals, which are incredible creatures. I can certainly understand the attachment people have to these beautiful creatures. Again, we admire them because we are taught about the beauty of nature and wildlife in facilities that are responsible and effective. However, without these facilities, many Canadians would never see such creatures.

The parliamentary secretary talked about the conservation of cetaceans. I want to tell him and the government caucus about the devastating effect that the new marine mammal regulations will have on the community of Churchill.

As I said, in the estuary in the summertime beluga whales are there in the thousands. As soon as a boat is launched, they swim up to it and there is nothing that can be done about it. These ridiculous marine mammal regulations that the government is insisting on enforcing would potentially kill this \$10 million industry.

I made a statement about Churchill earlier in the House today. Ecotourism is a \$10 million a year industry, employing 300 people. But the community of Churchill is on the ropes economically, and the whale and polar bear watching industries are the lifeblood of that particular community.

In the new marine mammal regulations, there is a minimum distance requirement of 50 metres. In the Churchill River estuary, which is not a very large area, there could be 30,000 beluga whales. How can they be avoided? Interestingly enough, the marine mammal regulations do not apply to large vessels that may be plowing up and down the estuary. They can plow through belugas willy-nilly, pardon the pun.

In terms of the ecotourism industry in the Churchill area, the very gentle environmental "use" this industry makes of the Churchill River estuary is the ultimate in sustainability, yet the government is promulgating marine mammal regulations that could potentially put that industry out of business.

I heard about the situation with humpback whales in Conception Bay. The operators there offer people the opportunity to slip into the water and swim with the whales. That would be completely banned under the new regulations. I have been told that the operator in Conception Bay lost \$60,000 in business.

None of these regulations will have any positive impact on cetacean populations whatsoever. I guarantee there has been no scientific proof that these marine mammal regulations will improve the situation of cetaceans in Canada. All they will do, as the Liberal government has done over and over again, is to hurt remote rural communities. I find that unacceptable.

•(1755)

Mr. Fin Donnelly (Port Moody—Coquitlam, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise to speak in support of Bill S-203, an act to amend the Criminal Code and other acts (ending the captivity of whales and dolphins).

The bill was first introduced in the Senate in 2015. It has taken three long years to get it here, and I fully support its quick passage into law. The purpose of the bill is to phase out the captivity of cetaceans: whales, dolphins and porpoises in Canada. There is an exception for rescues, rehabilitation, licensed scientific research, or if it is in the best interest of the cetacean.

Keeping these incredible creatures confined is cruel. This is a moral issue, but it is informed by science, and I hope all members of the House will support this legislation. The study of cetaceans is important, but New Democrats believe research on cetaceans can be conducted in an ethical manner in the wild where they belong. There, scientists can get a realistic view of their natural behaviours without causing a lifetime of pain and suffering.

Science has proven that they suffer in captivity. Let us have a look at what the Animal Welfare Institute reports about their natural behaviour compared to when they are in captivity.

In the wild, cetaceans can travel up to 100 miles a day, feeding and socializing with other members of their pods. Pods can contain hundreds of individuals with complex social bonds and hierarchies. In captivity, they are housed in small enclosures, unable to swim in a straight line for long or dive deeply. Sometimes they are housed alone without opportunities for socialization, or they are forced to live with incompatible animals and even species with which they would not naturally have close contact.

In the wild, cetaceans spend approximately 80% to 90% of their time under water. They have the freedom to make their own choices. In captivity, they spend approximately 80% of their time at the surface, looking for food and attention from their trainers, who make the choices for them.

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In the wild, they are surrounded by other sea life and are an integral part of marine ecosystems. They have evolved for millions of years in the oceans, and in most cases, they are the top predators. In captivity, cetaceans are in artificial environments that are sterile or lack stimulation. Tank water must be treated or filtered, or both, to avoid health problems for the animals, although they may still suffer from bacterial and fungal infections that can be deadly. Other species, such as fish, invertebrates and sea vegetation cannot survive these treatments, so display tanks are as empty as hotel swimming pools.

In the wild, cetaceans live in a world of natural sound. They rely on their hearing as we do on our sight. Echolocation is their main sensory system, and they use sound to find mates, migrate, communicate, forage, nurse, care for young, and escape predators. In captivity, cetaceans must listen to filtration systems, pumps, music, fireworks and people clapping and yelling daily. Their concrete and glass enclosures also reflect sounds, so a poorly designed enclosure can make artificial noises worse. Echolocation is rarely used, as a tank offers no novelties or challenges to explore.

In captivity, it must be horrific for these animals. Cetaceans are intelligent, emotional and social mammals. Orcas, in particular, are highly social animals that travel in groups or pods that consist of five to 30 whales, although some pods may combine to form a group of 100 or more.

Canadians witnessed their extraordinary human-like behaviour this past summer, as we watched the grieving ordeal of the mother orca, J-35 Tahlequah, who carried her dead newborn calf for about 1,600 kilometres over 17 days. She empathetically held on, diving deep to retrieve her calf each time it slid from her head. Jenny Atkinson, director of the Whale Museum on San Juan Island told the CBC:

We do know her family is sharing the responsibility of caring for this calf, that she's not always the one carrying it, that they seem to take turns. While we don't have photos of the other whales carrying it, because we've seen her so many times without the calf, we know that somebody else has it.

● (1800)

This type of grieving behaviour is not unique to killer whales. Dolphins and other mammals, including gorillas, are known to carry their deceased young in what is widely believed by scientists to be an expression of grief.

Sheila Thornton, the lead killer whale biologist for Fisheries and Oceans Canada describes it. She said:

Strong social bonds between the families of orcas drive much of their behaviour. The southern residents share food, a language, a culture of eating only fish and an ecological knowledge of where to find it in their home range.

Bill S-203 is an important piece of proposed legislation that would grandfather out captivity in three ways.

First, it would ban live captures under the Fisheries Act, except for rescues. To be clear, the bill would not interfere with rescues. In fact, it would allow for research if the cetacean is unfit to return to the wild.

Second, it would ban cetacean imports and exports, except if licensed for scientific research or in the cetacean's best interest. An example of that exemption would be a transfer to an open water

sanctuary under the Wild Animal and Plant Protection and Regulation of International and Interprovincial Trade Act, or WAPPRITA.

Third, it would ban breeding under the animal cruelty provisions of the Criminal Code, subject to a summary conviction and a \$200,000 fine unless provincially licensed for scientific research.

It is important to note that government Bill C-68, which is currently in the Senate, prohibits cetacean captures except for rescues and authorizes the regulation of imports. However, Bill C-68 would not restrict imports or exports by law or ban breeding.

Bill S-203 would also ban cetacean performances for entertainment. Currently, two Canadian facilities hold captive cetaceans. The Vancouver Aquarium holds one dolphin and has publicly committed to not hold any new cetaceans following the Vancouver Park Board ban. Marineland in Niagara Falls, Ontario, holds 50 to 60 belugas, five dolphins and one orca. Since 2015, it has been illegal to buy, sell or breed orcas in that province.

For these facilities, a change brought on as a result of Bill S-203 would be felt gradually. Marineland, for example, could keep its current whales and dolphins, many of which should live for decades, and in that time it could evolve to a more sustainable model, perhaps with a focus on conservation. The Vancouver Aquarium, for instance, could retain its current residents for research and may even acquire new whales and dolphins through rescue and rehabilitation.

Phil Demers, a former head trainer at Marineland, said this about the bill:

As a former Marine Mammal Trainer, I believe the bill to ban cetacean captivity and breeding in Canada is imperative and long-overdue. I have witnessed the physiological and emotional consequences captivity imposes on these magnificent beings, and those who care for them. No living being should be forced to endure what I've witnessed, and it's my hope that this bill will finally put an end to these cruel practices.

It is about time. Canada is behind other jurisdictions on this issue. The United Kingdom, Italy, New Zealand, Chile, Cyprus, Hungary and Mexico all have banned or severely restricted these practices. Companies have begun ending their partnerships with other companies that keep cetaceans in captivity. Air Canada, WestJet, JetBlue, Southwest Airlines and Taco Bell have all recently ended their association with SeaWorld Entertainment, which operates a total of 12 parks in the United States.

In a letter to the Vancouver Parks Board, Dr. Jane Goodall said:

The scientific community is also responding to the captivity of these highly social and intelligent species as we now know more than ever, about the complex environments such species require to thrive and achieve good welfare. Those of us who have had the fortunate opportunity to study wild animals in their natural settings where family, community structure and communication form a foundation for these animals' existence, know the implications of captivity on such species.

● (1805)

In 1977, I received the honour of a lifetime when the Squamish nation bestowed me with the name *Iyim Yewyews*, meaning orca, blackfish or killer whale, a strong swimmer in the animal world. They gave me this name for the work I was doing to conserve, protect and restore the watersheds, our marine environment and the natural world, which includes these whales.

I encourage all members to get on the right side of history and pass this important bill.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Resuming debate, the hon. member for Toronto—Danforth will have approximately seven minutes.

Ms. Julie Dabrusin (Toronto—Danforth, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to stand today in support of this bill to end the captivity of whales and dolphins. What is important to me in seeing this bill go forward is that we are making steps about animal welfare. There is so much more to do, but we are seeing steps going forward.

I was pleased to speak in favour of the bill that would end sexual abuse of animals and animal fighting. I am looking forward to bills that are coming from the other place in respect to testing on animals for cosmetics, as well as shark finning.

Today, I am very pleased to stand in support of this bill, which builds on work that was done by the government bill, Bill C-68, which also aims to end captivity or at least capture cetaceans. This Senate bill goes further and it is a very important step.

One of my favourite holiday memories is from my vacation to Newfoundland. I went for my friend's wedding. We went to the Bonavista Peninsula.

We were at the Bonavista Social Club. As my family and I sat on the porch, we watched whales out in the bay. It was the most beautiful thing. What was beautiful about it was not just the whales; it was the fact that they were in their natural element. It was part of what added to the beauty. If people want to learn about animals and about cetaceans, the best way is to do that is to see them in nature, enjoying themselves and being together. That was truly one of my favourite holiday memories.

When I compare that memory to what I hear about the conditions of cetaceans being kept in captivity, it breaks my heart. It also breaks my heart when I hear members from across the way talking so disparagingly about taking this step forward to support our cetaceans and to ensure they do not suffer.

Keeping cetaceans in captivity is a fairly new development. It started in the 1960s. I understand the first orca on display was in 1964. Therefore, this has not happened forever. However, 54 years after that first orca was put on display, it is finally time to put an end to this practice. It is time for us to say "no more".

I would like to take a moment to thank the leadership of the former Senator Wilfred Moore, who brought the bill forward in the

Private Members' Business

other place, and Senator Murray Sinclair, who then took over the sponsorship of the bill and moved it forward. I also look very much forward to working with the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands to ensure we get the bill through this place, so we can move it forward.

What would the bill do?

It proposes to ban holding cetaceans in captivity. It also bans the breeding of cetaceans. That is also part of the problem. It is not just taking them out from the wild, but it is also about breeding them for the purposes of captivity. It bans the capture of cetaceans from the wild and it bans the import and export of cetaceans.

For anyone who is not used to the term cetacean, it is defined as whales, dolphins and porpoises.

It is important that the bill have some teeth. Therefore it proposed a fine of up to \$200,000 for people who contravene it.

As I mentioned, the bill goes further than Bill C-68, but I am very happy our government took that first step. Right now, Bill C-68 is being considered in the other place. However, this bill takes important additional steps. I ask all members in this place to give it serious thought and see how we can go further.

I want there to be no mistake. We must end keeping whale and dolphins in captivity. It is heartbreaking to hear some of the examples, such as confining whales to small spaces. A wild orca may travel 150 kilometres in a day. I was reading an article that described orcas in captivity as couch potatoes. It is not healthy. Apparently the largest orca tank in the world is less than one ten thousandths of 1% of the size of the smallest home range for wild orcas. That is unbelievable. Imagine how that would feel.

● (1810)

To picture that, an orca would have to swim the circumference of the main pool in SeaWorld more than 1,400 times to get that kind of distance. It is dizzying. I could not imagine having to go through that. Senator Sinclair perhaps said it best when he was speaking to senators in the other place about this bill. He said, "So think about this, senators: How would you feel if you had to live the rest of your life in a bathtub?"

I put that same question to the members here. How would they feel spending the rest of their lives in a bathtub?

Another part that really struck me was when I heard about the effect of sound in these tanks for cetaceans. They use sound to be able to get around. Echolocation is the right term. It is the main sensory system. Sound reverberates within these tanks, and they have more sounds from filtration systems, clapping, yelling and music. We can imagine being confined to a small space and having that kind of sensory overload. It is horrible, and it actually has an impact on whales and dolphins.

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We see whales harming themselves in captivity. They do not in the wild, but we can understand that being held in a tank like that, having heard a bit of what I have described, would be so frustrating for them. They have hurting teeth. Their teeth are damaged from biting on the bars. They rub against the sides of the tank and damage themselves. That is not normal behaviour. It is the behaviour of whales and dolphins that are deeply frustrated and are being harmed by their circumstances.

Another part we have heard a bit about and I would like to emphasize is that whales, for example orcas, are very social. They are part of a family. In fact, I read somewhere that male orcas never leave their moms. They go away for a short bit, mate and come back. They stay as a family, and it is very important for them to stay together. If we take whales out of that family pod, we are breaking a very important tie for them. Not only are they confined to this bathtub, not only do they have these sounds disturbing them, they are pulled away from their social networks. That is a very important part of their health and mental health. We can add to that the fact that they do not necessarily get along with whales from other families, so there can be aggression between them, and we have seen that type of aggression in certain situations.

There are also shortened lifespan. When we have whales in captivity, they do not live as long as they do in the wild. From what I understand, of 200 orcas that have been held in captivity, none have reached what we would describe as old age, which would be about 60 years for a male and 80 years for a female. None of them have lived that long, because of the conditions they are kept in.

I want to mention sanctuaries for whales, because ultimately, we are going to have to find a place for those who cannot be released into the wild after they have been held in captivity. When we are doing this, we need to make sure that we do not have sanctuaries that also treat the whales as entertainment. We need to be sure that the sanctuaries provide them with a healthy atmosphere.

Mr. Speaker, you have been very kind to give me this time. I would like to thank the animal advocates who have stood up and carried this ball. We are going to keep carrying that ball and bring it over the line.

• (1815)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): The time provided for the consideration of Private Members' Business is now expired and the order is dropped to the bottom of the order of precedence on the Order Paper.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

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

[*English*]

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise this evening to pursue a question I asked on September 20 on the subject of the ongoing tragic and unacceptable conditions in Kashechewan in James Bay.

While I put the question to the Prime Minister, I also recognized that the Minister of Indigenous Services was working very hard. I recognize and see in her someone who is dedicated and compassionate and I think it is making a difference. It was a big decision for the government to divide what used to be called the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs into two departments. In the one, the hon. minister who had previously held the full portfolio would thereafter be responsible for untangling the issues of treaties and legal entitlements, particularly the long-term question of how to get rid of the Indian Act, a racist piece of legislation. In the other, the previous Minister of Health would become the Minister of Indigenous Services and be responsible for the large task of providing drinking water in every indigenous community, and for dealing with the unacceptable low quality of education provided to indigenous children, and the deep problem of inadequate, mouldy housing that is totally inappropriate for the climate of various indigenous communities. This particular community is one that has suffered for a very long time.

In the week of September 20, the students from Kashechewan came to Ottawa to plead with the federal government for a new school. What struck me forcefully before I asked the question and the reason I decided to ask it of the Prime Minister was that the Minister of Indigenous Services said in the media, “if your community wants to be moved, I will do everything in my power to make it possible.” I asked the Prime Minister whether the government was prepared to support the Minister of Indigenous Services and make it so. The Prime Minister has the ability to make it so. The Minister of Finance has the ability to make it so.

The response by the Prime Minister was not inappropriate. It just did not respond exactly to my question, which is what the late show today is all about. The Prime Minister talked about what the government had already done and stated:

In March 2017, we signed a framework agreement with the Government of Ontario and Kashechewan First Nation to support the health and safety of the community. This work is ongoing and includes an action plan that reflects the community's culture, priorities and options for relocation.

He also mentioned that a feasibility study was under way.

The difficulty is that the community has been left in a flood-prone area that is not their traditional home or territory. They were moved there in 1957. It is interesting that in the colonial process, we first colonize, then bring in the churches and the churches recruit and convert. The group that is now living in Kashechewan happens to have been forcefully moved there because they had been converted by the people of my faith. I happen to be Anglican. It was the Anglican group that was put on the north shoreline of the river despite it being known to be a flood-prone region.

Every year we spend money. It costs millions of dollars to evacuate the community and bring them to a place that is not flooded. It is time to move them to a place that is not flood-prone.

• (1820)

Mr. Dan Vandal (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indigenous Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as always, it is a pleasure for me to rise in the House to speak on many different subjects. I want to begin by acknowledging that we are on the unceded land of the Algonquin people.

*Adjournment Proceedings**[Translation]*

On September 17, 2018, Chief Friday and students from the Kashechewan nation came to Ottawa to ask for a new school and secure the support of the Minister of Indigenous Services for relocating their community.

[English]

The minister met with Chief Friday, the community and students, and confirmed that the Government of Canada will support the community's request for a modular school solution. A modular school will provide a safe and healthy place for the students to learn and will better serve the students' needs. It has the immense added benefit that it could be moved to a new site in the future.

I am pleased to advise that progress has been made. Kashechewan issued a request for proposals for the new school on November 21. Our shared goal is to have a contract in place in the coming months so that supplies can be ordered in time for delivery on the winter road. Our top priority is the safety and well-being of the students and their education.

The minister also reiterated the government's support for the community and its larger needs. Indigenous Services Canada has provided funding to the community to undertake a feasibility study to determine the viability of the community preferred site for relocation. The site is located on higher ground a short distance upstream, on the Albany River, which is less prone to flooding during the annual spring breakup. The department has received the final report of the site feasibility study and is working very closely with the community on the next steps in this process.

[Translation]

These measures are consistent with the framework agreement entitled, "Together we Work for Hope", which was signed by the Government of Canada, the Government of Ontario, and the Kashechewan First Nation on March 31, 2017, in order to support the safety, health and future of the community.

[English]

Steady progress has been made since the signing of the framework agreement to address the first nation's long-standing challenges. A tripartite steering committee has been established with representatives from Kashechewan First Nation, the Government of Canada and the Province of Ontario on the implementation of an action plan to address key priority areas. The committee met on September 20, and is meeting again in a few weeks to further discuss progress.

Residents of Kashechewan need reliable access to effective programs and services, functional housing, as well as infrastructure. There is a lot of good news. I am happy to note that upgrades are currently being made to the water treatment plant and repairs have been completed to the secondary school. There have also been investments in health and social programs, including funding for youth mental health.

[Translation]

Our government remains committed to working in close co-operation with the Kashechewan First Nation to ensure the safety, health and future of the community.

[English]

Ms. Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, this is the sort of late show debate I really like, where we are moving closer to being on the same page. When it has been decided this is the right community to move to, the right place upstream, there are some very beautiful large trees on the site which I believe they have decided would be best. Those trees indicate it is not flood prone, as trees that big do not grow overnight, as one of the experts noted. In the effort toward truth and reconciliation, is this country prepared to do what it should do, which may cost as much as \$800 million or could cost \$1 billion? We have to move a community to a place where they can live, not a place where every year we spend millions to move them in a state of emergency and where the schools are portables. We can do better. We must do better. However, I think we need the political will to say that when it comes to it, and we know what we want, we will write the cheque.

● (1825)

Mr. Dan Vandal: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Indigenous Services has been very clear in her support for Kashechewan's short-term, medium-term and long-term goals, including its desire to relocate the community. However, a multi-stage process will take time, and in the interim, we must continue to provide quality short-term services for the community, functional housing and infrastructure.

Our government is 100% committed to working closely with Kashechewan First Nation to support a healthy and sustainable community. The plans include working together with federal partners and Ontario ministries to take into account concerns about the annual flood risks at the current site.

[Translation]

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Ms. Christine Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, NDP): Mr. Speaker, if memory serves, the question that I am raising today dates back to September 21 or 22. At that time, the Quebec election was coming up.

At the end of August, the Government of Quebec announced that it would invest in two cell tower projects. At the time, the Government of Quebec was getting fed up with the federal government because it was constantly changing its mind about the cellphone issue. As a result, Quebec decided to pay for the federal government's share of the cell tower projects itself.

I have been asking the government for over a year to come up with a plan for cellphone coverage. Unfortunately, every time I ask a question about the cellphone networks in rural and remote areas like mine, the government responds by talking about the Internet. Sometimes, it goes as far as to say that a plan is coming, but still nothing has been done. The next election is drawing ever closer and I am getting frantic because I do not know whether anything will end up happening.

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It is important to understand that cellular service is crucial for the safety of people who live in remote regions. In many places, there are extremely busy roads and main highways linking the biggest towns in rural regions that still have huge areas with no cell service. This is having a serious economic impact and adverse effects on people's safety. Everyone understands the impact on safety. It is absolutely inconceivable in this day and age that someone would be unable to call 911 in the event of a traffic accident or specific problem.

On top of that, this has serious economic repercussions. Imagine having to go to a meeting and, after driving for 30 minutes, you learn that the meeting has been cancelled. That means wasting one full hour of your time driving to a meeting that never takes place. It is not only the time involved, but also all the travel costs, including the mileage, the wear and tear on the vehicle, and so on. In terms of efficiency, this is having a significant impact on businesses, particularly on workers who travel by car. No matter how many questions we ask, the government still does not have a plan.

I want to know why it is that every time I ask a question about cell service, I get an answer about the Internet. Why is the government leaving it up to provincial governments to invest in these projects? Why is it doing absolutely nothing? The government is completely washing its hands of the issue.

Lots of people ask me why their cellphone gets a signal when they are travelling all over Africa, and it costs a lot less, but when they are in Canada, a G7 country, they do not have a cellular network that works even on some main roads. Why is the cellular network more reliable in Africa than in a country like Canada, a G7 country?

• (1830)

Mr. David Lametti (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague from Abitibi—Témiscamingue for her question. I am pleased to respond to her comments about wireless network coverage.

Canadians need access to telecommunications services, including wireless services, in order to participate in the digital economy. This is why the government's telecommunications policy is based on three main objectives: quality, coverage and affordability.

Mobile coverage is indispensable, and gaps in service are frustrating to Canadians. The government has taken steps to expand the mobile wireless network in rural areas. This involves requiring that providers provide service in rural areas in accordance with the terms of the appropriate spectrum licences so that Canadians across the country have access to state-of-the-art wireless services.

The government is also looking to the future. Data traffic from the growing number of connected devices will only increase over time. Wireless airwaves, known as spectrum, are essential to supporting increasing demand for data. The government is responding through the release of different types of spectrum. For example, the 600 megahertz spectrum band is excellent for providing rural and urban areas with mobile services because it can carry signals over long distances and deep into buildings.

That is why our upcoming 600 megahertz auction will require carriers to deploy beyond the major urban areas. These requirements

are more stringent than in the past and place an emphasis on promoting rural connectivity.

Mid-band spectrum allows for a mixture of providing coverage and capacity. The government initiated a consultation to release additional mid-band spectrum, known as 3,500 megahertz, while supporting the provision of services in rural areas.

The release of spectrum is part of the government's broader rural strategy, which also includes the connect to innovate program. This program will invest up to \$500 million by 2021 and bring enhanced high-speed Internet to over 900 rural and remote communities.

Also, the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission, the CRTC, recently announced the details of its \$750-million broadband fund. As part of the fund, the CRTC set a goal that wireless coverage should include major transportation roads to the greatest extent possible.

Wireless projects will be chosen by geographic coverage and kilometres of road covered. The CRTC will begin the competitive process to select projects in 2019.

Supporting new technology also requires investment in network infrastructure. In 2016, Canadian telecommunications companies invested over \$11 billion in their networks. Wireless 4G or LTE networks are available to 99% of Canadians.

The government understands the need for high-speed Internet—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Order. The hon. member for Abitibi—Témiscamingue.

Ms. Christine Moore: Mr. Speaker, we are making progress. I managed to get half an answer pertaining to cell service and wireless networks. At least we are talking about the same subject for once. I want to thank my colleague for making the distinction between Internet and cell service. That said, although he seems to be starting to understand the problem, I would really like him to answer one question.

The two projects in Abitibi—Témiscamingue and Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean that I talked about have received massive support from the local community, who believed their needs were being met. That is why the Quebec government decided to cover the federal government's share too.

Can my colleague tell me whether the federal government will commit to reimbursing Quebec for the portion that the feds were supposed to invest but Quebec had to invest instead?

• (1835)

Mr. David Lametti: Mr. Speaker, I do not have an answer regarding the two specific projects because that was not part of the question I was given.

Adjournment Proceedings

In closing, I want to reiterate that our government is committed to fostering an environment conducive to investment in this crucial sector of our economy. I want to assure this House and Canadians that the government is fully aware of the vitality of the telecommunications sector for all Canadians.

We remain committed to our objectives, which are to support competition, choice and availability of telecommunications services and to foster a strong investment environment.

[English]

STEEL INDUSTRY

Mr. Erin Weir (Regina—Lewvan, CCF): Mr. Speaker, earlier this month I asked about the structural steel construction of the new LNG Canada facility. After determining that China was dumping and subsidizing structural steel, the Canadian International Trade Tribunal applied countervailing duties. LNG Canada sought an exception from those tariffs so that it could ship in steel modules from China. It appears that the Government of Canada has granted exactly such an exception.

It is understandable that the government wants to pull out all the stops to facilitate a \$40-billion project. However, we should recognize that this project will not contribute very much to our economy if \$39 billion is spent on imported components. On the contrary, I would argue that the construction of LNG Canada should be seized as an opportunity to develop Canada's steel industry.

As much as I would like to advocate that these steel modules be built in Regina, I recognize that it would not be feasible to ship them over land to the west coast. However, if they can be shipped from China, perhaps they could be shipped from Canada's east coast or perhaps we need to look at developing the construction facilities on Canada's west coast to build the modules right there. Therefore, we should take this as an opportunity, a historic chance, to build up our steel industry. There are all kinds of ways that the government could try to support this industrial development. However, the first and obvious step would be to uphold the existing tariffs on Chinese structural steel and not to grant an exception for LNG Canada to ship in modules from China rather than build them here.

I have talked about Canada's steel industry. Another aspect of the LNG Canada project is the regulation of tanker traffic on our west coast. Yesterday, I saw Canada's best premier, Rachel Notley, speak to the Canadian Club here in Ottawa. Unfortunately, only one other member of this House attended that event. It is too bad that other MPs missed the speech because Premier Notley raised a very good point, that the LNG Canada project inevitably means a large number of tankers on the north coast of British Columbia, which seems inconsistent with Bill C-48, which put a moratorium on oil tankers on the north coast of B.C.

I supported Bill C-48 because it seemed like a reasonable compromise to limit tanker traffic on the north coast and allow it on the south coast. That seemed consistent with the plan to export oil through the Trans Mountain expansion. However, since that project is now stalled, I think we need to re-examine whether it makes sense to ban oil tankers while increasing the number of LNG tankers. Maybe the government has a good reason for that, but I think we need more of an explanation.

Therefore, I have two questions for the parliamentary secretary. Why not use the LNG Canada project as an opportunity to develop Canada's steel industry? Why continue to ban oil tankers on B.C.'s north coast while the government supports LNG tankers in those same waters?

• (1840)

Mr. David Lametti (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will treasure this moment as being a moment in the House with the hon. member for the CCF Party.

I will channel my inner Tommy Douglas and do my best, although I warn members that it does not appear to be exactly the question that I was prepared for.

[Translation]

The Government of Canada continues to defend Canada's steel industry and to support the country's workers.

We have a robust and reactive trade remedy system to deal with undervalued and unfairly subsidized steel imports into the Canadian market. In recent years, we have taken steps to enhance our response to unfair trade. This summer, the government announced a series of measures to improve the effectiveness of Canada's trade law enforcement.

These measures include regulatory amendments to improve the effectiveness of Canada's trade remedy system, particularly by providing the Canada Border Services Agency with the tools required to fight the circumvention of duties.

They also include regulatory amendments to improve the country of origin labelling regime in order to provide customs officers with additional tools to verify the country of origin of certain steel products and to better align with the U.S. system.

Finally, there are additional funds to bolster the enforcement of trade rules, which will require a 50% increase in the number of employees at the Canada Border Services Agency working solely on investigations and compliance with trade remedy actions.

When the United States imposed unjustified and counterproductive tariffs on Canadian steel and aluminum, the Government of Canada reacted the same way. On July 1, 2018, Canada began to impose reciprocal countermeasures, dollar for dollar, on U.S. imports of steel, aluminum and other products representing \$16.6 billion, while continuing to work to have the American tariffs completely removed. We are continuing that work today, even after the USMCA agreement was signed.

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While the Government of Canada continues to work with the United States to remove the tariffs on steel and aluminum, we are aware that these tariffs and our own Canadian countermeasures could have an impact on businesses and workers. For example, given the longstanding integration of the Canadian and American supply chains, the Government of Canada recognizes that the corrective measures taken by Canada against U.S. imports may cause problems for Canadian manufacturers that depend on American steel and aluminum. That is why the government undertook a process to allow Canadian companies dealing with exceptional circumstances to apply for targeted relief.

Those measures represent a balanced response that will support Canadian producers and manufacturers.

• (1845)

[*English*]

Mr. Erin Weir: Mr. Speaker, I certainly appreciate that the parliamentary secretary may not have come here this evening prepared to talk about tanker regulations that did seem flow from the broader issue of the LNG Canada project. I would just encourage the federal government to take seriously the question posed by Alberta Premier Rachel Notley.

The parliamentary secretary did a fine job of summarizing the government's actions for special import measures. I think the government has done a decent job of strengthening our system to respond to unfairly traded products, such as Chinese steel, and that system resulted in countervailing tariffs on Chinese structural steel.

The question that I asked originally, and that I asked again this evening, is this. Why is the government backing down from its own system and allowing this exception for LNG Canada?

Mr. David Lametti: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for elaborating on his question. I will undertake to, first of all, deliver his opinion on Premier Notley's role and that her comments should be carefully looked at, and I will deliver the primary question he has asked this evening.

I will undertake to do that on his behalf, and I thank him for that.

[*Translation*]

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

(The House adjourned at 6:45 p.m.)

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