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OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)

Wednesday, December 12, 2018

—

Speaker: The Honourable Geoff Regan

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, December 12, 2018

The House met at 2 p.m.

Prayer

• (1405)

[*English*]

The Speaker: It being Wednesday, we will now have the singing of *O Canada*, led by the hon. member for Long Range Mountains.

[*Members sang the national anthem*]

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*Translation*]

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

Mr. Luc Thériault (Montcalm, BQ): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Bloc Québécois, I would like to wish all Quebecers a merry Christmas and a happy new year. I would also like to extend holiday greetings to my fellow members of Parliament.

The holidays give us a chance to spend time with our loved ones and recharge our batteries. New Year's Day being a time for making resolutions, I have a few suggestions for the Prime Minister.

First, he could resolve to pay for his own vacations and avoid bringing too much clothing in his luggage when he travels abroad.

Second, he could resolve to give Davie some really good contracts, increase health transfers and compensate our farmers for losses due to the new free trade agreements.

Last, he could resolve to not run a pipeline through Quebec and, if possible, to not buy pipelines from Americans with our money. He could also resolve to listen to Quebecers for once. That would be great.

Happy holidays to all.

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HIGH-SPEED INTERNET

Hon. Denis Paradis (Brome—Missisquoi, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the rapid deployment of high-speed Internet is essential to the people of Brome—Missisquoi. This is an essential service that many of my constituents have been waiting for for a long time.

On November 28, I met Patrick Bonvouloir, the president and CEO of IHR Télécom, a company that rolled out fibre optics across my riding. My colleague, the member for Saint-Jean was there, and we discussed what needs to be done to move forward quickly, including the involvement of the CRTC.

I want to point out that IHR Télécom was among the first to receive federal and provincial government approval. It has done exemplary work, and the first homes in Pike River and Saint-Sébastien will be connected as of January 2019. Everyone involved in this file must work together to get all of Brome—Missisquoi connected as quickly as possible.

I want to take this opportunity to wish everyone happy holidays and to thank my team for their excellent work.

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[*English*]

HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, while we enjoy time away, I hope we will remain attentive to challenges facing fragile democracies around the world. For example, in Sri Lanka, the President has sought to oust the elected Prime Minister and replace him with a former president with a troubling human rights record. Our active engagement with that situation now is needed to prevent the complete erosion of democracy. During the last election, the Liberals promised to actively engage the situation in Sri Lanka to promote justice and reconciliation but have failed to act.

The human rights situation in Turkey deserves more attention as well. Much has rightly been said about the murder of Jamal Khashoggi, but let us not forget that the Saudi consulate is not the only place in Turkey where it is dangerous to be a journalist. Canada must not allow Turkey to use this incident to whitewash its own declining human rights record.

I note as well that the people of Bangladesh will be going to the polls over our Christmas holidays. Minority communities and other Bangladeshis are hopeful that communal violence will be avoided. Canadians are watching and are wishing that country very well.

As we prepare for the holidays, let us recommit ourselves to standing up for the less fortunate and to greater engagement with human rights issues around the world.

Merry Christmas.

Statements by Members

●(1410)

VOLUNTEERISM

Mr. Doug Eyolfson (Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia—Headingley, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honour two constituents, Rusty and his human companion, George Ames, for their amazing work at the St. Boniface Hospital. Rusty, the fluffy, glasses-wearing therapy dog, and George have been a fixture at the hospital for nearly a decade, volunteering their time comforting both patients and staff.

Last year the pair received the Senate 150th Anniversary Medal for their dedication, and recently, the hospital unveiled a portrait of the doctors commissioned in their honour. As one of the doctors at St. Boniface said, “I think that a happy, good-natured, loving dog makes a big difference to alleviate some of that stress and help you remember that there's a lot of goodness in the world.”

At 15 years of age, Rusty is still going strong and is helping people in all walks of life get through stressful and difficult times.

I thank George for his dedication to helping bring moments of cheer into people's lives, and to Rusty I say, “Good boy.”

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GOVERNMENT POLICIES

Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill—Keewatinook Aski, NDP): Mr. Speaker, 2018 has been a tough year for people where I am from. People have lost their jobs in communities like Thompson and are set to lose them in Flin Flon. Communities like Churchill are struggling to find their footing. First nations continue to face a housing crisis. Education is grossly underfunded. People are literally dying because of the lack of health care supports.

People have had enough. It is similar across the country. Canadians are falling behind, all this while their government sits on the sidelines. Instead of fighting for good jobs, the government is fighting workers, like postal workers, and speeding up the hollowing out of industries through foreign takeovers and job-killing trade deals. Instead of fighting climate change, the government is buying a pipeline. The government is not part of the solution; it is part of the problem.

This is my message to the Prime Minister. Enough of the benefits for rich corporate friends. Enough of hollow words on climate change. Enough of pushing Canadians further behind.

Enough is enough. Canadians deserve better in 2019.

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CONDOLENCES

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon (Kanata—Carleton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is with great sadness that I rise to speak of the passing of the granddaughter of long-time member of Parliament Marlene Catterall.

Marlene asked me to share that at 21 years old, Claire had everything to live for. She was beautiful, smart, talented, caring and loved by all, but barely a week ago, Claire took her own life, unable to live any longer with the demons of depression that tormented her.

The unwavering devotion and care of her adoring parents and the years of medication and treatment in the end could not rescue her from this terrible illness. At the age of 16, however, Claire had registered as an organ donor, and so in fulfilling her wish, we know that Claire will live on as her precious heart continues to beat in another body to live a new life, to give life, and to save another family from the grief that her's is enduring now.

I say to her, “Shine brightly, Claire, shine on.” We love her.

* * *

ONE SEED PROJECT

Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to give a shout-out to Lambton College for its Enactus project, the One Seed project, which just won first place globally. The students in this project have lifted 330,000 people in Zambia out of poverty. By training 75,000 farmers in no-till farming methods, people who did not have enough food for a day are now able to sustain themselves and their families. The profits from their improved yields went into rainwater collection for drip irrigation, which allowed crop diversification into other foods, such as peanuts. This led to the construction of a peanut butter factory. Enactus students even built a health centre for the community.

I am so proud of Lambton College, the Enactus program and the work of the One Seed team. One Seed is number one.

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PROJECT WELLNESS

Mr. Dan Ruimy (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, you may remember that a year ago, I rose to celebrate my constituent George Klassen's 80th birthday and the work he does drilling water wells with Project Wellness. I ended by saying that maybe one day, I will be out there with him.

This past constituency week, in November, I took some personal time to join George in Malawi, Africa, and what an incredible journey it was. We drilled wells in three villages and provided a sustainable source of fresh, clean water to thousands of people. I saw first-hand the impact fresh water can have in a village. They now have the ability to grow their own crops. They no longer have to drink from the river they bathe in. This leads to less sickness and disease, which leads to better health.

We look around and see what they do not have. They look around and they see what they do have.

This Christmas will be the most special for me. George is with us today. From my family in this House to his, I say merry Christmas.

Statements by Members

●(1415)

MAKE-A-WISH CANADA

Ms. Kate Young (London West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, for years, the Make-A-Wish foundation has granted wishes to children with life-threatening medical conditions.

Aiden Anderson is a 15-year-old boy from my riding of London West who lives with a severe heart condition. Today his wish is coming true. Aiden's wish is to be Prime Minister for the day. He is here today with his family on Parliament Hill and gets to experience a tour of Centre Block, dining at the parliamentary restaurant, holding his own press conference and of course, meeting the Prime Minister of Canada.

His strength, determination and courage serve as an inspiration. He sets an example for all of us and demonstrates that no matter one's age or the challenge we face, we can and we will succeed.

I congratulate the Prime Minister for the day, Aiden Anderson.

* * *

OIL INDUSTRY

Mr. Blaine Calkins (Red Deer—Lacombe, CPC): Mr. Speaker, coveralls matter. They matter because they are worn by people, workers who get up day in and day out and make all our lives better.

With me here in Ottawa are the coveralls I last wore when I worked in the patch in Alberta. They bear my name and the company's name, but more importantly, these coveralls symbolize the current plight of every unemployed energy and construction worker in Canada. Right now there are over 100,000 pairs of coveralls stuffed in duffle bags, hanging in closets and not being used, all because of destructive government decisions.

The energy I helped extract from the ground likely ended up in the gas tank of a mom taking her kids to soccer, music lessons or school; maybe in a truck bringing fresh fruit and vegetables, lumber or consumer electronics to a local store; possibly in a tractor by a farmer preparing his fields to grow food for the world, or maybe even in an air ambulance that just saved someone's father, mother, sister, brother or child.

Coveralls matter. A government that forgets this does so at its own peril.

* * *

*[Translation]***HOLIDAY SEASON IN MADAWASKA—RESTIGOUCHE**

Mr. René Arseneault (Madawaska—Restigouche, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as we go into the holiday season, I want to take this opportunity to thank the people of Madawaska—Restigouche for placing their trust in me every day.

[English]

This historic building is about to close its doors for renovations, so let me say that it has been an honour and a privilege to stand in this place on behalf of the voters of my beautiful northern New Brunswick riding.

[Translation]

From Lorne and Nash Creek, following the coast of the Baie des Chaleurs and the Restigouche River through Dalhousie, Campbellton and up to Tide Head, from Balmoral to Saint-Léonard, by way of Atholville, Kedgwick and Saint-Quentin, from Edmunston to Upper Madawaska and from Upper Madawaska to Lac Baker, families are getting ready for Christmas eve.

[English]

Laughter and music will soon be heard from every home.

[Translation]

Just thinking about the feast we are about to enjoy makes my mouth water. It also makes me feel five pounds heavier.

I wish all my colleagues and all Canadians a wonderful holiday season and the very best in the new year, with much happiness and health in 2019.

* * *

*[English]***CENTRE BLOCK**

Hon. Larry Bagnell (Yukon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as chair of the House of Commons procedure committee, I will be as sad as everyone this Christmas to depart for a decade this building where Laurier walked, which has been our home for almost a century. Its carvings, carillon, history and architecture make it a national heritage treasure.

However, our democracy is not an edifice. It lives in the hearts and minds of the representatives who inhabit it, who reflect the face of Canada: indigenous people, the French, the English, citizens from cultures and religions from all over the world, our veterans, the LGBTQ2, the wealthy, the poor, the disabled, the rebels, the young, the mothers and grandmothers.

On February 3, 1916, the old Centre Block burned to the ground, but the very next day, Parliament resumed in the Museum of Nature. For wherever free Canadians exist, so will their democracy, the rule of law, the freedom to dissent, and the right to elect their representatives and their Parliament to preserve the privilege of freedom and equality for all.

Statements by Members

●(1420)

VETERANS AFFAIRS

Mr. Phil McColeman (Brantford—Brant, CPC): Mr. Speaker, during the last election, the Prime Minister promised to fully restore veterans' pensions and that he would not fight them in court. He has failed to deliver on both. His minister spent most of the year criss-crossing the country trying to sell a pension scheme that veterans told him did not fulfill the promise.

When veteran Sean Bruyera publicly questioned this scheme, the minister sent in high-priced lawyers to shut him up. The Prime Minister tells veterans they are asking for too much, but spends over \$38 million fighting those same veterans in court.

His minister's mismanagement has created a massive backlog of disability claims. While thousands of veterans are made to wait over a year for their benefits, convicted murderer Chris Garnier receives benefits meant for them.

Every question the government is asked is met with a refusal to take responsibility. The Prime Minister and his minister have failed veterans.

* * *

[Translation]

CENTRE BLOCK**Mrs. Alexandra Mendès (Brossard—Saint-Lambert, Lib.):**

Perched high on a hill
The Ottawa River below
Our beloved seat of Parliament
A building we all know

Where parliamentarians toiled
Almost a century
To create, build and strengthen
Our great democracy

The Senate and the Commons
Lie within Centre Block's walls
And our dear Canada is governed
From within these hallowed halls

Every pillar, window, carving
Has a story it can tell
They all make up the history of
This building loved so well

Now it's time to say goodbye
For a time that seems so long
We will really miss it here
But our work, we'll carry on.

[English]

So long to Centre Block,
You've served Canada well.
For such great services rendered,
We thank you and say farewell!

* * *

MEMBER FOR NANAIMO—LADYSMITH

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have the privilege of paying tribute to a fantastic colleague and a great friend. The member for Nanaimo—Ladysmith is a tireless advocate

for women's rights and the environment. The first private member's motion passed in this House was her motion on pay equity. Without skipping a beat, she expands that advocacy to EI reform and pensions for women.

As the queen of late shows, just yesterday she was on her feet calling for stable core funding for women's organizations. Her resolute demand for a national child care program and call for action to end violence against women is unparalleled. She did us proud as the Canadian representative at the UN Commission on the Status of Women.

With equality, and economic, social and environmental justice at the top of her agenda, I would remiss if I did not pay tribute to her effective campaign on abandoned vessels. Her efforts pushed the current government to finally take action, making a difference for the entire country.

On behalf of the NDP, I thank her. She will be missed on the Hill but the people of Nanaimo will not be losing her voice, it is just a change of locations.

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SHELDON KENNEDY CHILD ADVOCACY CENTRE

Hon. Rob Nicholson (Niagara Falls, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in my 23 years as a member of Parliament, I have had the occasion to work with some truly remarkable Canadians. Sheldon Kennedy stands out among them. As justice minister, I worked with him and valued his input on the rights of victims.

Yesterday, he announced he will be stepping down from the child advocacy centre that bears his name. I am truly honoured to stand in this House and thank Sheldon for his outstanding activism and tireless work on behalf of victims from across this country. The centre has been responsible for saving the lives of many Canadian children by providing care and services after experiencing the trauma of abuse. Sheldon made the decision to better the lives of other children rather than remain a victim of sexual abuse at the hands of his hockey coach.

As he steps aside to focus on his own health and family, we are assured the centre and solid foundation that Sheldon built will continue. Sheldon's efforts have left a lasting legacy, and we are grateful for it. On behalf of all Canadians, I thank Sheldon.

* * *

●(1425)

CHRISTMAS

Mr. Rodger Cuzner (Cape Breton—Canso, Lib.): Mr. Speaker,

Oral Questions

'Twas the week before Christmas and our last week in this place,
So here's one final ditty, before they walk out the mace;

Let me ask your indulgence and suggest that we pause,
To see what's in those letters to our dear Santa Claus.

The opposition leader asked Santa for a fresh ride,
A new Ford family wagon, he'd drive it with pride;

But to get something so bloated, the chances are slim,
And from early indications, it seems Ford is driving him.

Gift-wrapped surprises are now sheer delights.
Like when Ford said "Au revoir" to francophone rights.

He'll ask Santa for groceries is everyone's hunch
Because the member from Beauce, has been out eating his lunch.

The NDP letter provides a bit of a twist,
A victory in Burnaby is not on their list;

And in Quebec where Bloc support has gone right through the floor,
They're just beggin' old Santa to be relevant once more.

What's in the PM's letter, you need not ask twice;
It's peace, hope and justice, and a pipeline would be nice.

And my ask from Santa doesn't have to be seen;
It's four more years of good government, starting 2019!

The Speaker: I must say, it was nice. However, the last sentence could be interpreted by members as they wish.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[*Translation*]

FINANCE

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister's worst failure, in this year of failures, is his promise to balance the budget.

This promise was really cast in stone, but the Parliamentary Budget Officer tabled a report indicating that next year's deficit will be \$28 billion.

Why did the Prime Minister mislead Canadians about balancing the budget?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the commitment we made in 2015 was to create economic growth, which would benefit the middle class and all those working hard to join it. That is exactly what we did by cutting taxes for the middle class and increasing taxes for the wealthiest 1%. We introduced the Canada child benefit, which helped nine in 10 families and lifted 300,000 children out of poverty across the country.

We know that there is still much work to be done on infrastructure investment, fighting poverty and investing in youth and our seniors. We will continue—

The Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

[*English*]

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians had a choice, and Canadians voted for a balanced budget. That was the promise the Prime Minister ran on. Now we find out that his temporary and tiny deficits are now massive and permanent. They are not \$10 billion. They are not \$15

billion. They are not \$20 billion. They are not \$25 billion. The Parliamentary Budget Officer said they could grow to as high as \$30 billion.

Deficits today mean higher taxes tomorrow. Will the Prime Minister tell Canadians in what year the budget will be balanced?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, one of the first things we discovered when we came to office in 2015 was that the Conservatives' phony balancing of the budget actually hurt Canadians. It hurt our veterans. It hurt our public service. It cut Canadian border services and police services. The Conservatives cut services that Canadians needed right across the country in order to present a phony balanced budget just in time for the election.

We made a different choice: to invest in Canadians. What has that delivered? It has delivered the lowest unemployment rate in 40 years and 800,000 new jobs in the past three years.

• (1430)

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister needs to stop saying falsehoods about our record and start telling the truth about his record. It was the Conservatives who left a balanced budget. How do we know it was balanced? The finance department said it was. His own minister's department told Canadians that the budget was balanced. We did that while lowering taxes and protecting core services for Canadians. However, his reckless deficits are putting social services under great pressure. In less than five years, more tax dollars will go to the interest on the debt than are currently being spent on health care.

When will the budget be balanced?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member opposite wants to talk about the facts. The Conservatives, under Stephen Harper, had the lowest growth rate in Canadian history since the depths of the Great Depression. They added \$150 billion to our national debt with stubbornly low growth to show for it.

We made a different choice and Canadians supported us in investing in communities, in investing in the middle class instead of giving boutique tax credits to the wealthiest Canadians. We focused on growing the economy for everyone—

The Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what the Prime Minister is trying to do is distract from his terrible record by saying things that just are not true. The Conservative government protected Canada's economy through the worst global recession since the 1920s. We did it while cutting taxes and bringing Canada back to balance.

What he has done is racked up massive amounts of new debt. He inherited a great fortune, a perfect situation for the Canadian economy, a balanced budget and a booming global economy. He has squandered that and blown through the savings.

When will the budget be balanced?

Oral Questions

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this is very interesting. What we see from the Conservatives is a doubling down on Stephen Harper's economic plan, the plan that Canadians soundly rejected in 2015, giving tax breaks to the wealthiest, cutting things like veterans services, health care for refugees and eliminating the long-form census. These are the things the Harper government did that the Conservatives are once again running on.

The Conservatives have no real plan for the economy. We have created 800,000 new jobs and have the—

The Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what the Prime Minister is trying to do is double down on a failed plan of higher taxes and massive deficits, threatening Canadians as we head into difficult economic headwinds. In fact, the IMF said today that there are significant risks that it is worried Canada is not prepared for. However, it is not a surprise that the Prime Minister is not worried. He has never had to worry about money, so he does not worry about what happens to Canadians when he blows through their savings.

When will the Prime Minister understand that the federal budget is not a trust fund at his disposal?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what the Conservatives did not understand and what they obviously fail to understand is we cannot grow the Canadian economy through cuts to services, through cuts to Canadians.

We need to invest in Canadians. We need to invest in the middle class and those working hard to join it. We need to invest in infrastructure in their communities. We need to invest in science and research. We need to invest in our young people. That is exactly what we have done and that is how we have created 800,000 new jobs over the past years and have the lowest unemployment in—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques.

* * *

CANADA REVENUE AGENCY

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, two years after the Panama papers scandal, governments around the world have recouped over \$700 million in fines and back taxes as a result of investigations, but Canada has recouped zero. Just as an example, since 2016, the Australian Taxation Office has recouped more than \$48 million, but Canada has recouped zero.

Canadians who are not rich are presumed guilty until they can prove their innocence, and the CRA goes after them with all guns blazing. However, Canadians who are wealthy are innocent until proven guilty, and they are treated with kid gloves.

I ask the Prime Minister, why is there this double standard?

• (1435)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to set the record straight.

We have made investments of over \$1 billion to give the Canada Revenue Agency the resources needed to crack down on tax evasion and aggressive tax avoidance.

On the Panama papers specifically, the CRA has identified over 3,000 offshore entities with over 2,600 beneficial owners that have some link to Canada, of which the CRA has risk assessed over 80%. I can confirm that there are several criminal investigations under way regarding the Panama papers which, as my colleague knows, can be complex and require months or years to complete.

[Translation]

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, funny, that is not stopping other countries from completing investigations and getting results.

I would remind the Prime Minister that the Auditor General does not know where the money spent by the CRA went. The CRA has no trouble going after Canadians who are not rich and bullying them, but it treats tax evaders with kid gloves.

The Canada Revenue Agency has been investigating for over two years now, but it still has not dealt with the 3,000 files of people involved in the Panama papers. However, it has ample time to pore over the files of 332,000 Canadians who receive benefits. With answers like the one we just heard, it is clear that the Liberals are protecting the status quo.

Why the double standard? Why go after the least wealthy Canadians and leave the richest alone?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have made investments of over \$1 billion to give the Canada Revenue Agency the resources needed to crack down on tax cheats.

On the Panama papers specifically, the CRA has identified over 3,000 offshore entities with over 2,600 beneficial owners that have some link to Canada, of which the CRA has risk-assessed over 80%.

I can confirm that there are several criminal investigations under way involving the Panama papers. As my colleague knows, these investigations can be complex and take time to complete.

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THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. François Choquette (Drummond, NDP): Mr. Speaker, according to a report released on Monday at COP24, Canada ranks 54th out of 60 on the climate change performance index. My goodness that is shameful.

Where is the leadership the Liberals promised?

The time to act is now, not in 2050. Experts have recommended that the Liberals implement accountability and transparency mechanisms like the ones proposed by my colleague from Edmonton Strathcona

Will they listen to the experts or will they keep listening to rich polluters?

Oral Questions

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this government understands how important it is to protect our environment while creating economic growth. That is why we put a price on pollution. Across the country we know that putting a price on pollution is the best way to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions and ensure that families will be able to adapt to this change and prosper during this economic transformation period. We know that it is important to fight climate change for the future of our children and we will do so the right way.

[*English*]

Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Canadians are growing increasingly fearful of reports that impacts of climate change are worsening even beyond what scientists predicted. Pressure is mounting for this government to institute measures to make them more transparent and accountable for their decisions on climate action. The United Kingdom, Germany, Sweden, Denmark and Finland have long ago instituted effective measures to make this happen. Merely appointing yet another hand-picked advisory body just does not cut it.

Will the Prime Minister support my Motion No. 204 to legally enact binding greenhouse gas targets, a duty to act, and measures to ensure improved accountability and transparency for federal action on climate change?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are working to reduce emissions across the Canadian economy to create jobs and meet our international commitments. Our actions include pricing pollution right across the country, accelerating the phase-out of traditional coal power, making historic investments in cleaner infrastructure like public transit and charging stations for electric vehicles, adopting regulations to cut methane emissions from oil and gas by 40% to 45% by 2025 and more.

As Canadians know, there is no more choice to be made. We are both protecting the environment and growing the middle class.

* * *

CARBON PRICING

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has often boasted about inheriting a great family fortune. He has never had to worry about the cost of living, so it is no wonder that he does not worry when his policies drive up the cost for Canadians. His tax on gas, on home heating and on groceries will hurt seniors, suburban moms and small businesses. Worse, government documents now show that by the year 2022, the carbon tax will have to be six times higher than the Liberals now admit, driving up gas prices another whopping 70¢ a litre and home heating by another \$1,000 a year.

What is the full and final price of the Liberal carbon tax?

• (1440)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have put forward a strong and robust plan to address climate change and to support Canadians through this transition. We have a plan and it is perfectly okay, obviously, for people to ask questions, to criticize or to suggest improvements.

What is not correct is to not recognize that the Conservatives have no plan to fight climate change. They have no idea how to fight

climate change, prepare our economy for the future and to create the jobs of the future. They do not see it as a priority. That is where they are wrong.

Canadians know from wildfires to floods to droughts right across the country that we need to act on climate change and the Conservatives are not.

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is the Liberal government that does not have a plan to reduce emissions in Canada. All the Liberals' plan is, is for a tax grab. The reason we know it will not reduce emissions is that they have given a massive exemption to the largest emitters in Canada. The full cost of the carbon tax will fall to hard-working Canadian families, commuters, soccer moms and small businesses. Worse yet, we know now that the carbon tax will be higher in the future.

Will the Prime Minister tell us what is the full and final price for the Liberal carbon tax?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, again, we can see that the Conservatives do not want to address the question of what their alternative is and how they are going to fight climate change.

We have been very clear. We are going to put a price on pollution. We are accelerating the phase-out of traditional coal power. We are making historic investments in cleaner infrastructure. We are adopting regulations to cut methane emissions. We are moving forward in a way that is going to support families and protect them for the future. The Conservatives have no plan at all. That is unacceptable.

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is the Liberal government which has put a price of zero on the largest emitters in Canada. It has granted a huge exemption to large emitters that can afford to hire lobbyists to get a special deal. Hard-working Canadian families and commuters have to bear the full brunt of the Liberal carbon tax. Now we find out that the carbon tax will have to be even higher in the future.

If the Prime Minister claims that he does not mind getting questions, will he answer this simple question: What is the full and final cost of his carbon tax?

Oral Questions

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, unlike the Conservatives, we believe that emissions need to go down and that we need to continue creating good middle-class jobs for Canadians.

What the Conservatives are saying is actually factually wrong. We have set a target for industry to reduce pollution. If companies fail to meet that target, they pay the price. If they do better, for example through innovation, they are rewarded. Our plan will also give money directly to households where the federal backstop applies.

The only mystery here is why the Conservatives refuse to have a plan themselves.

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals have granted a huge exemption. That is from their own documents. When a companies go over that target, they do not pay a tax. They can purchase offsets.

The Liberals have come up with a scheme that allows the country's largest emitters to avoid paying the carbon tax. However, that special deal is not available to hard-working Canadian families, commuters, suburban moms or small and medium-size businesses that have to pay the full brunt.

We know what the costs are going to be today. What will the full and final costs be for the carbon tax in the future?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there are two reasons why the Conservatives are so worked up about our plan. First, they have no plan about which they can talk. Second, in provinces where the federal backstop applies, Canadian households will be receiving more from the climate action incentive than the cost of pricing pollution. This means that the ones who will pay are the companies who pollute the most.

Conservatives, like Stephen Harper and Doug Ford, and the current leader, are so ideologically against any environmental protection. They want to take that money away from Canadians. While Conservatives want to make pollution free again, we are putting it—

● (1445)

The Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

* * *

NATURAL RESOURCES

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is the government's plan that makes emissions free for the largest emitters. The Conservatives are ideologically opposed to a tax that raises the cost of living for Canadians. That will be the choice in the next election.

The Prime Minister has failed in so many areas, but there is one file in which he is succeeding. He went around the world and bragged about his plan to phase out Canada's energy sector. Sad to say, it is working. He has chased out new pipeline proponents. He is bringing in a bill that will ensure no future pipeline gets built.

Will the Prime Minister do the right thing and scrap Bill C-69?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when the Conservatives talk about scrapping Bill C-69,

which is focused on giving tighter timelines, a single project single evaluation and responds to the concerns of industry, they actually mean let us go back to CEAA 2012 that Harper put forward. That was an absolute failure for industry. There was a failure in getting anything built. It would be a disaster for the oil and gas industry and for industries right across the country. We will not do that.

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what the Prime Minister is trying to do is convince Canadians that his reckless actions have not had an impact on the energy sector. However, here is the reality.

Under the Conservative government, four major pipeline projects were built by private sector dollars, increasing our capacity to ship our energy to markets by over a million barrels a day. Three pipeline projects were on the books when he took over. Two are completely dead and one is on a lifeline, with no plan to move it forward.

Therefore, will the Prime Minister do the right thing and scrap his no more pipeline bill?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have known for a long time, listening to the energy sector, that its number one priority is getting oil resources to markets other than the United States. It has asked for that for a long time.

Stephen Harper and his Conservatives worked very hard to get that done, and they did not get it done for 10 years. We are moving forward in a significant way, in the right way, understanding that working with environmental groups, respecting community interests and partnering with indigenous peoples is the only way to get things done right.

* * *

[Translation]

LABOUR

Ms. Karine Trudel (Jonquière, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals say they are working for the middle class, but they side with big corporations every time.

They forced Canada Post employees back to work. They gave our money to Bombardier with no strings attached. When Lowe's bought Rona, the government demanded no guarantees. To top it off, there is no local content requirement in the fleet renewal contract VIA Rail awarded to Siemens.

Why are they turning their backs on middle-class workers?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government maintains a safe, effective and reliable rail transportation system for Canadian passengers.

Today's investment will give millions of passengers access to new trains with a smaller environmental footprint that offer more space for people with reduced mobility and are equipped with the latest technology.

Unlike the previous government, we got the best possible contract to provide Canadians with modern, more accessible, high-quality trains.

[*English*]

Ms. Tracey Ramsey (Essex, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in 2015, the Liberals masqueraded as progressives, trying to convince labour they cared.

While GM has decided to close its plant in Oshawa, the Liberals are nowhere to be seen in the fight to keep these jobs in Canada. When postal workers were fighting for better working conditions, the Liberals, like the Conservatives before them, legislated them back to work. The Liberals did nothing to remove Trump's steel and aluminum tariffs, which are costing jobs.

The year 2018 has been defined by the Liberals betraying Canadian workers. Why will the Liberals not admit what Canadians see clearly; that the government has never had their backs?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, from the very beginning, this government has worked in partnership with organized labour in the country. Among the very first things we did was eliminate Bill C-525 and Bill C-377, the anti-union bills the Conservatives had put forward. We then continued to work with labour, ensuring we would get to the bargaining table between labour and employers. We have demonstrated the tripartite working model works very well.

We know we are not always going to agree on everything with organized labour. However, we do know that basing everything on a respectful approach that values the contributions of labour and the strength of the middle class of the country is the way to do it.

* * *

• (1450)

[*Translation*]

IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Parliamentary Budget Officer pegs the cost of the Prime Minister's failure at the border at more than \$1 billion. The affected provinces are sending the bill to the Prime Minister.

When will the Prime Minister understand that the only way to stop paying billion dollar bills is to close the loophole in the safe third country agreement?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are working with the United States and our provincial partners to ensure that our immigration system remains strong and reliable.

We know that irregular arrivals, asylum seekers, present a challenge to the system, but in the meantime we can assure Canadians that in terms of security, all the checks are made and we are applying our immigration system in its entirety. We understand

this is a complex situation, but we are working with the provinces and our partners.

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the crisis created by the Prime Minister will cost more than \$1 billion, and now we learned this morning that residents living near Roxham Road are being offered compensation. This adds to the impact of this crisis, on top of the facilities in Lacolle becoming permanent and the provinces being stuck with the bills.

The Prime Minister needs to stop making others pay for his failures.

Will he finally resolve this crisis?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we will make sure that our immigration system remains fair and compassionate while maintaining the integrity of our borders and keeping our communities safe.

We are investing \$173 million to make our borders more secure and to fast-track the asylum claim process. The Conservatives cut the agency's budget by \$390 million, they cut health care for refugees, and now they want Canadians to violate international law. We will continue to enforce Canadian laws and respect our international commitments.

[*English*]

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, he claims that Canada's immigration system should be compassionate and fair. There is nothing fair about crossing through an illegal border crossing from a safe part of upstate New York into Canada, jumping the queue, skipping the line and forcing others to wait longer, because more and more resources have to go to those coming into Canada illegally. This is the legacy that the Prime Minister caused with his irresponsible tweet.

Literally, the Liberals have done nothing to stop the problem. Instead of just adding up the costs, will they finally do something to stop the crossings themselves?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are ensuring that our immigration system remains fair and compassionate, all the while ensuring the integrity of our border and the security of our communities. We will continue to ensure that Canadian law is applied and that our international obligations are respected.

I will also highlight, in this, the last opportunity for PMQs in the House, it is a pleasure to be taking questions from everyone, not just the Leader of the Opposition.

The Speaker: Order, please. I think members want to hear the next question.

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have good news for the Prime Minister. After the 2019 election, he will not have to answer the questions he does not like in the House.

Oral Questions

Here is what he does have to answer for. The Prime Minister has to answer for the fact that he has done absolutely nothing to stop the illegal border crossings into our country. He can try to hide the truth and say things that are not true. He knows it was the Conservative government that added 26% worth of Canada Border Services agents at our borders. It is the Conservatives who are proposing real solutions to solve this problem.

When will the Prime Minister do something about it?

• (1455)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I look forward to the opportunity to present our plan to Canadians next year in the federal election. I look forward to going against what seems to be the Harper Conservative platform once again.

The Harper Conservatives cut \$390 million—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order, please. There is far too much noise. I know everyone is excited about Christmas after the poem and all that. We need to calm down and hear each other, even if we do not like what may be said by the other side.

The hon. Prime Minister has the floor.

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, I suggest you give them a little indulgence. They all want an opportunity to ask questions and make comments on this last day of Prime Minister's question period in the House of Commons.

We are going to continue to stand up for Canadians and ensure that things move forward properly. That is something we committed to Canadians.

* * *

[Translation]

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Ms. Brigitte Sansoucy (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal government has made all kinds of commitments to first nations and promised billions of dollars in infrastructure to improve their living conditions. However, many indigenous communities do not have access to safe drinking water and will not have access before 2021. That is unacceptable. Some communities have been boiling their water for 25 years now, and they are being asked to wait another three years.

It is the government's responsibility, so will it take action now?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are taking action now. We recognize how unacceptable it is that some reserves in this country still do not have clean drinking water. That is why we have committed to ending all boil water advisories in the country by 2021, and we will.

We have ended 73 long-term boil water advisories. We know we have a lot more work to do, and we are doing it. We will keep our promise.

[English]

Ms. Georgina Jolibois (Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister should be ashamed of himself for saying that.

With the closure of STC in Saskatchewan, people with disabilities in northern Saskatchewan are being left in the dark by the Liberals. People like Gary Tinker from Pinehouse, Saskatchewan are forced to hitchhike across the province to get to appointments, to see their families or just to live a normal life.

People with disabilities cannot wait until after the election. What are the Liberals waiting for to help northerners like Gary and to restore the bus service?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we were extremely concerned with the decision by Greyhound to suspend bus service across parts of the northwest. That is why we have been working with local communities and other providers to ensure that there are alternatives in place. We have created programs and are partnering with and allowing indigenous communities to step up. We recognize the situation is difficult on top of an already difficult situation. That is why we are working in partnership with indigenous communities to solve this problem.

I thank the member opposite for her question and for her work on this file.

* * *

PENSIONS

Hon. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, In 2016, our government reached a historic agreement with the provinces and territories to expand the Canada pension plan to protect income security for pensioners. That CPP expansion is supposed to begin this year, but the Conservative Party opposes that expansion, which will allow greater security for pensioners. Will the Prime Minister assure the House, despite the opposition from the Conservatives, that the CPP will be expanded as intended?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to start by thanking the member for Malpeque for his hard work as chair of the finance committee, and his extraordinary service to this House and to Canada.

We worked with the provinces and territories to reach a historic agreement that will help to ensure that Canadians get the secure and dignified retirement they deserve. The enhanced Canada pension plan will mean Canadians receive up to \$7,000 more per year when they retire. This means that more Canadians will actually be able to retire at age 65. Despite the Conservative opposition, we are moving forward with the CPP expansion to make sure Canadians have a secure retirement.

Oral Questions

● (1500)

*[Translation]***INTERNATIONAL TRADE**

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the crowning touch to the Prime Minister's year of failure has to be his disastrous NAFTA deal, which contains a long list of concessions in areas like the automotive sector, prescription drugs and dairy products.

The deal is so bad that Donald Trump's top economic adviser said Canada gave very graciously.

Why did the Prime Minister fail to secure the removal of the steel and aluminum tariffs during the NAFTA negotiations?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, from the beginning of the NAFTA negotiations, our number one goal was always to get a good deal for Canada, and that is exactly what we did.

This deal will protect more than \$2 billion a day in cross-border trade, allow tariff-free access for more than 70% of Canadian exports and improve opportunities for Canadians.

This agreement makes the rules fairer for the automotive industry, preserves the binational dispute settlement mechanism and protects supply management. While the Conservatives wanted to take Stephen Harper's advice and sign any—

The Speaker: Order. The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

[English]

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister did not say he would go to Washington to get a good deal. He said he would go to get a better deal. Let us look at the deal he got.

He uses the word “capitulate”. It was the Liberals who capitulated on dairy, signing away market access and preventing our farmers from exporting. It was the Liberals who agreed to a cap on auto exports. They agreed to adopt Donald Trump's pharmaceutical regime, increasing costs for Canadian patients. After giving all of that away to Donald Trump, did the Prime Minister get any assurances on when steel and aluminum tariffs would finally be lifted?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to take a moment once again to thank all the Canadians from across the country, including of different ideologies, including some Conservatives, who worked hard to negotiate the right deal for Canada. We can be assured that this is a deal that will continue to secure our access to our most important trading partner at a time of uncertainty and unpredictability from that trading partner. We got rid of the ratchet clause, which infringed upon our sovereignty by preventing our government from controlling access to our energy resources. We kept chapter 19, and the cultural exemption will apply to digital programs. We—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: The hon. member for Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, I think, would do well to restrain himself a bit.

Order. The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am convinced that the Prime Minister had to google what the ratchet clause was.

Every single thing the current Prime Minister points to as a victory was something that a previous Conservative government already got for Canadians.

He had one bargaining chip left. He told Donald Trump that if he did not get rid of the tariffs, there would be no photo op. Donald called his bluff. He knew that the Prime Minister could not resist another photo being taken, and there he was, signing along with the rest of the leaders. In exchange for taking his picture with Donald Trump, did he get an end to the steel and aluminum tariffs?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is wonderful to be able to look into this space and see every seat filled. I know there may be a few people here for the first time in the gallery, but let me tell members that the Conservative benches—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order. Order. Members may not like what they hear from the other side. However, they have to listen to others in our democracy. Whether we like it or not, we do that.

The Right Hon. Prime Minister has the floor.

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, the Conservative Party is usually a lot quieter than this, and usually a lot more respectful. However, on this, the very last Wednesday question period in the House this year, I think they all want to be heard. That is the problem.

Will the Leader of the Opposition allow some of his fellow members to ask questions of the Prime Minister? Apparently not.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order. The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

● (1505)

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this is what happens when a Prime Minister does not like the questions and has to answer for his failed record on carbon taxes, deficits, and signing away concession after concession to Donald Trump without anything in return. Then, he asks for someone else to ask him questions.

Do not worry. The Prime Minister need not worry for too long, because come 2019, Canadians will send someone into his chair who is not afraid of the tough questions, and actually—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order.

The Right Hon. Prime Minister.

Oral Questions

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, after 10 years of Stephen Harper's government, we stepped forward with a fresh plan to invest in Canadians, to invest in communities, and that plan is working, with over 800,000 new jobs over the past three years and the lowest unemployment rate in over 40 years. Canadians are more confident about the future and looking to their kids' future with optimism.

We have a plan on climate change. We are taking action on building a stronger future. The Conservatives have only a failed plan to fall back on, because they are presenting no new ideas of their own.

* * *

IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Luisa Montoya and her family arrived in Canada in 2012, fleeing violence and extortion in Colombia. As a legacy case, they have been in limbo for six years. Luisa is married to a Canadian and their son Thomas was born in Canada. The family of seven is fully integrated and thriving.

Violence in Colombia has displaced millions and the Canadian government has issued an alert to avoid travel there. However, this family is being deported on Christmas eve. This is a cruel way for the minister to meet his quota of deporting 10,000 asylum seekers.

Will the Prime Minister direct his minister to intervene—

The Speaker: Order. The Right Hon. Prime Minister.

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada has an immigration system that is based on rules and principles, and we follow those rules. Canadians are among the few people on this planet who are, as a whole, generally positively inclined towards immigration, because they know that our system works. Our system is based on rules, procedures and processes.

We know that sometimes the decisions can be difficult. We will, of course, take a look at all files on compassionate grounds, but we will continue to apply our immigration system based on the rules and the facts of the cases.

* * *

CONSUMER PROTECTION

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): Mr. Speaker, that answer let the nation and a family down.

Canadians are subjected to unfair Internet data overcharges, restrictions when switching Internet providers and misleading aggressive telecom practices. The CRTC says it wants to establish a consumer Internet code of conduct, but has failed to provide sufficient time for consumer groups and the public. The result is a boycotted and broken system. Consumer groups have been clear. They want an extension so they can participate.

Why is the Prime Minister allowing the CRTC to make up a toothless code of conduct for consumers in Canada?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are proud of the work we are doing with the CRTC to ensure that our digital programming and protection of our airwaves keep pace with the transformations of our economy. We

recognize there is more and more need for data and for proper access to broadband. That is something we are continuing to invest in across the country and work with the CRTC on, although it is odd to see the NDP members complaining about this when they are the ones who want to impose extra taxes on Internet usage by Canadians.

* * *

[*Translation*]

FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL RELATIONS

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after being elected, the new Quebec government made several decisions in different areas. It received a clear mandate from the people to do so.

What is the Prime Minister's usual response on every issue? He criticizes the provincial decisions and tries to lecture Quebec.

When will the Prime Minister understand that there are separate jurisdictions in Canada and that Quebec is entitled to deal with the matters under its responsibility without constantly being criticized by this centralist Prime Minister?

• (1510)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I was pleased to sit down for the fifth time with all premiers last week and to have frank discussions about how we can continue to work together.

That is something Stephen Harper refused to do in the last years of his term because he did not want to talk to the provinces. Personally, I believe in collaboration and co-operation, and I want to point out that the work we are doing with the Province of Quebec is going very well.

We have tremendous respect for its views and we will work with it to improve the lives of Quebecers and all Canadians.

* * *

PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is not about meeting with the provinces; it is about respecting them.

On the other side of the river in Lévis, Davie shipyard workers delivered the *Asterix* supply ship on time and on budget.

Our brave men and women in uniform need another supply ship, the *Obelix*, and the Davie shipyard is prepared to start work on it tomorrow morning.

The Prime Minister needs to stop playing political games and give Davie that contract before Christmas.

What is he waiting for to do that?

Oral Questions

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I cannot believe that the member opposite just asked me to stop playing political games on this issue, because he is the one playing petty politics. The Canadian Armed Forces conducted an analysis and found that the *Obelix* is not needed. For the member to suggest that we should buy it anyway is just cheap politics.

We make decisions based on facts. We recognize that the Davie shipyard does good work, and we are working with Davie to give it more jobs, but we are not going to invent contracts for political reasons.

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, he can tell that to our men and women in the Canadian Armed Forces and to the Davie shipyard workers.

When you look at the scope of the Prime Minister's failures, it is obvious that he has failed to treat the provinces as partners. Instead, like all good Liberals, he maintains a paternalistic and centralizing attitude.

The new government in Quebec has identified a third link to the east as a priority for addressing urban mobility problems in the old capital.

Can the Prime Minister finally commit to being a reliable partner on that project?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have made record investments in infrastructure over the past three years, proving that we are here to be a reliable partner. I can say, however, that the project the member opposite referred to does not yet exist; it is still in the idea phase.

If he submits a plan, we will look at it. That is what we are here for. No one should be inventing projects for political rhetoric.

Our decisions will be based on the facts, on real projects submitted to us. We are not there yet with regard to the third link. When that happens, we will work with the stakeholders.

* * *

[English]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Hon. Hedy Fry (Vancouver Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our Prime Minister grew up in British Columbia and knows the southern resident killer whale is iconic to the people of our province. Sadly, these marine mammals face significant threats to their survival. For 10 years, the Harper government failed to take any measures to protect the environment that would actually sustain B.C.'s orcas.

Our government has a plan. Could the Prime Minister update British Columbians on our most recent initiative to save this precious species?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for Vancouver Centre for her hard work and her extraordinary service to our country. We recognize that a strong economy and a clean environment go hand in hand and that we must grow our economy responsibly.

Canadians and marine mammals have waited long enough during the 10 long years of Harper Conservatives' inaction. That is why in budget 2018, we announced concrete action to fix this problem. We will now have the needed and enforceable tools to address immediate and long-term threats to the marine environment, including marine mammals and the southern resident killer whale.

* * *

ETHICS

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, another massive failure for the Liberal government under this Prime Minister has been the ethics file. This is the only Prime Minister in Canadian history to have been found guilty of breaking ethics laws, and several other members of his team have followed suit.

The finance minister conveniently forgot about a villa in France, and other ministers have been found guilty of breaking rules. Now there is a massive investigation, with a big cloud of suspicion around a former Liberal MP and a Liberal cabinet minister.

Can the Prime Minister tell us exactly how many more Liberals are currently being investigated by the RCMP or by other investigators?

• (1515)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member opposite just got censured by the Ethics Commissioner for having told one of his members to break the ethics rules. We will take no lessons on ethics from them or from the legacy of 10 years of the kinds of practices that were all too common under the Harper Conservatives.

The Speaker: Order. The member for Banff—Airdrie will come to order, please. We each have our turn, and we wait for our turns. The Prime Minister will wait for his turn also.

* * *

HEALTH

Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the number of Canadians being infected with HIV is once again rising rapidly among young gay men and has reached epidemic proportions in indigenous communities, yet the Liberals have cut funding to many front-line HIV agencies and have failed to increase access to testing, when we know that knowing one's status is the key to reducing new infections.

Will the Liberal government move quickly to approve home testing kits for sale in pharmacies to help reach all men who have sex with men, and will it work with the provinces to ensure that testing is widely available without needing to see a doctor first?

Oral Questions

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we know that we have made strong strides forward in the fight against HIV-AIDS, but we know that there is much more to do. That is why Health Canada is working with our provincial partners to ensure that there are even more ways for Canadians to stay safe and more ways for Canadians to counter this terrible epidemic that we know continues, despite all the efforts we and others are putting forward to counter it. We understand, as always, that there is more to do, and we look forward to working with the member opposite and all members in this House to continue to address this terrible challenge.

* * *

[Translation]

FISHERIES AND OCEANS

Mr. Colin Fraser (West Nova, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, southwestern Nova Scotia depends on fishing, which is why I was so pleased last week when the Minister of Fisheries announced funding in excess of \$18 million to be distributed through the Atlantic fisheries fund. The money will be invested in aquaculture, science, innovation, research and development.

Can the Prime Minister tell us what measures our government has taken to support fisheries across Canada?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for West Nova for his work as a member of the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans and for the excellent work he is doing for his riding.

Our \$325-million investment in the Atlantic fisheries fund will support many different projects throughout the region. We have also announced the \$100-million British Columbia salmon restoration and innovation fund. In Quebec, we are investing \$30 million to support the province's fish and seafood sector. We are supporting our coastal regions.

* * *

[English]

FINANCE

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, before I ask my question, I want to take this opportunity, in the last question period on a Wednesday for Prime Minister's questions, to wish the Prime Minister the very best, on a personal basis, for him and his family. I hope all parliamentarians and all party members enjoy some time with their friends and families and connect with their constituents.

In the spirit of giving, I have given the Prime Minister 23 opportunities to answer simple and straightforward questions. I have one more gift for the Prime Minister. I am going to give him one final chance to tell Canadians in what year the budget will be balanced.

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the member opposite's kind words and wish him and his family, indeed all members in this House, a happy and safe and merry Christmas and happy holidays. We know that this is a time of year when we are a long way from our families. We still have

a couple of more days, at least, of work to do in this House, so we know that the days grow shorter but the time seems to grow longer.

We put forward a fiscally responsible plan that is growing the economy the way Canadians expect us to. We will keep working on creating jobs and growing the economy for all Canadians.

* * *

[Translation]

RAIL TRANSPORTATION

Mr. Louis Plamondon (Bécancour—Nicolet—Saurel, BQ): Mr. Speaker, and so it is. VIA Rail would rather sign a \$1.3-billion agreement with a German multinational than with a Quebec company, to purchase trains that will be used in Quebec. What a lump of coal.

Workers in La Pocatière are being laid off, and they are popping champagne corks in Sacramento, where the cars are manufactured.

How can the Prime Minister justify abandoning workers in La Pocatière and allowing VIA Rail to choose Siemens?

• (1520)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government maintains a safe, effective and reliable rail transportation system for Canadian passengers. Today's investment will give millions of passengers access to new trains with a smaller environmental footprint that offer more space for people with reduced mobility and are equipped with the latest technology.

Unlike the previous government, we got the best possible contract to provide Canadians with modern, more accessible, high-quality trains.

[English]

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

I rise today in the Christmas spirit, and also in a spirit of great nonpartisanship, to table, with unanimous consent, a copy of the Liberal platform, which promises a balanced budget in 2019.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

Hon. Erin O'Toole: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. There have been discussions among the parties and an email sent to all members of Parliament with respect to this motion. If you seek it, I believe you will find unanimous consent for this motion.

I move that the Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Technology be instructed to undertake a study of no less than four meetings to investigate the impact of the announced closure of the General Motors automotive assembly plant in Oshawa, and that the study (1) include impacted stakeholders, such as the union Unifor, to solicit input towards devising a plan to address issues that may have contributed to this announcement; (2) provide an opportunity for the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development to appear to address concerns about competitiveness raised by General Motors and any other issues the minister deems instructive toward developing a plan; and that the committee report its findings to the House of Commons no later than March 11, 2019.

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.

* * *

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

The Speaker: I have the honour to inform the House that messages have been received from the Senate informing this House that the Senate has passed the following bills on which the concurrence of the House is desired: Bill S-244, An Act respecting Kindness Week; Bill S-1003, An Act to amend The United Church of Canada Act. This second bill is deemed to have been read the first time and ordered for a second reading at the next sitting of the House.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[Translation]

WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY AMBASSADOR

The House resumed from December 6 consideration of the motion.

The Speaker: It being 3:25 p.m., pursuant to order made Tuesday, November 11, 2018, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on Motion No. 163 under private members' business in the name of the member for Etobicoke Centre.

Call in the members.

• (1530)

[English]

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

(Division No. 979)

YEAS

Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Amos	Anandasangaree
Angus	Arseneault
Arya	Ashton
Ayoub	Badawey
Bagnell	Bains
Barsalou-Duval	Baylis
Beaulieu	Bennett
Benson	Bibeau

Bittle	Blaikie
Blair	Boissonnault
Bossio	Boutin-Sweet
Bratina	Breton
Brisson	Brosseau
Caesar-Chavannes	Cannings
Caron	Carr
Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)	Casey (Charlottetown)
Chagger	Champagne
Choquette	Christopherson
Cullen	Cuzner
Dabrusin	Damoff
Davies	DeCoursey
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Di Iorio	Drouin
Dubé	Dubourg
Duclos	Duguid
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)
Dusseau	Duvall
Dzerowicz	Easter
Ehsassi	El-Khoury
Ellis	Erskine-Smith
Eyking	Eyolfson
Fergus	Fillmore
Finnigan	Fisher
Fonseca	Fortier
Fortin	Fragiskatos
Fraser (West Nova)	Fraser (Central Nova)
Fry	Fuhr
Garneau	Garrison
Gerretsen	Goldsmith-Jones
Goodale	Gould
Graham	Hajdu
Hardcastle	Hardie
Harvey	Hébert
Hehr	Hogg
Holland	Housefather
Hughes	Hutchings
Iacono	Johns
Jolibois	Joly
Jones	Jordan
Jowhari	Julian
Khalid	Kwan
Lambropoulos	Lametti
Lamoureux	Lapointe
Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)	Laverdière
LeBlanc	Lebouthillier
Lefebvre	Leslie
Levitt	Lightbound
Lockhart	Long
Longfield	Ludwig
MacAulay (Cardigan)	MacGregor
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Malcolmson
Maloney	Marcil
Masse (Windsor West)	Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)
Mathysen	May (Cambridge)
McCrimmon	McDonald
McGuinty	McKay
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLeod (Northwest Territories)
Mendès	Mendicino
Mihychuk	Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Érables)
Soeurs)	
Monsef	Moore
Morrissey	Murray
Nassif	Nault
Ng	O'Connell
Oliphant	Oliver
O'Regan	Ouellette
Paradis	Peschisolido
Peterson	Petitpas Taylor
Philpott	Picard
Plamondon	Quach
Qualtrough	Ramsey
Rankin	Ratansi
Rioux	Robillard
Rodriguez	Rogers
Romanado	Rota
Ruimy	Rusnak
Sahota	Saini
Sajjan	Samson
Sangha	Sansoucy
Sarai	Scarpaleggia
Schieffe	Schulte
Sgro	Shanahan

Routine Proceedings

Sheehan	Sidhu (Brampton South)
Sikand	Simms
Sohi	Sorbara
Spengemann	Ste-Marie
Stetski	Tabbara
Tan	Tassi
Thériault	Tootoo
Trudeau	Trudel
Vandal	Vandenbeld
Vaughan	Virani
Weir	Whalen
Wilkinson	Wilson-Raybould
Wrzesneski	Yip
Young	Zahid— 212

NAYS

Members

Abouttaif	Albas
Albrecht	Alleslev
Allison	Anderson
Arnold	Barlow
Benzen	Bergen
Berthold	Bezan
Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis)	Boucher
Brassard	Calkins
Carrie	Chong
Clarke	Cooper
Deltell	Diotte
Doherty	Dreeshen
Eglinski	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Falk (Provencher)	Finley
Gallant	Généreux
Genuis	Gladu
Godin	Gourde
Hoback	Jeneroux
Kelly	Kent
Kitchen	Kmiec
Kusie	Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Lloyd	Lobb
Lukiwski	MacKenzie
Maguire	Martel
McCauley (Edmonton West)	McColeman
McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)	Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound)
Motz	Nater
Nicholson	O'Toole
Paul-Hus	Poilievre
Raith	Rayes
Reid	Rempel
Richards	Saroya
Scheer	Schmale
Shields	Shiple
Sopuck	Sorenson
Strahl	Stubbs
Sweet	Tilson
Van Kesteren	Viersen
Wagantall	Warawa
Warkentin	Waugh
Webber	Wong
Yurdiga	Zimmer— 84

PAIRED

Members

Cormier	Pauzé— 2
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The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

[*Translation*]

I wish to inform the House that because of the deferred recorded divisions, government orders will be extended by eight minutes.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*English*]

JUSTICE

Hon. Jody Wilson-Raybould (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 32(2) I have the pleasure to table, in both official languages, three separate reports and a summary report on “State of Knowledge on Medical Assistance in Dying for Mature Minors, Advance Requests, and Where a Mental Disorder Is the Sole Underlying Medical Condition”.

* * *

[*Translation*]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Hon. Andrew Leslie (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs (Canada-U.S. Relations), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 32(2), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the following treaty.

[*English*]

It is entitled “Protocol Replacing the North America Free Trade Agreement with the Agreement between Canada, the United States of America and the United Mexican States”, done at Buenos Aires on November 30, 2018.

* * *

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

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

* * *

[*Translation*]

CLOSURE OF CENTRE BLOCK

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, just a few months before the end of the 42nd Parliament, a few weeks before the end of 2018, and a few days before the House adjourns for the holidays, I understand that we are all feeling a bit nostalgic and taking some time to reflect.

• (1535)

[*English*]

When we think about this room and all it has seen, these stones witnessed Winston Churchill speaking to Canadians. The stained glass windows reverberated with the voice of John F. Kennedy. The benches upon which we lean supported us through debates on repatriating the Constitution and free trade. These lights shone down on Malala Yousafzai. This carpet was walked on by Barack Obama.

Routine Proceedings

This is just a room. This is just a place. It is a lovely room, a lovely place, filled with history and stories, but this is not the centre of our democracy. Democracy happens whenever MPs gather, roll up their sleeves and get to work on building a better future for Canadians. When we meet in committee rooms, when we meet in caucus rooms, when we meet around a cabinet table and think about what Canadians hope for and dream of and are concerned about; and respond to that; wherever we gather to talk about the responsibility we have been entrusted, however momentarily, to deliver a better Canada for Canadians, a better world for future generations; that is where democracy happens.

[*Translation*]

Indeed, we are reflecting on the good times that we shared in this room and on the historic moments that shaped the country that we are so proud to live in today.

On a more personal note, I am thinking about friends who are no longer with us, such as Arnold Chan, who urged us to bet better at what we do; Gordon Brown, whose friendship, commitment and strong personality are greatly missed; and our dear Mauril Bélanger, who left us so tragically. He was always ready to fight for the rights of francophones and all Canadians.

The lesson that we should learn from them and from all those who contributed here in the House is that we have a responsibility to serve Canadians well, to listen to both our constituents and our opponents, our colleagues in the House who were each chosen by Canadians to be their voice here in this room and their voice in our democracy.

Yes, it is with some nostalgia that we are moving to another place for 10 years to continue these debates. However, I know that our members will continue to be committed to the people who put their trust in us and the work that we do every day in all sorts of circumstances to improve this extraordinary country that we love so much, whether we are doing that work here or somewhere else.

Yes, this is a good time to reflect and remember the importance of the service we provide to Canadians. Democracy does not reside here, however. It resides in the actions of all Canadians and those of their MPs who work every day to build a better Canada, a better world.

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, for 150 years, the Centre Block of our Parliament has housed Canada's democracy.

[*English*]

More than just a building, it is the embodiment of all of Canada's strengths and weaknesses. It has been burned to the ground and risen from the ashes, seen tragedy, and heard the greatest and most stirring words of our leaders.

It has heard the echoes of gunfire, as many people in this chamber still, no doubt, recall. It has rung with cheers of victory at the end of two world wars, and has stood mute witness to the tears of a nation.

[*Translation*]

Behind these walls, our predecessors and our ancestors charted a course for a nation.

To all those among us who had the honour of being sent here by our constituents, this is more than a building.

• (1540)

[*English*]

It is more than just four walls, six floors and a tower. It is the heart of our freedoms, the link between Canada's past and present, and between our fundamental values and the hard work of legislating and governing.

After this week, and for the next 10 years, our House will have a new home.

[*Translation*]

The issues we will debate in the new chamber are yet to be determined. They will test our determination and principles. If history is any indication, we will rise to the challenge and make our new House of Commons the beacon of democracy that this building has been for decades.

[*English*]

No doubt there will be passion, but I am more confident than ever in the strength, not of this building but of this institution, in the decency and dedication of parliamentarians who will be tasked with guiding us through whatever turbulence may come.

I count myself blessed to be among the few Canadians who get to come and work here every day, who have been elected to sit in this chamber, to represent our citizens and to participate in the moments that define our nation.

[*Translation*]

I know this is a sentiment shared by all my hon. colleagues as we gather to say goodbye to Centre Block for the next 10 years.

[*English*]

Because of the strength of our institution, the resilience of Canadians themselves and the dedication that parliamentarians bring to their work here, I know that in 10 years we will have faced down whatever threats may come, overcome our challenges and charted a course to a better and brighter future for all Canadians.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to rise for what may be the last time in the House of Commons, which has hosted our parliamentary debates since 1920.

[*English*]

It is an honour and privilege to call this Parliament my workplace. It is an honour to come up the Hill every day to work and walk the halls of this century-old building. It is a privilege to sit in this House of Commons, a building emblematic of our democracy where we shape the present and future of this country.

Routine Proceedings

[*Translation*]

This building is bigger than us. It is the seat of our society's democracy and it is where our political history is written. It is in this place that parliamentary debates take place in support of the common good. It is in this place that ideas collide and important decisions are made.

Since the inauguration of the new Parliament Buildings in the wake of the 1916 fire, 3,250 Canadians have had the privilege, as we do, of sitting in the House of Commons to represent their constituents. It is a daily honour that we must take stock of with humility.

[*English*]

This place is very likely the most recognized of all of Canada's landmarks. So much of our common history was decided in this place.

[*Translation*]

This Parliament is both the stage for our history and a witness to the passage of time. Many events in our country's history—history with a capital “H”—have taken place here. I am thinking of the first female MP, Agnes Campbell Macphail, to take a seat in Parliament in 1921, when the first federal election in which women could vote was held.

There are also many stories in our history—history with a small “h”—that are imprinted in the memory of every political party that has had the opportunity to be represented in the House and of those who worked here. I am thinking of anecdotes such as those about our colleague Pat Martin, who knew how to liven up debates. For example, there was the time when he told the House about his tight clothing bought on sale. I will spare my colleagues the details. I am also thinking of the same Pat Martin who insisted on having the office and furniture of Stanley Knowles, whose ghost apparently always haunted the elevator in corridor C.

I think about all of my colleague's questions that have livened up the House debates over the decades. I am thinking of moments like October 16, 1985, when NDP MP James Fulton expressed his disappointment with the government's policy on west coast salmon fishing by crossing the aisle to drop a dead salmon on the desk of Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, who happened to be away that day. I am also thinking of Tom Mulcair, who recently, towards the end of his political career, had the honour of occupying John Diefenbaker's old office.

Lastly, I think about all the members of Parliament who have died in office. My mind goes immediately to Jack Layton, of course, whose casket lay in state in the foyer of the House, where Canadians could come say farewell to good old Jack.

• (1545)

[*English*]

These walls, these rooms, this House could tell many great stories. They have witnessed the courage of the women and men who protect this Parliament every day. They have also witnessed much of the evolution of our society. In the men's facilities, for example, we are still reminded that we should not butt out cigars and cigarettes everywhere. When this building opened in 1920, what are now the

women's facilities, I am told were smoking lounges, a transformation that reflects how our society has evolved over time.

Over the past decades, an increasing number of female MPs and young parents have made their way into the House of Commons, especially in 2011, leading this institution to accommodate these changes by offering child care services, creating a family room and installing changing tables in bathrooms. Breastfeeding has also finally become accepted here.

This Parliament also remembers the past. We remember our missing soldiers in the Memorial Chapel of the Peace Tower.

We also remember our failures. That is why in 2012 a stained glass window was added to this Parliament to commemorate the legacy of Indian residential schools, for which Canada apologized in this House a few years earlier.

The evolution of our country is reflected within these walls. There is no doubt that the upcoming renovations will open the door for further transformations because the building that is the home of all Canadians must reflect people's diversity and stay up to date with how our society evolves.

[*Translation*]

Soon, the voices of parliamentarians will give way to the voices of movers. The echo of our debates will give way to the echo of the renovation work that will be carried out in Centre Block over the next 10 years at least. One hundred years after it was built, it is true that some refurbishment has become necessary to ensure that we leave a sound heritage building to future generations. Some of us may never set foot in this chamber again as MPs, but the memory of these walls will stay with us forever.

As the parliamentary leader of the New Democratic Party, I want to thank everyone who worked on the renovations to West Block, which will serve as a temporary home for the House of Commons. I also want to thank everyone working on moving everything out of Centre Block, as well as everyone who will be working over the next decade to renovate this Parliament.

[*English*]

I hope everyone here will take some time to cherish those last moments in this House of Commons before the long break ahead.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone here happy holidays, merry Christmas and a happy new year.

[*Translation*]

The Speaker: Is there unanimous consent in the House for the hon. member for Bécancour—Nicolet—Saurel to add his remarks?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Louis Plamondon (Bécancour—Nicolet—Saurel, BQ): Mr. Speaker, this year's end of session is a little more melancholy than usual, as we get ready to close down this building, which has been a second home for me for 35 years.

Routine Proceedings

As members know, Centre Block had to be rebuilt after a major fire and reopened in its current form in 1920, nearly 100 years ago. I have spent more than a third of a century walking its corridors. I could go on for hours about everything I have seen and heard under this roof. I first set foot in this place in 1984, under the banner of the Progressive Conservatives. That was during the time of the “beau risque”, as it was called by René Lévesque. Quebec nationalists were giving Canada a second chance and wanted to carve out a place for themselves with dignity.

I was a member of the House when that ambition was consummated in the Meech Lake accord. I was also here when that deal failed. I was part of the group that crossed the floor to sit as independent members following that insult to the Quebec nation. I was in the House 27 years ago when that parliamentary group became a party, the Bloc Québécois. Under this new banner, but still in the same building, I was here when separatists formed the official opposition in 1993.

I experienced the days of the 1995 referendum both here and in Quebec. The debates were very acrimonious, as everyone knows. I was also here during the debates on clarity. Today, however, people remember the good times, not the bickering. We remember the historic moments shared by great parliamentarians of all stripes. This Parliament is founded on deep mutual respect among those who are here to serve their constituents. Here, our ideas are different and our debates vigorous, but we recognize that each and every one of us sincerely wants to do the best we can for the people we represent.

I remember some of the great moments we have shared, such as when Nelson Mandela addressed the House in 1990, just a few months after being released from prison, where he had served 27 years for fighting to liberate his people. I remember great moments like the recent visit from young Malala, who was awarded the Nobel Prize at just 17 years of age. I remember great moments like the official apology for residential schools.

I also remember some sad times we experienced together, such as when our former leader, Lucien Bouchard, was fighting for his life. I will never forget that a member of the Reform Party placed a white rose on his desk and that Preston Manning greeted Mr. Bouchard warmly upon his return to the House, as the entire chamber applauded.

I will also never forget the pain we went through when two of our Bloc Québécois colleagues, Benoît Sauvageau and Gaston Pélouquin, lost their lives in car accidents while in office.

There have also been some funny and enjoyable moments in the House. With more than 300 members of Parliament and countless staff members spending long hours confined in this building, there is no shortage of funny stories.

For example, I remember when the Hon. Jean Chrétien welcomed Tony Blair and his wife, Cherie Blair, to the House. Mr. Chrétien delighted in calling Mrs. Blair by her first name, Cherie, because he said she was the only woman he could call *chérie* without his wife giving him that look.

It is for all of those reasons and moments that I feel a bit anxious today at the thought of leaving this building. One gets attached to its decor, its history and its ghosts. I hope that those ghosts will follow

us to the new building. If there is one thing that we should keep from this chamber and bring with us to the new building, it is the memory of all those who sat here in a spirit of respect for the ideas of others and with a willingness to serve the people who put their trust in us.

Happy holidays everyone, and I hope the move goes smoothly.

● (1550)

[English]

The Speaker: My dear colleagues, this week the House marks a milestone in its history. When it rises for the winter adjournment, it will do so for the last time in a decade, more or less, and preparations will begin to repair and restore this magnificent, but now fragile, building. For nearly 100 years, history has been made here.

[Translation]

Some members were first elected in 2015. However, the dean of the House, the member for Bécancour—Nicolet—Saurel, who just spoke so eloquently, has been representing his constituents straight through since 1984, when some of you were not even born yet. I myself was but a lad at the time. I actually had hair.

Whether you are a member of the class of 2015 or you have been walking these halls for 20-odd years like me, it is difficult to say goodbye to this chamber and this building that welcomed, educated and inspired us.

● (1555)

[English]

When they take their place in the interim chamber, the newly renovated West Block, the 338 members of Parliament who form Canada's 42nd Parliament will of course continue to serve their constituents to the best of their ability. That will not change. However, I know that like me, they will leave this place with a heavy heart.

I know we are not the only ones who have lumps in our throats today. The procedural clerks, the constables, the interpreters, the pages, the broadcasting team up there, the journalists in their gallery behind me and all those who work here, have all been our comrades in arms and they too must now make their farewells to what the chief architect of this building, John Pearson, referred to as the Parliament Building.

Our parliamentary family is starting a new chapter in its history. However, first we must finish this one and say *au revoir* to a place that has been so important to us.

As we prepare to leave this beautiful chamber and return to our ridings and our families, I encourage all members, and those who support them in this place, to pause, look around and savour the wonder that is the Parliament Building. It has taken good care of us for more than 100 years. It is now time we return the favour.

* * *

INTERPARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS

Hon. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34(1) I have the honour to present, in both official languages, three reports of the Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group.

Routine Proceedings

The first report concerns the 56th annual meeting with members of the U.S. Senate and the House of Representatives, held in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, from June 15 to 17 of this year.

The second report concerns the 71st annual meeting of the Council of State Governments West (CSG West), held in Snowbird, Utah, United States of America, from September 11 to 15 of this year.

The third report concerns the Canadian/American Border Trade Alliance Conference, held in Washington, D.C., U.S.A., from September 30 to October 2 of this year.

* * *

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mr. Stephen Fuhr (Kelowna—Lake Country, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 14th report of the Standing Committee on National Defence, entitled “Responding to Russian Aggression Against Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia in the Black Sea Region”.

Pursuant to Standing Order 109 the committee requests that the Government of Canada table a comprehensive response to this unanimous report.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Hon. Mark Eyking (Sydney—Victoria, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 14th report of the Standing Committee on International Trade, entitled “Canada and the Mercosur Countries: A Potential Agreement to Advance Trade Relations”.

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

While I am on my feet, I move:

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

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

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

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Speaker: In my opinion the yeas have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Speaker: Call in the members.

● (1635)

[Translation]

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

(Division No. 980)

YEAS

Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Amos	Anandasangaree
Arseneault	Arya
Ayoub	Badawey
Bagnell	Bains
Baylis	Bennett
Bibeau	Bittle
Blair	Boissonnault
Bossio	Bratina
Breton	Brison
Caesar-Chavannes	Carr
Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)	Casey (Charlottetown)
Chagger	Champagne
Cuzner	Dabrusin
Damoff	DeCoursey
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Di Iorio	Drouin
Dubourg	Duclos
Duguid	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Dzerowicz	Easter
Ehsassi	El-Khoury
Ellis	Erskine-Smith
Eyking	Eyolfson
Fergus	Fillmore
Finnigan	Fisher
Fonseca	Fortier
Fragiskatos	Fraser (West Nova)
Fraser (Central Nova)	Fry
Fuhr	Garneau
Gerretsen	Goldsmith-Jones
Goodale	Gould
Graham	Hajdu
Hardie	Hébert
Hehr	Hogg
Holland	Housefather
Hutchings	Iacono
Joly	Jones
Jordan	Jowhari
Khalid	Lambropoulos
Lametti	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)
LeBlanc	Lebouthillier
Lefebvre	Leslie
Levitt	Lightbound
Lockhart	Long
Longfield	Ludwig
MacAulay (Cardigan)	MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Maloney	Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)
May (Cambridge)	McCrimmon
McDonald	McGuinty
McKay	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McLeod (Northwest Territories)	Mendès
Mendicino	Mihychuk
Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Sœurs)	
Monsef	
Morrissey	Murray
Nassif	Nault
Ng	O'Connell
Oliphant	Oliver
O'Regan	Ouellette
Paradis	Peschisolido
Peterson	Petitpas Taylor
Philpott	Picard
Ratansi	Rioux
Robillard	Rodriguez
Rogers	Romanado
Rota	Ruimy
Rusnak	Sahota
Saini	Saijan
Samson	Sangha

Privilege

[English]

PRIVILEGE

MEMBER FOR NANAIMO—LADYSMITH

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of personal privilege to say my final speech in this House.

How could I be leaving this fantastic job? I am the fourth member of my family to be a member of Parliament, the first woman and the first New Democrat. I have the best spouse and political partner, Howard. I have an amazing staff team. I have a family who is proud of me and supports me, so how could I be giving a farewell speech?

I feel like I have been able to achieve a lot in the three years I have been here.

Abandoned vessels is something I worked on for eight years before being elected here. I feel we have really made a lot of progress. I have been honoured to carry on former member of Parliament Jean Crowder's work. We really pushed the issue here, with the support of the transport minister and members of Parliament from the Atlantic.

Pay equity was another win. It was my motion, just weeks into this Parliament, that put equal pay for women on the government's agenda. It was not there before. Three years later, we almost have legislation. That is a huge win.

Also, with my fellow New Democrat MPs from Vancouver Island, we had the rules for infrastructure funding changed so that BC Ferries could apply for capital infrastructure for ferry improvements. That brought \$62 million in improvements for coastal communities. We are very proud of that work.

With my staff team, I was also able to help bring millions of dollars of funding and hundreds of jobs into the riding of Nanaimo—Ladysmith.

Also, a ruling was made with the Speaker's agreement to change the rules so the Speaker could recognize first nations leaders who appear in the public gallery in this House. That was a small thing, but a new thing.

As New Democrats, we also achieved some amazing things this year particularly. My colleague, whom I am so proud to serve with, the member for Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou, brought in legislation. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is something the whole country can be proud of. I am honoured to serve with him and appreciate his leadership.

My colleague from Vancouver Island, the member for Courtenay—Alberni, just in the past few months has had huge wins both on veterans funding and on the issue of marine plastics pollution. I am very proud of him.

There are other New Democrat fixes which we really hoped would pass in this House and which my colleagues proposed, such as, closed containment for salmon farms, an anti-poverty plan, right to housing, labelling GMOs, and pension reform. These are all progressive constructive proposals. Sadly, they were all voted down by the Liberal government. Nevertheless, those issues were raised.

Sarai
Schieffe
Sgro
Sheehan
Sikand
Sohi
Spengemann
Tan
Vandal
Vaughan
Whalen
Wilson-Raybould
Yip
Zahid— 165

Scarpaleggia
Schulte
Shanahan
Sidhu (Brampton South)
Simms
Sorbara
Tabbara
Tassi
Vandenbeld
Virani
Wilkinson
Wrzesnewskyj
Young

NAYS

Members

Aboultaif
Albrecht
Allison
Angus
Barlow
Bergen
Bezan
Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis)
Boutin-Sweet
Brosseau
Caron
Chong
Clarke
Cullen
Deltell
Doherty
Dubé
Dusseau
Egliniski
Finley
Gallant
Généreux
Gill
Godin
Hardcastle
Hughes
Johns
Julian
Kent
Krniec
Kwan
Lloyd
MacKenzie
Malcolmson
Martel
Mathysen
McColeman
Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound)
Nater
Paul-Hus
Poilievre
Ramsey
Richards
Saroya
Shields
Sopuck
Ste-Marie
Stubbs
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Albas
Alleslev
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Arnold
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Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)
Duvall
Falk (Provencher)
Fortin
Garrison
Genus
Gladu
Gourde
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Jeneroux
Jolibois
Kelly
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Kusie
Laverdière
MacGregor
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Marcil
Masse (Windsor West)
McCauley (Edmonton West)
McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)
Motz
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Plamondon
Quach
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Strahl
Sweet
Trost
Viersen
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Waugh
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Members

Cormier

Pauzé— 2

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

The hon. member for Nanaimo—Ladysmith wishes to rise on a point of personal privilege.

Privilege

I love my job as a member of Parliament. I am honoured to serve with this beautiful New Democrat caucus. I am proud that Jagmeet Singh is our leader, the first racialized leader of any political party in this country's history. I have been so honoured to serve in this historic building.

However, the environmental and housing crises my riding faces cannot wait until after the next federal election. I have been pushing for eight years for regulations to deal with marine oil spills, and bitumen spills in particular. The government has not changed the regulations. However, the B.C. NDP says that it will, and it is trying.

Affordable housing spending is largely pushed off until 2020 federally, but just this week in my riding, the B.C. NDP has moved 155 homeless people into modular housing. As well, it has just announced spending of \$12 million for 120 new affordable housing units done with community organizations.

I fought to stop oil tanker transportation increases in my riding, which would risk tens of thousands of jobs we have on the coast already. I thought all we had to do was beat Harper, but it turns out the Liberals bought the pipeline. It is now the B.C. government which is working to stop that.

Climate change is the greatest crisis of our times. The Liberals adopted the Harper government's targets, and even the ombudsman says they will not meet them. Again, the action on the ground that is creating both jobs and climate change action is provincial. The NDP there is working the hardest to cut emissions and create jobs doing it.

I am inspired by the New Democrat and Green co-operative governing partnership, which is achieving results in British Columbia. In the referendum, I am really hoping voters choose to move away from the outdated first past the post system and into a proportional representation system to make every vote count. I am sorry it did not pass and was stopped by the government federally, but maybe we can make it happen provincially and inspire the rest of the country.

• (1640)

Finally, although I am proud to have advanced abandoned vessel solutions federally, we did not get the changes that New Democrats asked for dealing with the backlog, vessel recycling, and a turn-in program that has been done in Washington and Oregon. The B.C. NDP campaigned to do those things, so I can help in that regard to get this work finished.

I am honoured to have the endorsement of the Union of BC Municipalities, Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities and the Canadian Chamber of Commerce. They all endorsed the same solutions that the government voted down.

That the premier invited me to be part of his progressive government and stand for the nomination is a compliment to my staff team and my constituents who have worked hard to get real change on the agenda.

In my 15 years of elected office, I have drawn immeasurably on the wisdom of my colleagues from coastal communities and Islands Trust Council. The Snuneymuxw First Nation chief and council are very strong partners. Gabriola Island, my home, has continued

lessons of sustainability and community action that continue to support and inform me.

I have learned so much working alongside Ladysmith's mayor, Aaron Stone, and John Elliott, the Stz'uminus First Nation chief. I want to recognize the collaborative work that they have done together and recommend it as a model for the rest of the country of what reconciliation and action really looks like.

We have a brand new mayor and a brand new council elected in Nanaimo, which has precipitated this by-election, but that creates a real opportunity for us in my hometown to be able to implement progressive solutions.

Good things are happening already. With a new government in place provincially, we have three new ambulances, 24 new paramedics, a new update which was sorely overdue for the intensive care unit at the hospital, affordable child care for 2,700 Nanaimo kids, ferry fares frozen on major routes and rolled back on minor routes so seniors can ride ferries for free. Great things are happening.

I am determined to keep serving the people of Nanaimo and amplify those opportunities that are before us. I am hoping that I am elected to this new provincial role in the new year. I will be drawing on the lessons learned in this building. I will keep the work going, building on what we have been able to do together as a community, building on what I have learned from people at home and from the abundant lessons here in this Parliament.

It is an exciting future ahead of us. I wish my colleagues in the House well. I say a big hello and that I am so looking forward to being home and working shoulder-to-shoulder with the people implementing real results on the ground right now.

• (1645)

The Speaker: I thank the hon. member for Nanaimo—Ladysmith for her comments, for her service, and on a personal note, I am sure all colleagues join me in wishing her all the very best in the future.

[*Translation*]

I wish to inform the House that, because of the ministerial statements, government orders will be extended by 22 minutes.

[*English*]

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 Essex, International Trade; the hon. member for Abitibi—Témiscamingue, Veterans Affairs; the hon. member for London—Fanshawe, Canada Post Corporation.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

ELECTIONS MODERNIZATION ACT

Hon. Karina Gould (Minister of Democratic Institutions, Lib.) moved the second reading of, and concurrence in, the amendment by the Senate to Bill C-76, An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act and other Acts and to make certain consequential amendments.

That the amendment made by the Senate to Bill C-76, An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act and other Acts and to make certain consequential amendments, be now read a second time and concurred in.

She said: Mr. Speaker, I am extremely proud to stand in the House once again, and probably for the last time in this specific place, to talk about Bill C-76, the elections modernization act. This is an important piece of legislation that would ensure that Canadians continue to take part in our democratic process.

To begin, I would like to take this opportunity to say thanks to all those who have been part of the legislative process thus far. First, I thank the members of the House for the enriching debate that led to some amendments in committee that are making this legislation even stronger. I would also like to thank senators, in particular the sponsor of the bill in the Senate. I particularly appreciate the flexibility they have demonstrated in considering the bill, despite challenging timelines. I would like to thank the members of the legal and constitutional affairs committee for their observations, which shall guide the government in future efforts to amend the Canada Elections Act.

• (1650)

[Translation]

I would also like to thank the Chief Electoral Officer and the Commissioner of Canada Elections for supporting parliamentarians through every step of the legislative process. The exemplary dedication shown by their respective teams is fundamental for holding free and fair elections. I want to thank them.

[English]

Bill C-76 has now been returned to us with one amendment. This amendment is required because of a drafting error in one of the amendments supported by the House of Commons Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs. We will recall that PROC proposed a new blanket prohibition on the use of foreign funding by third parties for their partisan advertising and activities at any time, including outside the pre-election and election period.

The most effective way to achieve this was to consolidate the relevant provisions into one new division in the Canada Elections Act. In doing so, the concept of election advertising was inadvertently dropped off. "Election advertising" is defined as partisan advertising and advertising on an issue associated with a party or a candidate. This amendment corrects this error and ensures that during the writ period, election advertising, not only partisan advertising, is also captured within the scope of the prohibition on the use of foreign funding.

[Translation]

The amendment proposed by the Senate is essentially a technical one, but it really is important for protecting Canadians from foreign

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interference in our electoral process. This amendment gives me a chance to remind the members of the House that making the electoral system more secure is one of the key objectives of Bill C-76. The bill contains some important measures for protecting Canada's electoral system from foreign interference, an issue that concerns parliamentarians of all political stripes. It also contains measures aimed at ensuring that anyone who contravenes the Canada Elections Act cannot escape punishment, including more enforcement tools for the commissioner.

[English]

Bill C-76 goes further than that. In addition to making our electoral system more secure, it aims to make it more accessible and transparent. It modernizes our electoral law to bring it into the 21st century. Our government maintains that the more Canadians participate in elections, the stronger our democratic institutions will be. This is, quite simply, about the health of our democracy. This is why Bill C-76 contains a series of measures that will reduce many of the barriers Canadians may face when casting a ballot or participating in the broader democratic process.

This includes important changes to ensure that the need to prove identity does not create administrative barriers to Canadians exercising their right to vote, such as reinstating the use of vouching and allowing the use of voter information cards to confirm an elector's place of residence. Statistics Canada estimated that over 170,000 Canadians were unable to cast their ballot in 2015 because of the previous government's decision to make voting less accessible. Voting is a right and it is the responsibility of the government to make voting accessible to as many Canadians as possible. We take that responsibility seriously.

These measures will empower Canadians who previously could not vote to cast their ballot on election day. We are also taking important steps to ensure that our democratic process is accessible, not for some Canadians but all Canadians.

Bill C-76 contains measures to better support electors with disabilities by ensuring that adaptation measures are available, irrespective of the nature of their disability. For example, the option of at-home voting will be available for persons with all types of disabilities. This legislation will also encourage political parties and candidates to accommodate electors with disabilities by creating a financial incentive through reimbursement of expenses related to the accommodating measures.

Bill C-76 will also facilitate the vote for Canadians Armed Forces electors. It will expand the franchise to many Canadians living abroad, and it reinstates a broader public education mandate for the Chief Electoral Officer of Elections Canada.

With this legislation, we are ensuring that every Canadian who has the right to vote will be able to cast their ballot.

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[Translation]

The legislative framework governing elections is supposed to put candidates and political parties on a level playing field. This is only possible when we have transparency rules in place. Bill C-76 also makes some noteworthy advances in that regard.

For example, it creates a pre-writ period and establishes spending limits for political parties and third parties during that period. In addition, third parties that are especially active will be required to file interim expenses returns with Elections Canada in the lead-up to election day.

Online platforms will also be required to maintain a registry of partisan and election advertising messages published on the platform during the pre-writ and writ periods.

These requirements will give Canadians access to more information about who is trying to influence their votes.

•(1655)

[English]

I would also mention that Bill C-76 takes key steps in modernizing voter services. For instance, it will give the Chief Electoral Officer more flexibility to manage the workflow in polling stations. Over time, these changes should reduce wait times on polling day. Recognizing that Canadian electors have busy lives, Bill C-76 also extends the hours of advance polling days by making them 12-hour days.

This legislation will also limit fixed election date elections to a maximum of 50 days and it will implement a pre-election period to ensure there is transparency around third party spending. There will also be spending limits for election advertising and partisan activity by third parties.

During the pre-writ period, a maximum of \$1 million for advertising and activities can be spent and no more than \$10,000 per electoral district. During the writ period, a maximum of \$500,000 may be spent and no more than \$4,000 per electoral district. These limits are set for 2019 and are adjusted for inflation.

I firmly believe that Bill C-76 is good for democracy and good for Canada. It is about strengthening the integrity and increasing the fairness of our elections and protecting them. This bill implements over 85% of the recommendations made by the former Chief Electoral Officer following the 2015 general election.

Canadians need to have a process they can trust and our election laws need to be as robust as possible. As the Minister of Democratic Institutions, I am committed to maintaining and strengthening the trust of Canadians in our democracy.

Bill C-76 will ensure that our democratic institutions are modern, transparent and accessible to all Canadians. As section 3 of the charter reads:

Every citizen of Canada has the right to vote in an election of the members of the House of Commons or of a legislative assembly and to be qualified for membership therein.

Canadians have the right to cast their ballot and our government is ensuring that they do not face barriers when it comes to exercising their right to vote.

I am incredibly proud of this legislation. There is no right more fundamental than citizens being able to cast their ballots and exercise their right to vote. This legislation is about Canadians, and Canadians can trust that it was drafted and introduced with them in mind.

Hon. Erin O'Toole (Durham, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would agree with the minister that all Canadians hold our elections and our democratic traditions in this parliamentary democracy as very important. The right to vote and the promotion of voting are very important, as is this debate in the House. This will likely be the last bill we debate in this historic, original chamber of the House of Commons.

On this bill that is about fair elections and our democratic process and debate, will the Minister of Democratic Institutions undertake not to use time allocation or closure of debate on our fundamental principles of democracy, which are our elections, our Elections Act and Bill C-76? Before we close this chamber, will our Minister of Democratic Institutions renounce the use of time allocation or closure on this bill concerning our democracy?

•(1700)

Hon. Karina Gould: Mr. Speaker, I would like to reiterate that there is symbolic importance to our debating elections legislation in this place, which brings all of us here as elected representatives. It is fitting to think about democracy in this place and that when this legislation, hopefully, passes this place and receives royal assent, the next group of members of Parliament will be elected into the House of Commons, not this chamber in particular but the one in the West Block. Integral to this legislation is the fact that it would ensure that every single Canadian would have the ability to cast their ballot in 2019. That is what all of us want to happen. As my hon. colleague mentioned, promoting the right to vote, the ability to vote, and education about voting are what all of us stand for in this place. That is what Bill C-76 would do.

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we just watched a curious exchange. There was a specific question by a Conservative member about the use of closure on this bill, put to the democratic institutions minister about a tactic that, in all fairness, the Conservatives used with regard to a voting bill in the last Parliament. At that time, the Liberals said it was terrible that the Conservatives were using closure on something as important as a democratic voting bill, a procedure the Liberals are now using and cannot even admit they are doing, in answer to straightforward question. Again, ironically, it is being done with a bill concerning our democracy. Canadians look upon this and scratch their heads and wonder.

This bill comes 750 days after the Liberals first introduced Bill C-33. It is 226 days after Elections Canada gave its own deadline. As the minister knows, many of the things in this bill with merit would not be applied to the 2019 election because it took the Liberals so long to introduce the bill.

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I would like to ask the minister about one very specific thing that is not in this bill. One change that New Democrats proposed was to suggest that the reimbursement parties get back from Elections Canada, effectively the voters and taxpayers, for elections expenses should be tied to the effort each party makes to present an equal mandate—in other words, that it be tied to their attempts to get toward fifty-fifty. The Prime Minister made great boasts about 50% of his cabinet being women, and we said that we should extend that to the whole House. As the minister knows, three-quarters of the House remain men. That is essentially the same composition under the Harper government. Therefore, if we are going to change this, New Democrats say that we should follow the money, as is often said in finance and business and politics. Therefore, we proposed what we did.

By the way, when this one proposal was applied in Ireland, it increased the number of women and under-represented groups in the next election by 90%, and the number of women and under-represented groups in the Irish parliament by 40%. We proposed making this change, and the Liberals voted against it.

To my friend across the way and her allegedly feminist Prime Minister, when we propose ideas that would help get more women elected to the House of Commons, why do Liberals vote against those ideas that have been proven to work in democracies around the world?

Hon. Karina Gould: Mr. Speaker, the member knows how passionate I am about getting more women elected to this place and about ensuring that we have greater representation of women in Canadian politics at all levels, whether here at the federal level or in provincial or municipal politics.

There are a number of measures in this legislation that would help ensure that women can run for office. We know that many of the barriers women face in terms of getting involved in politics are specifically around nominations. One of the things I am very proud of in the legislation, and it is something that has not been talked about enough, is the proposal to move the reimbursement for child care or other care expenses for family members out of the maximum candidates are allowed to spend and into a separate bucket. What happens now is that if I have to pay child care expenses as a candidate, I have to take that out of the maximum spend I have, and I am at a financial disadvantage compared to a colleague who does not have those care expenses. Under Bill C-76, those care expenses would be reimbursed up to 90%. These are important, tangible measures that would make a real difference.

Of course, we welcome conversation and debate on this issue, and I think it is a lively one we should continue to have. I look forward to the recommendations from the CEO following 2019.

As I have said many times in this place, it is incumbent upon all of us to reach out to women and to under-represented groups to ensure that they see themselves represented in this place and have the courage and the confidence to put their names forward. As all of us in this place know, it requires a lot of courage to put one's name on a ballot, in public, to stand for something. Let us all do that important outreach.

● (1705)

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal (Surrey—Newton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the minister for bringing Bill C-76 forward. It is a wonderful opportunity for many more Canadians to join when it comes to voting. As the minister and also the member for Durham mentioned, this might be the last time we will be debating the bill and that I will be standing here. I want to thank the constituents of Surrey—Newton for giving me the privilege of sitting in this beautiful and historic House for the third time.

The minister has said that she made many changes to make voting places accessible. What changes in particular did she make to make it easier for people to go to a special ballot and cast their votes? Because it is an ongoing process, are there any further changes she is thinking of bringing in that would help increase participation in our voting system when it comes to elections?

Hon. Karina Gould: Mr. Speaker, it is important to note that in Bill C-76, one of the amendments to the Canada Elections Act would provide the ability to ensure that vouching could occur at advance polls and at regular polls. This is something we heard from Canadians across the country, particularly the most vulnerable Canadians, who may not have the standard pieces of identification that many Canadians have but that not all Canadians have.

When the CEO of Elections Canada was at PROC and at the Senate committee, he talked about vulnerable Canadians and who they may be. With regard to vouching, but more importantly, with regard to the voter information card as a piece used to establish residency, he said that it is often older women who make use of these cards. They may not have a driver's licence or bills that come in the mail in their names. They are often in the husband's name. To be able to use the voter information card in conjunction with another identifying piece that establishes identity means that they can cast a ballot. That is something that is really quite important.

I look forward to the CEO's recommendations following the 2019 election, as I am sure all members in this place do. There will be a review of how this piece of legislation was rolled out and how it enabled Canadians to vote. Of course, if there are further suggestions, our government or the next government will take those under advisement.

What this legislation aims to do is enable Canadians to cast their ballots, regardless of their circumstances in life.

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I would like to table the government's responses to Questions Nos. 2025 to 2029.

Mr. Blake Richards: I will just point out on this point of order that the minister has just raised, Mr. Speaker, that if the government really wanted to table these things, perhaps it should not have pushed to end routine proceedings and should have given people an opportunity to table petitions and do other things.

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I just want to point out that procedurally, the government forced a vote that eliminated this opportunity, and now the minister is standing up on a point of order to try to do exactly what they all, including the member, voted to eliminate.

● (1710)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): That is more of a debate point.

Is the hon. member for Hochelaga rising on a point of order as well?

[*Translation*]

Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet: Mr. Speaker, I was about to say the same thing.

I totally agree. One cannot have one's cake and eat it too, but that is what the government is trying to do today. I do not think that is fair. It should not have moved on to government orders if it wanted to table that kind of thing.

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak to Bill C-76. I have talked about this bill a few times already, and I hope this will be the last. If I have to speak to this bill, this is what I will say.

[*English*]

If the bill were truly about democracy, it has failed. If the bill were truly about the Prime Minister rigging the election for the benefit of the Liberal government, then mission accomplished. With that, I will go on to explain how, in our view, as the official opposition, Bill C-76 would fail, in so many ways, to achieve the democratic purposes the government claims it would.

First are the spending limits during the pre-writ period. Historically, of course, these were very different from what was first proposed in Bill C-76. The bill proposed specific limits in regard to not only third parties but also registered parties. In the original format of the bill, it would only take four third parties to outspend a registered party. Through the graciousness of my colleagues, as well as through negotiations, we were able to get this up to \$2 million, which we on this side do not necessarily believe is fair. However, it is certainly an improvement over what it was previously, which was \$1.5 million. Essentially, by setting these limits, the bill would be gagging Canadians by not giving them different parties with opportunities to present themselves to Canadians with the information required for them to make informed decisions. That is what the government has tried to do with the elections modernization act.

In addition to rigging the election for the Liberals, the bill would attempt to undo everything that was done within the Fair Elections Act, which some members refer to as the unfair elections act, which is so very funny. There are many other things, in addition to these spending limits, that attempt to achieve democracy but would not.

Second is the attempt to curtail foreign interference. As I have stated in previous speeches, the measures that would be put in place under the bill would essentially be a slap on the wrist. In fact, it is well known that we offered 200 amendments in an attempt to serve the Canadian public and democracy, but fewer than a handful were accepted. Some were in regard to the attempt to keep foreign

interference out of Canadian elections. In fact, we are not seeing that this would happen as a result of Bill C-76. Not only would it just give a slap on the wrist, it would not legislate the mechanics that would be necessary to ensure that foreign interference did not take place.

It is interesting that when the issue of foreign interference was on the other side of the House, there was not a lot said about it after the last election. However, the tide has turned. All of a sudden, we are seeing the effectiveness of these third party groups. These things now become very interesting.

● (1715)

The third reason that Bill C-76 would fail to protect the Canadian public is with regard to foreign influence. This is very alarming on our side of the House. We are very aware of the interventions that we saw, not only in the United States in their most recent election, but also with Brexit.

I will not go into the suggested protocol to be applied during the election, which we also believe should be extended perhaps to the pre-writ period, and extended indefinitely. We are not convinced that it is a protocol that will serve Canadians.

Putting the protocol aside for a moment, foreign influence was absolutely ignored in this bill, and it is very concerning for us on this side of the House.

The greatest concerns for us include the use of voter cards as proof of residency. We are very committed to ensuring the legitimacy of the electorate. That is a Conservative value that we will not forgo. We feel very confident that the use of voter cards does not ensure that.

In addition, in terms of preserving the legitimacy of the electorate, we are very concerned about the non-residency requirements that were withdrawn.

The vouch to return to Canada and the five-year leave requirements were withdrawn. As a result, we are very concerned about the government's safeguard for the legitimacy of the electorate, which is the most important thing of all.

Ensuring that we have safe and fair elections for Canadians is the obligation of the government. We take our role in pointing this out to the government, as the official opposition, very seriously.

This is coming back here. This bill went to the Senate and our Conservative colleagues in the Senate, who are truly Conservative, who do not wear the veil of independent senators, proposed four amendments to the bill on Monday. We are very proud of our Conservative senators. All four amendments were unfortunately defeated, unsurprisingly.

Here we are again, bringing back this piece of legislation that fails Canadians, fails democracy and fails the Canadian electorate. This really is not a big surprise, considering that the government is also putting forward the debate commission to not only rig the election in its favour, but to rig the leadership debate process in its favour as well.

We certainly cannot overlook the Liberal government's attempt to buy the media for close to \$600 million.

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We simply cannot overlook all of these things.

It is with much regret that we come to have the final debate on this bill. We think it is a travesty for democracy in Canada. Frankly, it is no different than what has been par for the course with the Liberal government. Between the pre-writ spending, the true lack of commitment to foreign influence, the use of voter cards and the taking away of the non-residency rules, it is really not surprising for us that this piece of legislation would be pushed through prior to the upcoming election in 2019, and that democracy would not be served.

As I said, if this bill was truly about democracy, it fails. If this was about the Prime Minister rigging the election for his Liberal government, then it is mission accomplished.

With that, I move:

That the motion be amended by deleting all the words after the word "That" and substituting the following:

"the order for the consideration of the amendments made by the Senate to Bill C-76, An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act and other Acts and to make certain consequential amendments, be discharged and the Bill withdrawn".

• (1720)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): The motion is in order.

Questions and comments.

Mr. Scott Simms (Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in normal speak, we would probably call this a hoist amendment. On this side of the House, we call the hoist amendment part of the 2015 election. One of the reasons why we hoisted the Conservatives was the fact that the Fair Elections Act of 2014 was such an egregious mess. In many cases, it was really an insult to section 3 of the charter, the right of all Canadians above the age of 18 to vote.

One of the issues the member spoke of was with respect to the voter information card. How we draw logic that allowing people to use their voter identification card as a piece of ID is a regressive measure in democracy defies all logic.

I remember when a certain Conservative member from Mississauga said that he saw an actual abuse of the voter information card, only to find out he made it up. It was all make-believe. It was like this once upon a time a voter information card was abused. The whole thing was an absolute shambles from when it started until the very end.

If the Conservatives want to brag about the 2014 Fair Elections Act, or the unfair elections act, depending on what side of the House one is on, and if this bill does not go far enough to cut down on foreign intervention or interference in our elections, why did they not do something about in 2014?

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie: Mr. Speaker, we did do a lot for democracy in the Fair Elections Act. In addition to the voter information cards, we also had the non-residency requirements in regard to both the vouching to return to Canada as well as the amount of time spent outside of Canada.

The idea that Bill C-76 does more to protect the integrity of the electorate, which is the key issue here, is absolutely preposterous. It is ridiculous. There is no comparison. We attempted, through close

to 200 amendments, to make these inserts that would do a better job of providing legitimacy to the electorate.

In my opinion, with respect to this specific issue, the Fair Elections Act was a far superior piece of legislation when it came to this objective. I would suggest that my colleague perhaps review the Fair Elections Act and in particular the parts related to legitimacy of the electorate.

• (1725)

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I think the conversation was about the potential for voter fraud, which should occupy all of us. When people go to vote, they must be able to trust the results, although they may not like the results under the unfair voting system that Canada maintains, despite the rest of the world evolving and despite the Prime Minister promising to make every vote count and make 2015 the last election under first past the post. Therefore, when my Liberal colleague talks about a commitment falling into shambles, we know of what he speaks.

It was suggested by my Conservative colleagues that by using voter ID cards, that somehow they were being used to manipulate or vote fraudulently. This was the whole inspiration of their election act, which some called the Fair Elections Act, and those who did not like it, such as myself and my party, called the unfair election act. We asked the Chief Electoral Officer for proof of that. He came back to us and said that in the last election, or in the election before, there was no evidence of significant voter fraud under any condition, certainly not by using the voter ID card, which every Canadian is sent.

Therefore, while there have been discrepancies on the cards themselves, some small pieces of misinformation or information that gets corrected at the poll, the Conservatives continue to spread the idea that people are defrauding the voting system and voting illegally, which is unfair and not wise to the conversation.

This bill brings back the use of those voter ID cards. Is it not our hope and inspiration to ensure that as many Canadians who are entitled to vote are able to cast that vote in the next election and the elections that follow?

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie: Mr. Speaker, I very much disagree with my colleague, not necessarily on the legitimacy of the voter card, but perhaps their disorganized distribution. There are many stories of cards ending up in the mail rooms of apartment buildings for people to grab at will and to obtain another piece of identification very easily through non-governmental means to use in voting. I think the concern regarding the use of these cards is not only well-founded but legitimate.

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What stood out more to me was my colleague's first point about the broken promises of the Liberal government. I can see here that he and his party feel this was a major promise broken by the Liberal government. He was disappointed enough by it that he spoke about it here today on our final day in the Centre Block. Certainly, on this side of the House, we feel, just as Canadians do, there has been a slew of broken promises by the Liberal government. This example, sadly, just outlines another broken promise.

Mr. John Nater (Perth—Wellington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, one of the things that I think concerns us in the official opposition is the impact of foreign influence on our elections. The Prime Minister said there was not much foreign influence or tampering in the last election. He did not go on to indicate exactly what he meant by that. We are still waiting to hear an answer on that.

At committee, among the many thoughtful and reasoned amendments put forward by the opposition parties was an amendment requiring a third party to have a segregated bank account. It was recommended by Dr. Lori Turnbull, a former adviser to the democratic institutions portfolio within PCO. She suggested having a segregated bank account to ensure that every dime going into it would be from domestic sources, with zero possibility of foreign influence finding its way into those bank accounts. That suggestion was rejected by the Liberal majority.

What does the member for Calgary Midnapore think about the rejection by the Liberal Party of that thoughtful, reasonable amendment by an eminent scholar in this field, Dr. Lori Turnbull?

• (1730)

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie: Mr. Speaker, I have a couple of thoughts in regard to this.

First of all, it is as I said. If there were truly a commitment to democracy and to ensuring there is no foreign interference in elections, the measures recommended by experts in the field would have been taken into consideration and implemented in this bill. Quite frankly, they were not. That is just one example of the mechanisms that could have been implemented in Bill C-76 to absolutely make certain that foreign interference does not occur within our electoral process.

My second thought is this. Heaven forbid should something major happen in the 2019 election, given the lack of commitment to negating foreign interference, in addition to the weak protocol that I see being put forward in regard to possible foreign interference, our electoral system and possibly the election itself would be in grave trouble.

My thanks to my colleague for bringing this not only to my attention but also to the attention of Canadians.

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure this evening to rise in this place, which has been referred to much over the last couple of days. As we all know, in just a few short days, members of Parliament will be returning to their constituencies and homes for the holidays and this place will be shut down for some number of years. We were told it will be for 10 or 12 years, but in Ottawa speak, we are guessing more like 15 or 20, which is probably fair. My kids will be in their mid or late twenties the next time we are in this place.

I reflect on the fact that we are dealing with an elections bill. It is kind of appropriate that this place, for the last 100 years, is the place where representatives of Canadians from every corner of the country have engaged, two and a half sword lengths from each other, in debate on the issues of the day. The reason we are able to do that is based on our electoral system. The legitimacy we all have to stand in this place is only based on one thing, and that is the support of the people in our ridings in the various parts of the country.

It is fitting that we are debating an election bill, the last bill debated in this room, this hallowed ground. It is a bit ironic that the bill has been put under what we call time allocation, which means the government is imposing its will on the legislation, shutting off debate on our democracy and how democracy will be affected. This is also passing ironic because when the Conservatives did it when they were in power, the Liberals raged about such a mistreatment of our parliamentary democracy, that they would shut down the voice of Parliament in order to ram a bill through. A couple of years later, the Liberals are doing the same thing. Why the rush? It is because they took so long to bring the bill forward.

I say with all clarity of voice and vision that Liberals were elected, promising to undo what the Harper government had done to our election system, to make consequential changes. They introduced a bill about a year into their term in office to do it and then did nothing. They sat on the bill for hundreds of days. It sat there, with no debate, no discussion, nothing. It kind of felt like they had no sense of urgency to fix our democracy. The Prime Minister had said that one of his most urgent priorities was to fix the problems the previous prime minister had created. We agreed with him and we kept asking him where the bill was.

The Liberals did nothing with it. Then they introduced this bill a few hundred days after that. It was 748 days in total that we had been waiting on it before they brought it forward. That is 226 days past the deadline that Elections Canada had set. It told the Parliament of Canada that it ran the elections and that it needed any rule changes by a specific date. That was 226 days ago. A bunch of things in Bill C-76, if passed in Parliament, as it is likely to do in a day or two, will not happen for our next election. Those fixes will not happen and not because of anything the opposition did. The government sat for so long on the legislation because it had other priorities.

There is something not known about this entire building, Centre Block and the House of Commons. When the original architects put this building together, they intentionally left it unfinished. If we go through the halls and look at the masonry and architecture, we will see blank spaces, spaces that have not yet been affected by art or any description. When asked why they did not finish the building entirely, they said that the building was meant to represent democracy in Canada, which was a conversation and that conversation was not finished.

Government Orders

For many Canadians, too many Canadians, that conversation has hardly yet begun, particularly for indigenous peoples who have been waiting more than 150 years for some sort of comprehension and understanding from the Crown and this place as to how to properly respect and engage in what we call nation-to-nation dialogue. It is unfinished business.

We often speak of standing on unceded territory, land that has not yet been ceded to Canada, to the Crown. For us to fully and completely become ourselves, it is not just going to be a renovation of a building. It is going to take meaningful, structural change, power sharing change, where the Government of Canada no longer acts like some sort of paternalistic entity in the lives of indigenous peoples, but as a conversation of mutuality and respect, which has for so long been lacking.

• (1735)

Let me get back to the bill, which is hundreds of pages long and so badly written. Three hundred and thirty-eight amendments were drafted by government and opposition members. That is an extraordinary number of fixes to a bill that the government took three years to write. The bill may be vast in its comprehension but it is kind of simple in its effort, which is to make voting fair and open to all Canadians.

A couple of opportunities were sorely missed. Our former colleague Kennedy Stewart had quite an ingenious bill. He is a smart guy. He is now the mayor of Vancouver. Smart people in that city elected him mayor. When he looked around the world at democracy, he wondered which countries do well in terms of having their Parliament reflect the population. One clear indicator would be the kind of gender balance in a parliament, and which parliaments are good at it and which are bad at it.

Canadians might live under the misapprehension that, because we have a self-described feminist Prime Minister, this Parliament itself must also have some sort of gender balance. Lo and behold, we do not. Seventy-six per cent of the people in this place look like me, male, mostly white, and 24% are women.

One might ask what it was like under Harper. It was almost exactly the same. I think there was a 1% change from one administration to the next. That might be shocking to Canadians, because the government seems to have changed so much, but in terms of the gender balance of this place, it did not change at all, really. Why not? Because the same rules exist.

Our friend looked around the world, at Ireland, Norway and the Scandinavian countries, and found the number one way to do it, and the Liberals know because we had all this evidence at committee, is to have a fair voting system.

A proportional voting system tends to elect more women and under-represented groups. Our feminist Prime Minister looked at that, made the promise to change the voting system, realized that it might not work out so well for the Liberals, and then quashed the promise, even though it would have brought more women and more equity-seeking groups into Parliament. A choice between country and party, and the Liberal Prime Minister chose party.

He killed that promise, much to the disappointment of many Canadians because it had been repeated 1,800 times. I actually

believed him. I might be a little on the gullible side. I thought, when I saw a leader of a party who sought to be prime minister repeat a promise clear as day 1,800 times, that he was not going to back out of that one, because that would make him a liar.

Suddenly, lo and behold, he decided one day that he did not want to do it anymore because he did not like it. Committee heard testimony from average, ordinary Canadians. Eighty-eight per cent said they wanted a proportional voting system. Of the experts who testified in front of committee, 90% said Canada needed to move towards a fairer voting system. All the studies, the 14 national studies from the law commission to all the provinces that have studied this, concluded that Canada needed to move towards a proportional voting system where every vote counts.

I do not know about my colleagues, but one of the number one reasons I hear on the doorstep when someone says they do not want to vote is “My vote does not matter. I vote for a party in my riding that does not stand a chance, so what is the point? I voted in 10 elections and I have never voted for somebody who held office.”

In the last election, a little over half of all the votes cast in Canada elected nobody. The experience of more than half of the electors who went to the polls to cast their vote, which is an expression of hope for the future, was that their vote was not realized in any kind of meaningful way. The Liberals do not want a fair voting system because it did not work out for them.

We then look to this idea from our friend Kennedy Stewart, who says Ireland has a really novel thing going. When political parties in Ireland spend money in elections, they actually get a reimbursement from taxpayers. This is very generous to the political parties. How about we tie that reimbursement back to how well-balanced each of the parties' list of candidates is? As the Prime Minister said in 2015, it is 2015. The closer a party gets to fielding candidates for office who actually look like the country we seek to represent, the closer it gets to 100% of the reimbursement back from taxpayers. The further away they get from that parity, the less money they get, because money seems to be a motivation for political parties. Who knew?

• (1740)

In Ireland, what were the results when it made this one change? The number of candidates from diversity-seeking groups and from women increased by 90% across the political spectrum. The number of people who were elected into the Dáil, the legislature, increased by 40%. Again, remember, from the Harper government to the new Liberal government, we changed 1%. This one change brought in 40% better representation, more fair representation of what the country is.

My bet is this. If we had 75% women in Parliament, we would already have affordable child care in this country. If we had 75% women in Parliament, we would already have pay equity legislation in this country. We know it matters who stands for office and gains the seats in this place in terms of what kind of policies we push. For so many generations, women and other diversity-seeking groups have been standing on the outside pleading with the powers that be rather than being on the inside.

Government Orders

Daughters of the Vote was here. Does everyone remember the moment when 338 young women from each of the ridings were here? One woman stood and asked the Prime Minister a question, and she said that she would like to see proportional representation brought in as a voting system because we know it works. The Prime Minister said no, that when we ask a man to run he says yes and when we ask a woman to run she asks why her. It kind of felt like victim blaming a bit, like it is women's fault for not having enough courage and confidence to take on the challenge of electoral politics, like women do not have enough courage and confidence to tackle some of those difficult things that face families in communities right across this country. I felt it was a bit insulting. This young woman shot back, which I think was really great, that at the current pace, Parliament would be gender-balanced in 86 years, and that she did not want to wait that long. It was nice to see a young woman put the Prime Minister of Canada properly in his place.

Another important element we have to address, because it is happening around the world as we speak, is the element of our elections being fair, outside of foreign influence. My Conservative colleagues talked about this. The evidence we heard at committee was overwhelming about the vulnerability of our political system to foreign interference, particularly through hacking of the parties' databases.

What is in the parties' databases? An incredibly rich amount of information about individualized voters. Not just their age and where they live, but their voting preference, their income and their opinions on major issues. Parties seek to collect all this information about voters. All the parties do it. The Liberal Party bragged about it out of the last election as the key element of its win. It had the best data. It was able to mine data from the social media environment better than anybody else. When people clicked something on Facebook, "liked" that cat photo, the data might have been grabbed by the Liberal Party.

Who did the Liberals hire? What was the name of the company they put on contract? Cambridge Analytica. That is right. The Liberals gave Cambridge Analytica a \$100,000 contract, which we still have not been able to figure out. What else is Cambridge Analytica involved in? Brexit, right. These were the guys who were able to use backdoor technology to mine data illegally from Facebook, Twitter and other social media norms, grab people's preferences, opinions and personal information without them knowing about it.

One of the changes asked for at committee by the Chief Electoral Officer, the Privacy Commissioner, the head of our secret service—the spies are saying this is a problem—was that political parties had to fall under privacy law. Now, let us be fully transparent here. Two years ago, my party, the New Democratic Party, was opposed to this. To fall under privacy law would mean we would have to be able to give Canadians the power to demand of us what information we had collected on them, give it back to them and forget them if they wanted us to. Political parties do not want to do that.

However, slowly and surely, with evidence building, we saw the light and we now agree with this. We had all three major political parties at committee. The Conservatives said that they would follow whatever law was in place. The Liberals said that no way until Sunday they wanted to do this. Why?

● (1745)

I will read a quote that should chill some of my Liberal colleagues, "We judge that it is highly probable that cyber threat activity against democratic processes worldwide will increase in quantity and sophistication over the next year," particularly affecting Canada. This was said by the head of our Communications and Security Establishment. That is the spy agency that the Minister of Democratic Institutions commissioned a study for, to see what the security threat on our democracy is right now. He studied it and he said the threat is real because all it takes is a foreign government, a foreign entity, to hack into the Liberal, Conservative or NDP databases and then be able to manipulate elections as was done in Brexit.

My friend from Winnipeg smiles at the memory. I wonder how people in England would feel knowing that important vote they had on whether to stay in Europe or leave it was hacked into, that personal data was stolen from various political parties, mined out of Facebook sites and then voters were sent particularly influential messages to have them vote a certain way. In that case it was the leave vote. Now the government is in complete turmoil and people do not trust the system.

What happened in the Trump election? There is documented case after case that social media sites, Facebook, Twitter, were used to garner information about voters' intentions, how they were feeling about issues. Then they were sent very highly targeted messages to motivate them toward one side, in the case of Mr. Trump, voting for him for president. Who was hiring these hacks? The Russians were. That is what the entire inquiry is about. It is about foreign interference in the U.S. election. Never mind the payouts to the porn stars and all the rest. That is the sideshow. The major issue for American democracy was that the U.S. election was hacked by virtually a sworn enemy in Russia.

We say that in Canada we are nice people and no one would ever want to influence us. Certainly the Chinese government would not have any interest whatsoever in influencing the outcome of our next election. The Chinese government has no opinions about any arrests or detentions that have been taking place, about the introduction of any telecom companies into the Canadian environment, about the purchase of major oil sands assets by Chinese companies. No, no, the Chinese government would never stoop to such practices; except that it does and we are naive and foolish to not have done something about it when we were clear-eyed.

Government Orders

The Chief Electoral Officer of Canada, the guy who runs our elections, said, “If there is one area where the bill failed, it is privacy.” The Privacy Commissioner said that the bill “adds nothing of substance”. The B.C. Civil Liberties Association said that protection of personal information “falls far short of internationally recognized privacy standards”. The Liberals said, “Let us just continue on with the wild west. We will be fine. We are Canada,” as if that somehow would be a protection for us.

My sincere worry is that as we look to the end of this Parliament, as the last bill to pass out of this Parliament, it is the most important one which guides how we elect our representatives, the people who speak on our behalf, the people who will make the laws that affect us not just today, but for generations to come. In passing this piece of legislation, the Liberals were given all of the evidence and the solutions to fix the bill to protect our democracy as best we could from foreign interference, from hacking, from people trying to influence the outcome of a free and fair election. The Liberals said, “We just need to study that more.” After hundreds of days of delay, they said, “We need to study it more,” when we were studying it at the time.

The Liberals' own members on the privacy and ethics committee just finished a study on this and concluded—this is radical, I know—that political parties should fall under privacy law, the very thing we were asking to be changed in the bill. Liberals on one committee said we need to do this to protect our democracy and Liberals on one committee over did not want to enact it into law. This is so frustrating. We cannot have this.

As we end this session, as we see the bill make its final way, let us not pretend that it does all the things the minister earlier claimed it does, because it does not. Canadians need to understand and be vigilant and wary. When we do this again, and we are going to have to fix this again, my fear is this. We will have our next election and in the midst of it, we will hear of allegations of hacking and foreign interference. At the end of the election, there will be actual evidence of a hacked election. Canadians will not just blame one of the political parties, they will lose even more faith than they already have lost in our political process. That undermines everything that we try to do in this place and everything that we have been trying to do for the last century in this place.

● (1750)

We can do better. Canadians deserve better. This bill could have been so much more.

Mr. Scott Simms (Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this is one of the final times we get to speak in this House. We have been doing this since 2004. I want to thank my colleague for his speech and his insight with respect to the legislation.

I want to go back to the last election and when we talked about democratic reform. I will let my colleague talk about the position we took in 2015, which he has already done and will do again. However, I want to talk about the position of the New Democrats for a moment, because it is a one-sided argument. I do this with the utmost respect.

My problem with the New Democrats and their position in the last election is simply this. They wanted to propose not only democratic

reform and not only proportional representation but an exact prescription as to how that would be initiated. It is called mixed member proportional representation, MMP. It was something that was run by the electorate of Ontario a while back and in other jurisdictions.

This is what they based it on. In 2002, there was a Canadian law commission study that was done, across the country, on how we could reform the democratic process. It said that if we went by way of proportional representation, MMP would be the system to use. I am not saying that would not be a good thing to have in this country. One-third of the people would either be taken from a list or appointed by a leader, and two-thirds would be directly elected, much like we are here, and our ridings would be much bigger. There would be two levels of MPs in this country. However, it was very prescriptive.

They spent two hours, in 2002, in St. John's, Newfoundland, talking about this system, and now it was going to take that two hours and impose it on the people. I found it at the time to be overly insincere. In actual fact, it could not have been done within four years, because so many people were not consulted about that exact system. If they had opened up the conversation post-election, that would have been better.

● (1755)

Mr. Nathan Cullen: Mr. Speaker, I have great respect and admiration for my friend. However, the notion is strange to me that he seems to be critical of the idea of parties standing in elections and making promises that are specific. I have two points. First is that specificity is okay. Voters can handle it. Second is that in the process of the study my colleagues and I worked on, where we went around the country as part of the electoral reform initiative, I remember that at the time, the minister stood up in the House and said that the striking of this committee was almost as significant as women earning the right to vote. It is a strange irony that she later became the minister who killed that very initiative. Life works out strangely in politics. However, she saw it as important, as did I. A lot of us put a lot of energy into it. Our families made some sacrifices. We listened to Canadians.

Private Members' Business

MMP, the system my friend described, was overwhelmingly supported, as it is by the evidence, and as it is by our global partners in democracy. Even for those who do not follow the intricacies of voting systems, I would say look at the results. How do countries that use first past the post do when measuring economic, environmental and social measures? Are they more equitable? Are they more green? Are they doing better on the economy? The committee heard about all the research from the OECD, which is the developed countries of the world, the free democracies. Overwhelmingly, the OECD countries that use a proportional voting system get better outcomes, not just on the environment and social issues, which we might guess, but also on economic issues.

Aside from the actual way the vote is cast, most Canadians are curious about a couple of things. One is whether they will have a direct representative, someone they can call. Second is whether the kind of government they are going to get will produce better results for them, their families and their communities. The evidence on that scale is overwhelming.

I will end on this. With the minister, the Prime Minister's Office and the Prime Minister himself, I was not prescriptive in our attempts at negotiation. We never, at any point, publicly or privately, said that it was MMP or bust and that it had to be exactly that model. We set out a range of models. We also offered the government a slow roll. They could do it over a few elections. We offered as much as we could. However, in the end, the sincerity to actually do something about it was lacking, in all honesty, on the government side. There was not a willingness to see this thing through in any form other than the personal system the Prime Minister liked, one that is used by one house in the Australian government and that does not work for Australians or anyone else.

The Prime Minister should have known better. In the end, the declaration he made was that the decision to betray this promise was his and his to make. I fundamentally disagree with that type of notion of what parliamentary democracy looks like.

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am shocked by how much I agree with my colleague from Skeena—Bulkley Valley. My sister is a very strong member of the NDP, and we agree at the family dinner table that we are the principled ones, so it is a good to hear so much from that member.

It was we, the Conservatives, who were left holding the government to account in regard to Bill C-76 throughout this entire process. We were the bad cop; they were the good cop. Every time we said whoa, they said go. Why did they not do more? I am hearing today that they did not think it was a great piece of legislation. Why did they not do more to put the brakes on it, rather than letting it go forward so easily, when we worked so hard for Canadians to put the brakes on it?

Mr. Nathan Cullen: Mr. Speaker, we proposed a whole bunch of amendments. The government did not accept many of them. As for putting the brakes on it, what I think my friend is referring to is the filibuster at committee where the Conservatives just talked out the clock to delay the bill. That was a big part of it.

We may have agreed on some of the points I raised in my speech, but we fundamentally disagreed on vouching and some of the other things in this bill. As my friend knows, there are pieces missing from

a large piece of legislation like this. There are pieces that we would like to see in it, but we have to look at the entire net of the bill and ask if it is a move forwards or backwards. That happens with many pieces of legislation. On this one, we wanted to see something happen and we enjoyed the substantive debates that we had. That is what our job is here: to have those debates.

• (1800)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): It being 6 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' Business as listed on today's Order Paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[*Translation*]

CANADA REVENUE AGENCY ACT

The House resumed from December 5 consideration of the motion that Bill C-316, An Act to amend the Canada Revenue Agency Act (organ donors), be read the third time and passed.

Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet (Hochelaga, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to debate Bill C-316, an act to amend the Canada Revenue Agency Act with regard to organ donors, introduced by my colleague from Calgary Confederation.

My colleague's bill would authorize the Canada Revenue Agency to enter into an agreement with a province or a territory regarding the collection and disclosure of information required for establishing or maintaining an organ and tissue donor registry in the province or territory. With authorization from the taxpayer in their last tax return, the CRA could disclose to the province or territory the individual resides in the information collected under the agreement.

The NDP supports this bill. We firmly believe that we must take all necessary steps to ensure that every Canadian gets the organ or tissue transplant they need. This is not new to us. Since 2002, two NDP MPs on five occasions have introduced a bill to create a Canada-wide organ donor registry and to coordinate and promote organ donation across Canada.

This bill is essentially a weaker version of what we have been calling for for some time in order to allow anyone who needs a transplant to have access to the organs or tissues needed.

Private Members' Business

In this Parliament, the Conservative member for Edmonton Manning, whose son has received three liver transplants, had once again introduced a bill to establish a Canadian organ donor registry. Bill C-223 was debated in the House in 2016, but was defeated when the Liberal caucus voted against it. The health minister at the time, who is currently Minister of Indigenous Services, defended that Liberal Party decision by saying, "This is a matter that is under provincial jurisdiction, and it is for that reason that the bill was unsupportable."

It is interesting that the Liberals claim to be the great champions of the provinces when it suits them, but then impose their decisions in other situations. That is another story.

That being said, we truly hope that this time the Liberals will support this new bill that essentially seeks to have the federal government collaborate with the provinces and territories to help them implement their own organ and tissue donor registry. What everyone in the House needs to realize is that Canadians registered on a waiting list to get an organ or tissue transplant are dying, in part because of our low donation rate.

Currently only 20% of Canadians are registered organ and tissue donors in their province or territory. Some provinces and territories are already taking steps to increase the number of registered donors, but, unfortunately, despite these initiatives, far too few people consent to have their organs or tissue removed and transplanted to people in need.

According to a recent study by the Standing Committee on Health, in 2016 alone, 260 out of 4,492 people registered on a transplant list died before getting the organ or tissue they needed to survive. These are our fathers, mothers, sisters, brothers and children. This has to stop. Losing one person is one too many.

The NDP believes that, by passing the bill, the federal government could help without interfering in provincial jurisdiction. I will say it again: if it is passed, the bill we are debating today will make it possible for the federal government to co-operate with the provinces and territories and make it easier for people to sign up to be organ donors.

Of course, special measures would have to be implemented to ensure that taxpayers consent to giving personal information to their province or territory of residence so they can be added to an organ donor registry, as it would otherwise not be possible to forward this type of information to other levels of government.

One donor can save up to eight lives and help more than 75 people by consenting to the harvesting of organs or tissue. Unfortunately, as I mentioned earlier, Canada is lagging behind when it comes to organ donation. In fact, Canada's donation rate of 18 donors per million people puts us in the bottom third of developed countries.

The objective of this bill is to increase the number of donors by making it possible for Canadian taxpayers to register with their province's or territory's organ and tissue donation registry by providing their consent on their income tax return.

• (1805)

This legislative change will improve the consent rate and promote a culture of organ and tissue donation in Canada. Many health

professionals and organizations support this bill and additional incentives for people to consent to organ and tissue donation. All it takes is a little political will.

I would also like to take this opportunity to speak directly to everyone tuning in and strongly encourage them to sign up for organ donation using whatever procedure their home province or territory has in place and, most importantly, to discuss their wishes with their family members.

I really want to emphasize that last point because, unfortunately, even if a person has made the choice to be an organ donor, family members have the final say. According to a 2016 Ontario study in the Canadian Medical Association Journal, families vetoed the donor's wishes in one in five cases, which is huge.

I would also like Canadians to keep in mind what I said earlier, and that is that one donor can save up to eight lives and improve the quality of life of 75 people through tissue donation. What is more, age does not prevent people from becoming donors. In fact, the oldest organ donor in Canada was over 90 years old, and the oldest tissue donor was over 100. Medical history also does not prevent people from registering as donors. People with serious illnesses can sometimes donate their organs or tissue. Each potential donor is assessed individually.

If this bill is passed, Canadians will have a new way to consent to donating their organs and tissue. They will be able to do so via their income tax return and by consenting to allow their personal information to be shared with their province or territory of residence. If the bill does pass, I strongly encourage people to use this method. It will save lives.

I want to take advantage of this opportunity I have to address the House today to thank all those who work behind the scenes and who make us look good every day and to wish everyone an excellent Christmas break. With the subject of Bill C-316 in mind, I ask everyone to be very careful over the holidays, especially on the roads.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to wish you and all of my colleagues a very merry Christmas and a happy new year.

[English]

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be joining the debate at third reading on a private member's bill which I seconded, and which I support. I know it is late in the day, but I still want to give credit where it is due to the member for Calgary Confederation for the work he has done to bring it this far and to get consensus from both sides of the House on the value of the bill, the contents of the bill and also what it would do for Canadians.

Government Orders

They say that a good name is better than a precious stone. That is a Yiddish proverb. Members know I like Yiddish proverbs, so as it is my last opportunity in this place to use one, I had to do it. In the fall economic statement, the Government of Canada made an allocation of \$4 million to ensure there is follow through on this private member's bill's intent and purpose. I am hopeful.

I see a great opportunity to help Canadians who are in need of that precious gift of life, an organ or tissue donation sometime during their life. I will not repeat the statistics that members have heard repeatedly. Members also know that my two oldest boys will some day likely need a kidney transplant. Therefore, I have taken this issue to heart. That is why I want to give credit to the member for Calgary Confederation who has used his good name to advance this cause of organ donation.

It has taken over three years to get this to the point where members from all sides could agree that making a very small change to the information the Canada Revenue Agency collects and a simple, small modification to the schedule 1 tax form would ensure that perhaps over the next few years we will save a dozen, 100, 200, and hopefully more lives. It is a very small change. Our provincial and territorial governments would be able to use this to their advantage.

I do not often say two Yiddish proverbs in one speech, but I will since it is my last time rising in this House. It is said that health comes before making a livelihood. Those who have either donated an organ or received one will tell us that in the lead-up period, their lives change drastically. Someone who perhaps is in his or her thirties or forties and is in need of a kidney transplant and is on dialysis has to give up all the foods he or she ever loved eating during his or her entire lifetime. For the period of time the individual is on dialysis, the entire diet of the individual has to be adjusted. The individual has to learn to love things like no-salt food. French onion soup is something we often hear transplantees talk about. Those who are waiting for a lung transplant, like Robert Sallows, will tell us it is very difficult to work or earn a livelihood. I know the member for Calgary Confederation could speak volumes about Robert's activism. Robert is the recipient of a double lung transplant. We absolutely depend on our health to further our careers and earn a livelihood.

I will not be speaking for too long today, which will please a great many members. I will not be taking up the full time I have been allotted in Private Members' Business. However, I will say this. When this week comes to a close, we will be moving from this chamber over to the interim chamber in West Block, in the new renovated space. In this chamber, many members have come before us to take on the great issues of the day. We heard the House leaders speak about this too. The NDP House leader made an excellent statement on our ancestors who spoke in this place about the great issues of the day.

The person I will mention is John Diefenbaker. Everyone knows about the office he used. He was a member of Parliament who spent decades in this place, trying to make it better. He loved the House of Commons. He loved the space. He loved the debate. He thoroughly enjoyed the cut and thrust of it. His biographers have said of him that he would use a speech crutch. Whenever he would forget the next sentence of a speech, he would stop and say, "But, Mr. Speaker, I am still a House of Commons man." He would pause for a moment so

he could catch up to where he was going with his next argument, and then he would continue. His speeches are peppered with that speech crutch. He would use it quite often. Many members use "ums" and "ahs" and say, "Mr. Speaker," which is all fine. It is just part of the debate.

● (1810)

When I was a very fresh member of the House, I used written speeches. I would write them out ahead of time because I was always afraid of making a mistake or not covering all the points I wanted to make.

A great number of members have vastly improved in their ability to do that and it is thanks to hours of Private Members' Business, where we can spend 10 minutes on a specific subject that we are passionate about, hopefully, to provide personal viewpoints and viewpoints of constituents, or personal experience or the experience of constituents told through a letter or an email to make a case for a legal change, a regulatory change or simply a different viewpoint that needs to be put into Hansard.

As our time comes to a close, I will be supporting this legislation at third reading. I want to thank the member for Calgary Confederation and also all those who seconded the bill to take it this far to ensure that those who are looking for that gift of life, the precious gift of an organ or tissue donation, will have it that much easier in the future.

Many members perhaps will agree with me on this, that the Canada Revenue Agency will be seen as being a great help to Canadians instead of being an impediment to them, especially during tax season.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

ELECTIONS MODERNIZATION ACT

BILL C-76—NOTICE OF TIME ALLOCATION MOTION

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I am definitely warmed by the words of that member.

It is interesting to rise in this place because so much has been done. I do know that we are able to accomplish much. Unfortunately, an agreement could not be reached under the provisions of Standing Orders 78(1) or 78(2) with respect to the consideration of the Senate amendment to Bill C-76, an act to amend the Canada Elections Act and other acts and to make certain consequential amendments.

Under the provisions of Standing Order 78(3), I give notice that a minister of the Crown will propose at the next sitting a motion to allot a specific number of days or hours for the consideration and disposal of proceedings at the said stage.

I thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank all the people who work around you to make this place function. I can assure the House that we will continue to try to work even better to ensure that we are serving Canadians.

*Adjournment Proceedings***PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS**

●(1815)

*[English]***CANADA REVENUE AGENCY ACT**

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-316, An Act to amend the Canada Revenue Agency Act (organ donors), be read the third time and passed.

Mr. Robert Morrissey (Egmont, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise briefly to speak to the bill and indicate that this particular piece of legislation has strong support from the minister and all members in the House.

We support the bill and will not be putting forward any more speakers to speak to it as an indication of the support coming from this side of the House.

Mr. Len Webber (Calgary Confederation, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will be brief as well.

In the week since we have debated this legislation, five more Canadians have died awaiting a life-saving transplant. Delays are costing lives at a rate of five per week.

Bill C-316 has been unanimously supported through a health committee study and it has been unanimously supported by all parties at second reading. The bill was unanimously supported by health committee when it reviewed it. Bill C-316 has had all-party unanimous support in every single vote it has faced to date.

In a moment, the Speaker will ask for a unanimous decision on the bill. If it passes on a unanimous voice vote, the changes will make the 2019 tax return. If someone forces a recorded vote, this will not take place until next year and we will miss that 2019 deadline. The changes will only be on 2020 tax returns. In that year, 250 Canadians will die waiting for a life-saving transplant.

Bill C-316 will be the last private member's bill debated in this chamber for a very long time.

Everything that needs to be said has been said. Everything I wanted to say I have said. There is nothing more really to be said.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

(Motion agreed to, bill read the third time and passed)

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

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

●(1820)

[English]

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Ms. Tracey Ramsey (Essex, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to bring back to debate a question I had posed prior to us signing onto

the new USMCA or the new NAFTA as it is being called. At the time, we did not know what was happening in the negotiations. They were quite contentious, as Canadians know, but we were hearing about U.S. proposals that would lead to higher drug costs for Canadians.

We also were talking about the expectation Canadians had that Liberals would defend good jobs in the new NAFTA. Of course, we know now that the steel and aluminum tariffs remain on the table. This has left tens of thousand of Canadians, steel and aluminum workers and small businesses across our country in a very precarious position. It is a true failure of the Liberal government to not have achieved the removal of these tariffs and to protect those jobs.

Now we find ourselves in a very odd space where we have signed onto the agreement and we have no leverage with the United States to remove these tariffs. Communities across my region of south-western Ontario, Essex in particular, are extremely hard hit because of these tariffs and the underlying ecosystem they support with respect to the automotive and manufacturing sectors that flourish and are really a key driver not just of the economy in Ontario but of the entirety of Canada. This is a complete failure of the Liberal government to have left these tariffs and jobs in jeopardy.

Tonight I want to focus my comments on what at that time we knew as being a leak, that there was a proposal that would lead to higher drug costs for Canadians and for public drug plans. We now know that is the case. It is ironic that I rise today on the exact day the protocol replacing the North American Free Trade Agreement with the agreement between Canada and the United States of America and the united Mexican states was brought to the House by the parliamentary secretary. Through this document, we now know Canadians will pay a higher cost for medication.

The question really is this. Why would the Liberals sign us on to an agreement that would cost Canadians more for drugs, life-saving drugs, drugs that make lives more comfortable every day. People who suffer from chronic conditions are making very difficult choices about whether to pay their bills or their medication.

At the time, the response I received from the parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs was, "Mr. Speaker, I know how proud Canadians are of our public health care system and we are going to defend it." We now know that to be completely false. The Liberals did not defend the cost of medications in the new trade agreement, and we have left Canadians to pay the cost of that. There is a health cost to that. There is a mental health cost to that.

Canadians widely want to see us have a pharmacare plan, which continues to be studied and never implemented by any government in the country to the great detriment of the health of our citizens. This is a sweetheart deal for big pharma. This is the Liberals letting Canadians know that they will stand up for big pharmaceutical companies and they will not stand up for Canadians.

Adjournment Proceedings

Why did the Liberals agree to these provisions that would increase the costs of medications for Canadians? I am hopeful the response will not be a canned response, talking about the deal itself. I want to specifically hear why the Liberals have made it more expensive, in signing this deal, for Canadians to afford their medication?

Mr. Stéphane Lauzon (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be here tonight to participate in this important discussion on drug prices in Canada. Our government is committed to strengthening the health care system across the country and supporting the health of Canadians. We know that Canadians are proud of our publicly funded and universal health care system. However, we recognize that almost a million Canadians give up food or heat to afford the prescription drugs they need, or do not take their prescribed drugs due to the high prices.

[Translation]

This is why our government is taking action to make prescription medication more affordable and accessible. We realize that we can do even more.

In budget 2018 we announced the creation of an advisory council on the implementation of national pharmacare. The council, chaired by Dr. Eric Hoskins, will work closely with experts, as well as provincial, territorial and indigenous leaders.

In addition to assessing the options and exploring national and international models, the council will deliver, in spring 2019, independent advice to government on how to best implement affordable national pharmacare for Canadians and their families, employers and governments.

[English]

Over the course of the summer and into the fall, the council has been engaged with a broad range of stakeholders and Canadians. Through its consultations, the advisory council received over 150 written submissions and over 15,000 responses to its online questionnaire. The council also heard from many Canadians through its online discussion forums, public community dialogue sessions and regional stakeholder round tables.

[Translation]

The council will also carefully examine the reports from the Standing Committee on Health and the Parliamentary Budget Officer on national pharmacare. It will look at the best way to move forward on this important issue.

• (1825)

[English]

However, as we await the findings from the council, our government will continue to work to lower drug prices, provide more timely access to the new medicines Canadians need, and support appropriate prescribing. For example, our government is working closely with the provinces and territories through the pan-Canadian Pharmaceutical Alliance to lower drug costs.

[Translation]

By capitalizing on the combined negotiating power of governments, the pan-Canadian Pharmaceutical Alliance carried out more than 207 joint negotiations on brand name drugs.

They obtained price reductions on more than 70 generic drugs. In 2017, it was estimated that the efforts of the pan-Canadian Pharmaceutical Alliance had led to nearly \$1.3 billion in savings per year.

[English]

Health Canada is making changes to better align its drug review process with health partners and to expand its priority review process to more effectively meet the needs of the health care system. This will include establishing new regulatory pathways for drugs and working more closely with organizations that assess the cost-effectiveness of drugs.

All the measures I have outlined today are significant. However, our government recognizes that there is an opportunity to do even more. We look forward to the recommendations by the advisory council on the implementation of national pharmacare on how to move forward on this important topic.

Ms. Tracey Ramsey: Mr. Speaker, the problem is that the Liberals have been promising this since 1997. It is now 2018. In every single election, the Liberals have had a promise in their platform to implement a pharmacare program across our country, and every single time, including in 2015, they have broken that promise. Canadians no longer believe the Liberals when they say they are going to implement pharmacare in this country. How many times can Canadians be fooled by the government and, basically, the untruths being told, as if there were some culture of caring by the Liberals about Canadians who are struggling to afford their medication?

Once again, we are studying this. The member speaks about the money we are spending to once again study this. How much money have we spent to study something when there already is a plan? We have studied this issue over and over again. There is a wide consensus across the country on what needs to happen. The problem is that the Liberal government has failed to act on those recommendations.

Once again, we see that in 2019 there will be another carrot dangled in front of vulnerable and sick Canadians who cannot afford their medication. Once again, there will be a Liberal promise of a pharmacare plan that will never see the light of day. Now we see them spending money on pipelines and different things that are not improving the lives of everyday Canadians.

Again, I ask, why is the Liberal government not being honest with Canadians and saying that it will not implement pharmacare?

Mr. Stéphane Lauzon: Mr. Speaker, now my colleague is comparing pharmacare to pipelines. That comparison is problematic, because pharmacare is not something we can achieve overnight. It will require working closely with experts from all of the relevant areas, as well as with the provinces, territories and indigenous people.

Adjournment Proceedings

A key part of the role of the advisory council on the implementation of national pharmacare, led by Dr. Hoskins, is to help us identify a workable path forward. We have to get the details right and do this right.

[Translation]

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Abitibi—Témiscamingue not being present in the House to raise the matter for which adjournment notice has been given, the notice is deemed withdrawn.

[English]

CANADA POST CORPORATION

Ms. Irene Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Mr. Speaker, despite the Prime Minister's claims of being a friend of labour, he and his government have proven, once again, that there is no difference between Liberals and Tories.

It is postal workers who are suffering the tragic fallout of the same old story. Despite the fact that the Conservatives' back-to-work legislation forcing CUPW back to the Canada Post workplace in 2011 was deemed unconstitutional by the Ontario Superior Court, the government one-upped Stephen Harper.

It put profits ahead of people, and rammed Bill C-89 through in record time, using time allocation and procedural tricks to ensure less time for debate and consideration than Stephen Harper ever did.

The Prime Minister has managed to out-Tory the Tories, all the while claiming to be on the side of labour. What a joke. Bill C-89 forced postal workers to return to work on November 27 under their previous collective agreements, after five weeks of rotating strikes, which means that between then and this Christmas, at least 315 disabling injuries will happen to postal workers. Rural and suburban mail carriers will work roughly 250,000 hours without pay. Urban postal workers will work thousands of hours of forced overtime.

In 2011, the Conservative government imposed back-to-work legislation after Canada Post locked out CUPW members for two weeks. Ontario Superior Court Justice Stephen Firestone later determined that the legislation violated the rights to freedom of association and freedom of expression under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

In 2015, the Supreme Court of Canada declared the right to strike to be fundamental and protected by the Constitution.

CUPW was fighting for its members' lives and safety. The rate of workplace injuries has skyrocketed since postal transformation. Rural and suburban mail carriers continue to be paid less than urban workers, despite an arbitrator's decision that Canada Post should pay all workers equally. Forced overtime means workers are unable to spend time with their families and unable to see their children before bedtime. It means longer hours walking longer routes with heavier loads in dark and dangerous conditions.

All the while, Canada Post Corporation is profitable. If it were to consider any of the proposals in delivering community power offered by the union and its partners, its increased profitability and sustainability would be ensured for generations to come.

The government, in its arrogance, has ignored workers' charter rights to organize and to withdraw services when the employer

refuses to bargain a collective agreement in good faith. Every person in this country who earns a living from employment should be aware of, and hopefully furious with, the government's abuse of their human and constitutional rights.

New Democrats stand with workers. New Democrats stand with CUPW. Make no mistake about it, CUPW is fighting for every worker in this country, for safe working conditions, for fair and equal treatment, and to be compensated fairly for ensuring profits for the corporation.

The Prime Minister's sunny words in support of labour have tarnished in the light of his actions. The joke is on Canadians, and it is a sadistic joke played on Canadians who thought they had gotten rid of Stephen Harper.

The anti-work agenda and the refusal to advocate for those who create the wealth and deliver the services is alive and thriving under the Liberal Prime Minister.

● (1830)

Mr. Rodger Cuzner (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada Post Corporation and the Canadian Union of Postal Workers had been negotiating collective agreements for unionized urban and rural workers, but they were unable to reach an agreement. Our government has done everything it can to support and encourage Canada Post and CUPW to reach a new negotiated collective agreement.

Throughout the process, which had been going on for over a year, the parties were assisted by federal conciliation officers, mediators and a special mediator. Despite these efforts, the parties were unable to reach new agreements. On November 22, the Government of Canada tabled Bill C-89, which set out a process by which the parties were required to work with an independent mediator-arbitrator while the employees returned to work.

We legislated a fair and balanced process, not a deal, not a one-sided agreement. Our government took action because of the effects the rotating strikes were having on Canadians and small Canadian businesses.

Canada Post and CUPW were unable to agree on a mediator-arbitrator as per the process outlined in the legislation. On the advice of the chairperson of the Canada Industrial Relations Board, Elizabeth MacPherson, a former CIRB chair, has been appointed to serve as mediator-arbitrator to assist the parties in reaching a new collective agreement.

Adjournment Proceedings

Canada Post and CUPW have seven days to come to an agreement. This period can be extended to 14 days if both parties consent. If agreements are not reached in this period, Ms. MacPherson will be required to arbitrate all outstanding issues based on a number of guiding principles that are fair and balanced to the interests of both parties.

These principles include the need: to ensure the health and safety of employees; to ensure employees receive equal pay for work of equal value; to ensure the fair treatment of temporary, part-time and other employees in non-standard employment as compared to full-time and permanent employees; to ensure the long-term financial sustainability of Canada Post; to create a culture of collaborative labour-management relations; and to have Canada Post provide high-quality service at a reasonable price to Canadians.

Make no mistake that Canadian workers will be heard through this process. The government remains hopeful that the two parties will be able to negotiate new agreements. We will continue to monitor the situation very closely.

• (1835)

Ms. Irene Mathyssen: Mr. Speaker, I see no reason to change the question I asked in November, because I am still waiting for an acceptable answer. Why did the government rule against workers and not against the corporation?

While Canada Post refuses to acknowledge the needs of those who deliver the mail, CUPW is literally fighting for the lives of workers. Postal transformation is taking its toll on the workers' bodies, mental health and families.

Despite the Harper Conservatives' imposed legislation in 2011 being deemed unconstitutional, the current Prime Minister has done the same, all in the interest of greasing the wheels of commerce. That

price is too high. Why are corporate profits so much more important than the lives of workers?

Mr. Rodger Cuzner: Mr. Speaker, no government wants to legislate workers back to work. However, parties of all stripes have legislated workers back to work. Seven NDP premiers have used back-to-work legislation on 15 different occasions. Three members of the current NDP caucus were members of NDP provincial governments that enacted back-to-work legislation.

The member for London—Fanshawe and the member for Hamilton Centre were both members of the Ontario NDP government that legislated teachers from Lambton, East Parry Sound and Windsor school boards back to work.

The member for Vancouver East, in her sanctimony, chastised us. She also was a member of the NDP government that voted to legislate support workers, not essential workers, and cleaning staff back to work in 2000 in just one day.

In 1995, federal NDP members like Bill Blaikie, who is a great friend of mine and who I love, said that the the railway workers needed to be brought back when they were on strike, that it had gone on long enough.

The sanctimony from that corner never gets stale. It is always fresh, and I appreciate the load they are shooting tonight.

The Deputy Speaker: This House never disappoints.

The motion that the House do now adjourn is 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 6:38 p.m.)

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