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OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)

Wednesday, May 9, 2018

Speaker: The Honourable Geoff Regan

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, May 9, 2018

The House met at 2 p.m.

Prayer

• (1405)

[*Translation*]

The Speaker: It being Wednesday, we will now have the singing of the national anthem led by the hon. member for Edmonton Centre.

[*Members sang the national anthem*]

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*Translation*]

GUN CONTROL

Mr. Rhéal Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, GPQ): Mr. Speaker, Bill C-71 is a real feather in the government's cap. The Liberals found a way to disappoint both those who want to restrict access to firearms and those who want to make it easier.

In attempting to reconcile the irreconcilable to win votes, the government completely missed the point: what is the purpose of gun control? It is supposed to keep guns out of our neighbourhoods. Why then, is there not a word about assault rifles like the one used at the Quebec City mosque on January 29, 2017?

Gun control is also supposed to keep guns out of the wrong hands. Here again, there is not a word about people with serious mental illness accessing guns, not even the merest mention of conversations that need to happen with the provinces.

The government tried to sit on the fence, so it should come as no surprise that it is now sprawled on the ground.

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[*English*]

STATUS OF WOMEN

Ms. Pam Damoff (Oakville North—Burlington, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, last week we heard over and over again disconcerting things from Conservative political leaders across the country denying the facts and ignoring the real barriers faced by women in politics. Our government understands that women in politics face sexism, harassment, and other systemic barriers, and we are working to eliminate these factors.

[*Translation*]

That is why we are working with organizations like Equal Voice and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities to find out why there are fewer female elected representatives than male.

We also announced \$18 million in funding to enhance the participation of women, including indigenous women, as leaders in their communities.

[*English*]

We have introduced Bill C-65 to address harassment and sexual violence. Our government knows that we simply cannot move forward when half of us are held back.

* * *

VOLUNTEERISM

Mr. Ted Falk (Provencher, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this past weekend, more than 2,000 volunteers from over 20 churches in Steinbach, Manitoba, got together to comb the streets, parks, and ditches to collect the garbage that had accumulated over the winter. This annual Pick Up 'n' Walk event was organized by local churches to help the city remain sparkling clean. This year, an astonishing 10 tonnes of garbage was collected. It is so encouraging to see the churches in our communities rally together for such a great event. It is no coincidence that Steinbach has been declared the cleanest city in North America.

Efforts like this one are an excellent example of the good work faith groups do in our communities, but this year, many groups that engage in activities like this have been rejected for Canada summer jobs funding simply for holding different beliefs than the Prime Minister's.

Thankfully, many are rallying behind these organizations and ensuring that they have the resources they need to continue the good work. I would like to commend all the volunteers for graciously giving their time for a job well done.

*Statements by Members***PENSIONS**

Mr. Geng Tan (Don Valley North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, imagine if Canadians who volunteer to help seniors could bank hours of credit, to be redeemed in kind upon their own retirements. In other words, young people and capable adults who provide care to seniors would bank the time and then exchange it for care when they themselves are seniors. This system would provide additional social care to Canada's seniors. It is a solution that would run on time, not money. This scheme would encourage more people to provide unpaid help to seniors in Canada. By registering, they would build up a care pension, claimable in the form of care during their own retirements.

In recent years, some countries, such as Switzerland, have experimented with time banking as part of their retirement plans. I encourage my fellow parliamentarians to support such a time-bank system in Canada.

* * *

GREEN ARROW HEALING

Ms. Georgina Jolibois (Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, today I want to recognize the great work being done by Green Arrow Healing in Beauval, Saskatchewan. The members of Green Arrow are trained counsellors and educators who bring indigenous ways of healing and support to the youth of northern Saskatchewan. In addition to counselling and detox services for at-risk youth, Green Arrow combines traditional and western healing methods to foster leadership and to connect people back with nature.

The successes of Green Arrow Healing really show how vital it is to have first nations and Métis people and culture integrated into our wellness programs. Many who leave the Green Arrow workshops feel a new sense of hope and are confident in their ability to grow and build the bonds of family and friendship. I very much look forward to working with Green Arrow Healing as their programs and mandate continue to grow over the coming years.

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• (1410)

IN THE SOIL ARTS FESTIVAL

Mr. Chris Bittle (St. Catharines, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, spring in downtown St. Catharines brings with it the In the Soil Arts Festival. This three-day festival brings together a wide range of Niagara artists, who provide an explosion of creativity and unique audience experiences. The festival nurtures the creation of new work, showcases talent, encourages innovation, and provides intimate and uncommon platforms for audiences to experience.

In the Soil is Niagara's homegrown arts festival that is working to make Niagara culturally distinct. This year, 2018, marks the festival's 10th anniversary, and I want to take this opportunity to acknowledge and celebrate the incredible work of Annie Wilson, Deanna Lynn Jones, and all others in Niagara who have contributed to making "our little festival that could" an amazing success over the past decade.

In the Soil has been a labour of love and is an incredible celebration of the arts in Niagara. The festival planted its roots in downtown St. Catharines, and the community has grown alongside it

over the past 10 years. Congratulations to the In the Soil team on a great decade of success.

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CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE

Mr. Jamie Schmale (Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Bobcaygeon and Area Chamber of Commerce recently held its 2018 Awards of Excellence ceremony at the gorgeous Lakeview Arts Barn. I would like to congratulate all award nominees and recipients, including Andy Lummiss and Jessica O'Neill, for the Employee Achievement award; Bobcaygeon Eye Care, for the Business Achievement Award; Granny Bird Wool Shoppe, for the New Business Achievement Award; Happy Days Houseboats, for the Hospitality Award; Bobcaygeon Canada Day Committee, for the Not for Profit Achievement Award; Canada/US Walleye Tournament, for the Tourism Achievement Award; Sarah Quick, for the Creative Arts Achievement Award; and of course, Ruth McIsaac, for the Citizen of the Year Award.

A special thanks to all the sponsors and staff, general manager Ruthann Wilson, the board of directors, and president Miriam Newton for organizing this spectacular event.

In keeping with the theme of a strong business community, I would also like to extend my congratulations to Kavtek and Percheron Plastic for winning the recent Bears' Lair Entrepreneurial Competition in Peterborough.

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[Translation]

PETROZZA FAMILY

Mr. Jean Rioux (Saint-Jean, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the vitality and development of our ridings depend entirely on the engagement of the people who live there.

Our entrepreneurs' determination and especially their perseverance are key drivers of economic activity. St-Jean Pizzeria is a perfect example. Congratulations to the Petrozza family and the many employees who, for 50 years now, have been contributing to the economic growth of Saint-Jean.

A young Italian immigrant from Calabria realized his dream in 1968 when he decided to set up shop in Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu and share his culinary talents with us. Today we are celebrating this institution's many years of success bringing the flavours of Italy to our community. I join thousands of happy customers in sincerely thanking this distinguished Saint-Jean family.

Statements by Members

[English]

OXFORD FROZEN FOODS

Mr. Bill Casey (Cumberland—Colchester, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, 2018 marks 50 years for Oxford Frozen Foods in Cumberland County, Nova Scotia. Begun in 1968 by John Bragg, it has grown from a 100-acre farm to a business that today processes 150 million pounds of wild blueberries every year. Oxford handles other products, but wild blueberries are its calling card, and today, Oxford exports Grade A fresh and frozen wild blueberries to over 30 countries from Nova Scotia.

Routinely recognized as one of the best-managed companies in Canada, Oxford and the Bragg family are also generous supporters of our rural communities and economic development. They were quick to help support the refugee families when they came to Nova Scotia.

I thank John Bragg, David Hoffman, and the entire Oxford family for all they do for our community, and I congratulate them on their tremendous achievements.

Oxford wanted me to invite everyone to their celebration on July 28 in Oxford, Nova Scotia.

* * *

MOTHER'S DAY

Mr. Larry Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this Sunday is Mother's Day, and I would like to pay tribute to mothers everywhere. I lost my mother a year ago, and I still miss her dearly. We are all blessed with just one mother, and mine was the best, just as yours is, Mr. Speaker, I am sure, and as is every other member's mother.

Mothers are the glue in every family, the one we run to first at a very young age when we scrape a knee, and the first one we go to as adults when things are tough or we are having a bad day.

Today I say, "Thanks, Mom. You were the best." I thank my wife, the mother of our three sons; and my daughters-in-law, who are the mothers of my grandchildren. Indeed, I thank all mothers across Canada for being who they are. This Sunday, they should sit back, put up their feet, and enjoy the day. They have earned it.

Happy Mother's Day.

* * *

●(1415)

LIONS CLUB

Mr. Colin Fraser (West Nova, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on April 28, I was honoured to welcome Lions Club members from across Nova Scotia in my hometown of Yarmouth for their annual provincial convention.

Lions Clubs in Nova Scotia first began in 1945, when the first clubs were established in Halifax, Dartmouth, and Middleton. Seventy-three years later, Nova Scotia is now home to 69 Lions Clubs, including 12 in my riding of West Nova.

The many efforts of these clubs and their members in organizing fundraising activities and encouraging volunteerism makes all of our

communities a much better place to live. Their motto, "We Serve", perfectly captures the spirit of Lionism.

I thank the convention's co-chairs, Fred Graham and Sandra Blake, and the entire organizing committee from the Yarmouth Lions Club for hosting such a fabulous event. I thank all Lions for their service and the amazing work they do each and every day in Nova Scotia, across Canada, and around the world.

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OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC WINTER GAMES

Mr. Stéphane Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today it is a day of excellence in Parliament. We are fortunate to welcome Team Canada athletes competing at the Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games this year in Pyeongchang, South Korea. Together they garnered an impressive 57 medals, never seen before for our Canadians. They are a source of inspiration for all Canadians.

[Translation]

Everyone who watched the games as closely as I did knows one thing: an athlete is an athlete is an athlete.

Whether these athletes reached the podium or not, whether they were Paralympian or Olympian, their courage in the face of adversity, the years of determination required, their hard work to achieve a goal are all a shining example for all Canadians, regardless of their gender, their sexual orientation, their origin, and are what make them unique.

I want to thank our athletes for inspiring us.

[English]

Go Canada, go.

* * *

ROBERT FEAD

Mr. David Sweet (Flamborough—Glanbrook, CPC): Mr. Speaker, two days ago, we laid to rest Major Reverend Canon Robert Fead, who was tragically killed on his motorcycle.

Major Canon Fead faithfully served the Anglican Diocese of Canada for 25 years, but his work was never confined to the walls of the church. Among many other roles, Major Canon Fead was the beloved chaplain for the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders.

Following the 2014 Ottawa terror attack, Major Canon Fead presided over the funeral of Corporal Nathan Cirillo. He said at the time "My job, in the midst of all that chaos and fear, was to bring some sense of hope."

Major Canon Fead did just that every day of his life. Because of his dedication to the gospel of Christ and his unmitigated commitment to serve, he was able to bring that great hope and comfort to many, particularly the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders Princess Louise's Regiment.

My thoughts and prayers are with his wife Veronica, mother Pat, his family and friends, and his regiment. He will be sorely missed. May the major rest in peace.

Oral Questions

•(1420)

DOORS OPEN 2018

Ms. Leona Alleslev (Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this weekend, people throughout York Region will visit cultural sites all over our community and across Ontario, as they open their doors and welcome them to explore the stories inside at Doors Open events.

In my riding, doors will be open in Richmond Hill at the Hindu Temple, Thomas Boyton House, and St. Mary and St. Joseph Coptic Orthodox Church, and doors will be open in Aurora at the Farmer's Market, the Public Library, Victoria Hall, and the Aurora Cultural Centre.

Let us celebrate the diversity and rich cultural heritage that makes us who we are as Canadians. I encourage everyone in Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill and across York Region to get out and discover the vibrancy of our community and our country.

Join me on Saturday, May 12, in Aurora and Richmond Hill for Doors Open 2018.

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HUMAN RIGHTS

Ms. Irene Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Mr. Speaker, this Friday, Canada will undergo its third universal periodic review at the United Nations. This is an important moment when Canada will be held accountable by other UN member states on our domestic human rights track record. Canada's human rights violations, including discrimination against indigenous peoples, violence against women, systemic racism, and poverty, will be discussed on the world stage.

The federal government is responsible for ensuring compliance with the Canada Health Act. The act requires universal coverage for all insured persons for all medically necessary services.

Furthermore, the federal government provides direct health care for first nations, military personnel, and incarcerated individuals.

Canada can and must be willing to use the Canada Health Act to ensure safe and equal abortion access for all people in Canada. The government must do its duty and embrace a recommendation to use the Canada Health Act as a mechanism to ensure safe and equal access to abortion for all.

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JUSTICE

Hon. Rob Nicholson (Niagara Falls, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to make Canadians aware of some very troubling changes the Liberals are proposing in Bill C-75.

The government is essentially watering down very serious criminal charges by adding a possible summary conviction as a crown option. This could result in a penalty as low as a fine for what was an indictable offence with a penalty of up to 10 years. These charges include abduction of a child under the age of 14, material benefit from trafficking, breach of prison, participation in a terrorist group or criminal organization, advocating genocide, arson for fraudulent purposes, and the list goes on.

This is the Liberal answer to the current backlog in the justice system, a crisis created by not appointing the adequate number of judges to the bench.

Canadians know this. When a perpetrator of a serious crime is set free with a mere fine, he or she has not paid the price for that crime.

I call upon the government to finally start putting victims first.

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CANADIAN INDIGENOUS NURSES ASSOCIATION

Ms. Yvonne Jones (Labrador, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as we celebrate National Nursing Week, we acknowledge the tremendous, skilled and caring nurses across Canada and thank them for their endless contributions to health care.

I would like to welcome the Canadian Indigenous Nurses Association to Parliament Hill and acknowledge the significant work that it does to advance indigenous nursing and improve the lives of indigenous people.

Through their association, nurses promote the development and practice of indigenous health and nursing to hundreds of communities and reserves in Canada. Through their work, they are providing unique and specialized care to indigenous people. They understand the specific needs of indigenous patients and the challenges that indigenous people often face in accessing and navigating the Canadian health care system.

I ask members to join me today in thanking the Canadian Indigenous Nurses Association, all of its employees and those they serve, and to thank all those hard-working and dedicated nurses across Canada who lift us up in our country with hope and health when we need it.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[*Translation*]

THE ECONOMY

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister's carbon tax increases the price of everything. When businesses are forced to raise their prices, it becomes harder to do business. When they are forced to compete with business that do not have these costs, they become less competitive and that hurts the economy and kills jobs.

Why is the Prime Minister ignoring the economic cost of his carbon tax? Will he finally tell Canadians exactly how much this tax will cost the economy?

Oral Questions

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we saw that approach for 10 years under the Harper government, which made excuses for not taking action to protect the environment. By failing to protect the environment, the Conservatives also failed to meet their responsibility to create sustainable economic growth for the future. We know that by putting a price on carbon-based pollution and by working with communities across the country we can grow the economy while meeting our need to protect the environment for future generations.

• (1425)

[*English*]

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, recently the Prime Minister was in British Columbia lecturing Canadians on their personal behaviour. In fact, he was expressing his joy at the high gas prices, saying it was “exactly what we want”.

We know that millionaires like the Prime Minister can afford to pay higher gas prices, but hard-working moms and dads do not have the luxury to pay thousands more in new taxes. Therefore, how high does the cost of gas have to get before people start behaving the way the Prime Minister wants them to?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member opposite knows that I said no such thing. The Conservatives are continuing to try and create fear and division among Canadians as a way of justifying their continued desire to do nothing to reduce the impacts of climate change, to do nothing to protect the environment. That is what they did for 10 years under Stephen Harper and that is what they are continuing to do in their approach.

We on this side of the House agree with Canadians that it is time to protect the environment and grow the economy together. That is exactly what we are doing. The Conservatives do not even have a plan.

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DEMOCRATIC REFORM

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our plan will not involve raising taxes on hard-working middle-class Canadians.

[*Translation*]

The Prime Minister broke his promise of democratic reform when he was unable to rig the election system in the Liberals' favour. He then tried to fiddle with the parliamentary rules to weaken the opposition. When the Liberals have problems raising funds, their solution is to impose restrictions on their opponents who do not have the same problems.

Why is the Prime Minister imposing new rules on political parties and encouraging American-style super PACs that will allow foreign money to meddle in our elections?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on the contrary, our reforms of electoral financing and of the electoral system resulted in more transparency and more rules to limit the influence of money in our political process. We need to create opportunities for people to listen to and fully participate in

debates without being influenced by money. That is precisely the type of reform we are bringing in. That is what Canadians expect and that is what we are doing.

[*English*]

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): That is not what the Liberals have done at all, Mr. Speaker.

Every time the Prime Minister does not get his own way, he responds by rigging the rules to benefit his own party. When he did not get the electoral system he wanted, he abandoned all plans for democratic reform. When the opposition parties proved too effective in the House of Commons, he tried to take all the tools away from parties that sat opposite from him. Now, instead developing policies that encourage more Canadians to donate to the Liberal Party, the Prime Minister is trying to rig the next election by imposing punitive rule changes on his opponents.

Why is the Prime Minister restricting the activities of political parties, but making it easier for U.S.-style super PACs to spend huge sums of money?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is not a great surprise that the Conservatives do not understand the least bit about what we are doing with electoral financing reform. Their idea of improving the Canada Elections Act in the last government was to make it harder for people to vote, while making it easier for wealthy people to participate in the financing of political parties.

We took the opposite approach. We know that limiting the influence of money in our political system is for the benefit of Canadians and to the benefit of our entire political system.

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our changes led to more Canadians voting in the last election than in many elections before for years and years.

It is clear that the Liberal Party cannot attract support from Canadians themselves. They have had abysmal numbers fundraising, encouraging Canadians to make free decisions to donate to them. The Prime Minister is imposing restrictions on what other political parties can do with the money that Canadians freely donated to those parties.

I have a simple question. Will the Prime Minister implement the same ban on ministerial travel and government advertising in the pre-writ—

• (1430)

The Speaker: I would ask the hon. member for Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame and the hon. member for Cape Breton—Canso not to be speaking when someone else has the floor, and I would ask other members to do the same.

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

Oral Questions

There was a record number of Canadians voting in the last election not because of changes the Conservatives made to the Canada Elections Act, but in spite of changes they made to the Canada Elections Act, and more specifically, because of the people involved in changing the elections, Canadians went out to vote against Stephen Harper, not anything that Stephen Harper actually did to encourage them to vote.

Let us be very clear about why Canadians voted in record numbers in the last election. It was about getting the Conservatives out of office.

* * *

[*Translation*]

GOVERNMENT APPOINTMENTS

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, after breaking its promise of electoral reform, the Liberal government is now putting democratic institutions in jeopardy. The Chief Electoral Officer is an officer of Parliament who is appointed for 10 years, and when he or she leaves, we know months in advance. In this case, the government has known for more than 17 months.

We are now 18 months away from an election, and the Liberals have proposed two candidates in less than three weeks, and we have just seven days to review them.

Does the Prime Minister still consider this to be an open, transparent, and merit-based process?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, after a rigorous, open, and merit-based process, Mr. Stéphane Perrault has emerged as the most qualified candidate for the position of Chief Electoral Officer. With over 20 years serving in government, he has extensive knowledge and understanding of the Canada Elections Act and the Canadian parliamentary system.

We have every confidence that under his leadership, Elections Canada will be more than ready for the 2019 federal election. We have submitted an excellent candidate to the House.

[*English*]

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, for more than a year and a half, the Liberals knew that we had to hire a new Chief Electoral Officer and they did nothing. For more than a year and a half, the Liberals sat on a bill to undo the worst of Stephen Harper's unfair elections act and they did nothing.

Now, with less than a year and a half to go before the next election, the Liberals are panicking. Rather than work with us, they sent us a letter a few weeks ago with just one name on it for a new Chief Electoral Officer. Then just last week, they sent us another letter with another name on it, but a different guy. Canadians want to know: what happened to the first guy?

When it comes to our democratic rights, why do Liberals have such a hard time getting the job done?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, after a rigorous, open, and merit-based process, Mr. Stéphane Perrault has emerged as the most qualified candidate for the position of Chief Electoral Officer. With over 20 years serving in

government, he has extensive knowledge and understanding of the Canada Elections Act and the Canadian parliamentary system. We have every confidence that under his continued leadership, Elections Canada will be more than ready for the 2019 federal election.

We have submitted an excellent candidate to the House, and we hope that all members will confirm his appointment.

The Speaker: I would ask the hon. member for Souris—Moose Mountain not to be yelling when someone else has the floor, and preferably not at all.

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NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it would have been better if he had just said, “Your call is important to us; please stay on the line.”

When it comes to the Kinder Morgan pipeline, the threats to our environment are well known. The threats to first nations rights and title are also well known. Now we have a new threat to the Canadian taxpayer.

Not only did the Liberals break their promise to put the pipeline under a proper environmental review, and break their promise to respect first nations rights and title, the Prime Minister is now negotiating in secret a public bailout to help an American oil giant ship Canadian raw bitumen to China.

Why will the Liberals not simply come clean and tell us how many billions this is going to cost us and how much damage they are willing to do to our environment and to first nations rights?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again, there are layers of erroneous information in the question that the hon. member just asked.

First of all, we strengthened the environmental assessment process for the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion, and did more consultation with indigenous peoples. We have actually got to the point where there are over 40 different first nations organizations that have signed cost-benefit agreements and are very supportive of this pipeline expansion project, something which the NDP never talks about.

Furthermore, we have committed that we are going to get this pipeline built because it is in the interests of Canadians, and we are engaged in financial discussions to do so.

● (1435)

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals used the same process as the Harper Conservatives and he calls it “strengthened”. I cannot believe it.

[*Translation*]

Kinder Morgan's arbitrary deadline of May 31 is just around the corner. The government is clearly in panic mode. It has been reported that Kinder Morgan is demanding \$10 billion in compensation or investment from the federal government due to problems with the approval of the pipeline. This is the same Liberal government that promised in 2015 to end subsidies to the oil and gas industry.

Oral Questions

My question is simple. Is the government going to give Kinder Morgan \$10 billion?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again, what the NDP does not seem to understand is that we have strengthened the process. We have added steps to the environmental assessment and first nations and indigenous consultation process to ensure that we are not following the broken process that was in place under Stephen Harper. We needed to create a more robust system, and that is exactly what we did.

As for the financial discussions, we know that this is a project of common interest, of public interest, and we are going to move forward with it in a responsible way.

* * *

[English]

DEMOCRATIC REFORM

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, every time the Prime Minister faces opposition either in this House or with the public, he takes away the tools that opposition parties have to hold him to account. Now he is proposing to limit what political parties can do with the money that Canadians have freely given to political parties.

I have a very simple question. Will he impose the same restrictions on ministerial travel and government advertising in the lead-up to the next election campaign?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first of all, we know that it is the Conservative Party of Canada when it was in government that tried to tilt the rules to prevent people from voting and to make more money available for political parties because it helped the Conservatives. They extended the writ period to try and outspend everyone. However, Canadians did not buy any of what they were selling. That is why the Conservatives are now on that side of the House.

We have put forward proposals to reform the Canada Elections Act. We look forward to that proposal getting to committee, and hearing any and all of the suggestions the members opposite will make to improve and strengthen the act.

The Speaker: I have to remind the hon. member for Elgin—Middlesex—London that she should not be speaking throughout the time that someone else is speaking.

The hon. member for Richmond—Arthabaska.

* * *

[Translation]

IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES, AND CITIZENSHIP

Mr. Alain Rayes (Richmond—Arthabaska, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I think everyone in the House agrees that Canada is an open and welcoming country. That is not the problem. People are crossing our border illegally. Our border guards are exhausted and the cost of managing the situation continues to rise. Unfortunately, the Liberals are incapable of showing leadership on this file.

My question for the Prime Minister is simple. Will he step up and make sure that our Canadian border is secure?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, everyone who crosses the border irregularly is arrested. That is what happens everywhere in the country, and that is what people expect to see.

After that, we look into those people's files because, under international conventions, we have an obligation to allow people who claim refugee status to show that they need asylum, that they need to be recognized as refugees. We conduct a very rigorous assessment of their claim. If we determine that they are not real refugees, then they are sent back to their country of origin. We have a system in place and it is carefully followed, regardless of how people enter our country.

* * *

[English]

SENIORS

Hon. Alice Wong (Richmond Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, officials are expecting 200 illegal migrants to cross into Canada daily this summer, placing immense stress on our immigration system. Meanwhile, the Liberals are doing mainly nothing to support our seniors. Canadians are wondering why the Liberals are continuing to favour illegal border jumpers while ignoring the needs of seniors.

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the stresses in our immigration system are largely holdovers from a Conservative government that did not invest in the kind of supports for our immigration system, that cut resources to the Canada Border Services Agency, and that continued to underinvest in the important processes that keep Canadians safe.

In regard to seniors, unlike the Stephen Harper Conservatives, we actually are decreasing the age of retirement from 67 to 65. We have increased the guaranteed income supplement by 10% for seniors, and we have made new investments in the new horizons for seniors program, which is going a long way to support them.

* * *

● (1440)

IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

Mr. Ziad Aboultaif (Edmonton Manning, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as the nice weather arrives, thousands of illegal border crossers are expected to arrive with it, spurred on by the Prime Minister's reckless tweet. While the Liberals are rolling out the red carpet for these queue jumpers, people who came to Canada legally are forced to wait even longer to be reunited with their families.

Can the Prime Minister tell newcomers in my riding how this is fair?

Oral Questions

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again we see the same divisive approach from the Conservatives, pitting newest arrivals against recent arrivals, pitting one community of new Canadians against another community of new Canadians. That approach was what they founded their 2015 election campaign on. It did not work with Canadians then, and the kind of fear and division they are now trying to peddle is not working with Canadians now.

We are ensuring the application in its entirety of our immigration rules, laws, and processes. We are ensuring that we continue to be an open country that applies the rules.

The Speaker: I would ask the member for Barrie—Innisfil not to be calling out and yelling when someone else has the floor.

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

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, let us look at the facts provided by the government. We know that over 25,000 illegal migrants crossed the border in 2017. The government says that 90% of refugee applications are rejected, but only 243 people have been removed from Canada.

Can the Prime Minister tell us how many illegal migrants will cross the Canada-U.S. border over the next few months? Will it be 10,000, 50,000, or 100,000?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am happy to reassure the member, everyone in the House, and all Canadians. No matter how many people arrive at our borders, we will continue to apply the principles of immigration with integrity. Under our rigorous system and with all the laws Canada has in place, we will continue to protect the integrity not only of our territory, but also of our immigration system. This is what Canadians expect and that is why we, as citizens, still have confidence in our immigration and refugee acceptance system.

[*English*]

Hon. Michelle Rempel (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that was not the question, was it? How many people are going to cross the border illegally from the United States into Canada this year to claim asylum?

It takes a plan to bring humanitarian immigration to Canada. We need to ensure that there are resources for integration, which the government is not doing. We need to ensure that the world's most vulnerable are protected. We cannot do that without anticipating numbers.

How many people is the Prime Minister anticipating will cross the border illegally from the U.S. into Canada to claim asylum this year?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member opposite wants to hear about our plan. We have engaged with communities in the United States, in southern California and Florida, to talk about the rigour with which we apply our immigration system, and to ensure that they know that regardless of how many come to Canada, we will always be able to apply the entirety of our immigration system, of our rules, of our laws, to any arrival in this country.

That is what Canadians need to know. Regardless of expected or unexpected arrivals, we have a system that is strong and robust enough to deal with it. The fear that the Conservatives are trying to spread is not helping Canadians.

* * *

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, expert and institutional hearings of the missing and murdered indigenous women and girls inquiry are about to begin, and the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs, the only indigenous political organization in B.C. with standing, has pulled out because the hearings “do not allow for a rigorous examination of the systems that contribute to violence against indigenous women and girls,” and the UBCIC “will not sit idly by as Canada touts an incomplete process as a success”.

What action will the Prime Minister take to fix this dire situation?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the perspective of the member opposite, but let me remind her that at the centre of the process around the missing and murdered indigenous women and girls inquiry are families. That is why we are focused on a family-centric approach. That is why the commission is focused on hearing from as many families as possible and engaging with them in a responsible way. The inquiry is fundamentally about getting justice for the victims, getting healing for the families, and putting an end to this ongoing national tragedy, and that is what the inquiry is doing.

• (1445)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Romeo Saganash (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Native Women's Association of Canada just released a report criticizing the work of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. The association found that the inquiry lacked transparency and focused on the wrong things. The report assigned a failing grade in five of the 15 areas assessed and found that action was required in five other areas. This inquiry is without doubt one of the most important in our history.

Does the Prime Minister realize that someone is asleep at the switch and that this someone might be his government?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government is determined to put an end to this national tragedy. The independent commission's mandate is clear: families must be at the centre of their work. We are determined to give families long-awaited answers about the systemic and institutional failures that resulted in this tragedy.

Our government is also taking immediate steps by investing in women's shelters, housing, and education, reforming early childhood services, and making the Highway of Tears safer.

Oral Questions

[English]

THE ECONOMY

Hon. Lisa Raitt (Milton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on the topic of investor confidence in Canada, yesterday the Prime Minister said that the reason businesses were not successful at attracting investment to Canada was that they lacked “swagger”. I guess that is a new economic indicator he decided to make up on the fly. What businesses know is that it is the high cost of doing business in Canada, the higher and new taxes, and the unrelenting regulatory processes projects are put through that cause the problems.

Will the Prime Minister admit that he should not have blamed CEOs in the country for failed Liberal policy?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, perhaps the Conservatives would have had a better record on job growth and economic growth during their time in office had they actually paid attention to facts. In fact, Canada is among the OECD countries with the greatest ease of doing business. We have consistently demonstrated through the high calibre of hard work that Canadians are willing to do, our great education system, and our confidence in the future that these are the things investors around the world are looking for. We are drawing in record numbers of investments in extraordinary fields across the country—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Milton.

Hon. Lisa Raitt (Milton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am just wondering whether the Prime Minister is going to be changing the G7 agenda to include the importance of swagger in economics. The reality is that there is a problem in Canada with respect to investor confidence, and it has to do with the fact that taxes are too high. It is too difficult to do business in Canada because of high costs, and businesses get stuck in a regulatory approval process that takes years to come out of. When will the Liberals stop blaming CEOs in Canada, who work hard, and instead look to themselves as the problem?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, here are the facts. For 10 years, Stephen Harper had the worst growth rate in Canadian history since R.B. Bennett in the depths of the Great Depression. Over the past two and a half years, we have created hundreds of thousands of jobs, and last year we actually had the fastest growth in the entire G7. Our plan of investing in the middle class, giving confidence to Canadians, and giving confidence to investors is exactly what is working for Canadians, and the Conservatives do not get it.

* * *

NATURAL RESOURCES

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, is there some swagger? He seems so angry.

The Prime Minister promised Canadians a law that would ensure the Trans Mountain expansion will proceed. Now the natural resources minister says that legislation might not be introduced. The Liberals talk, but they have done nothing to meet the May 31 deadline. The Prime Minister created this crisis. He misled Canadians with that promise. Now he claims his only option may be to force taxpayers to foot the bill, which Kinder Morgan did not even need. This is a total failure.

Could the Prime Minister tell Canadians how he will meet the deadline and guarantee that the expansion will go ahead?

• (1450)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, for 10 years, the Conservatives did not get it done. They could not get one kilometre of pipeline to new markets in 10 years, regardless of all the boosterism they had for the oil patch and Alberta. What we have actually done is roll up our sleeves, and we are getting things done. We got the Trans Mountain pipeline approved, and we are moving forward on getting it built. We are working to demonstrate to Canadians that, unlike Stephen Harper and his gang, we understand that the environment and the economy need to go together and that we need to bring indigenous people into the success of our country, and that is what we are doing.

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in fact, the Prime Minister killed northern gateway, killed energy east, killed the Pacific North West LNG, and now Trans Mountain is hanging by a thread. A new report says that Canada's energy sector will lose \$15.8 billion this year as a direct result of cancelled pipelines. Canadian oil producers are forced to sell to the U.S. at lower prices. The Liberals are driving investment out of Canada at record levels, risking hundreds of thousands of jobs in all sectors and billions of dollars in investment and government revenue.

When will the Prime Minister champion energy investment in Canada and stop jeopardizing Canadian oil and gas?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what we have been able to do over the past two and a half years, investing in Canadians, investing in infrastructure, and demonstrating that we understand that growing the economy and protecting the environment go together, has led to tremendous new investments and confidence in Canadians, consumers, and investors. That is, quite frankly, a long shot from the terrible performance of the Conservatives under Stephen Harper. What they consistently did not understand was that giving confidence to Canadians in the future and growing the economy in responsible ways—

[Translation]

The Speaker: The hon. member for Laurier—Sainte-Marie.

* * *

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Ms. Hélène Laverdière (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, yesterday when we learned that the President of the United States was planning to pull out of the Iran nuclear deal, the Liberal members of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development rejected my motion calling for a study on Canada's role in the Middle East.

That comes as no surprise, given that the government refuses to discuss important issues such as Iran, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and Saudi Arabia. This is a dangerous time for international security.

Oral Questions

Has the government signalled to our European allies its support for the Iran nuclear deal, and what will it do to ensure that it survives?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we continue to support the process surrounding the Iran nuclear deal. We know that it is an effective international agreement that depends on cohesion within the international community to ensure that Iran does not develop nuclear weapons. This issue is extremely important to us and we are proud to support our allies.

We regret the decision by the United States. It is a step in the wrong direction. We believe, and have said it to our American friends, that the best thing to do is to work together to ensure that Iran does not develop nuclear weapons—

The Speaker: Order. The hon. member for Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke.

[English]

Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP): Mr. Speaker, despite the risk of nuclear conflict being as high as it has ever been, the Liberal government has done nothing on nuclear non-proliferation. Now, the Iran nuclear deal, which was unanimously adopted by the UN Security Council as a binding resolution, is at risk. The U.S. withdrawal from the deal represents a dangerous moment for international peace and security, and shows growing disrespect for international law. This leaves the nuclear prohibition treaty as the world's greatest hope for preventing nuclear war.

Why will the government not embrace the rules-based multilateral system it claims to champion and finally sign the treaty?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I have said many times, Canada is proud to lead the way on nuclear disarmament and countering nuclear arms by leading on the fissile material cut-off treaty. We know that leadership matters, and it actually has an impact on behaviours around the world. It is what the world expects of Canada, and that is what we will continue to do. That is why we are standing alongside the international community in continuing to hold Iran to account and keeping the JCPOA in place. We regret the decision by the United States to pull out, but we are still hopeful that we are going to be able to keep Iran from developing nuclear weapons.

* * *

HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. Michael Levitt (York Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in 1939, the MS *St. Louis* was carrying over 900 Jewish refugees from Nazi Germany seeking to escape persecution. To Canada's everlasting shame, the government of the day refused to provide that sanctuary. The refugees returned to Europe, where many were killed in the Holocaust. Since being elected, I have worked alongside my colleagues for our government to recognize that tragic event. Yesterday, the Prime Minister announced what our government will do to recognize the wrongs of the past.

Can he share this with the members of the House?

• (1455)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for York Centre for his tireless advocacy on behalf of his community.

When Canada denied asylum to the 907 German Jews on board the MS *St. Louis*, we failed not only those passengers, but also their descendants and community. Canada's discriminatory “none is too many” policy of the time failed those desperate for safety and refuge from persecution. To acknowledge this difficult truth, learn from this story, and continue to fight against anti-Semitism every day, I look forward to offering a formal apology on the floor of the House.

* * *

DEMOCRATIC REFORM

Mr. Blake Richards (Banff—Airdrie, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in addition to a number of changes that weaken the integrity of our electoral system, the Liberals are also attempting to establish a register of future electors for children between the ages of 14 and 17. Could the Prime Minister please confirm that he will not allow the private information of 14-year-olds to be handed out to political parties or to anyone seeking public office?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, unlike the members opposite, we believe that more Canadians should vote. We know that making young people aware, so that when they turn 18 they are able to vote in a smooth and easy way, is a really important principle. Unlike the Conservatives, who actually prevented Elections Canada from doing youth outreach to encourage young people to learn about our electoral system, we believe that bringing young people into the political system in a responsible and respectful way is actually good for our democracy, and we are excited about this process.

The Speaker: The hon. member for Banff—Airdrie may not like the answer after he asks the question, but I would ask him to listen in spite of that.

The hon. member for Louis-Saint-Laurent.

[Translation]

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in 2015, Canadians voted in very large numbers. In fact, it was the largest voter turnout in Canada's history. However, millions of Canadians have been disillusioned with the broken promises, especially those concerning electoral reform. We remember the Prime Minister, hand on his heart, saying that the 2015 election would be the last vote of its kind and that it would be different next time. What happened to his platform? He threw it away and did not even bother to recycle it.

What credibility does the Prime Minister have on election reform given all the recommendations and changes he has made?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, a record number of Canadians voted in the last election for one reason, and that was to bring about real change and get Stephen Harper out of the prime minister's office. It worked.

We will continue to roll back Mr. Harper's changes to our electoral system, which the Conservatives still deplore. We will make it easier for people to vote. We will encourage youth to learn more about our electoral system. We will limit the role of money and third parties in our electoral process because we believe that it is important to defend the integrity of our electoral system.

* * *

[English]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Mr. Speaker, an ISIS terrorist who returned to Canada in the past few years recently gave an interview with *The New York Times* podcast “Caliphate”. In the podcast, Abu Huzaifa states that he worked for ISIS enforcing sharia law in Syria. He brags about getting splattered with blood while brutally lashing people who broke their laws, and he proudly admits to murdering ISIS prisoners and having the irony smell of blood on his hands.

When is the Prime Minister going to stop allowing these bloodthirsty terrorists to walk on our streets, and throw them in jail instead?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again we see the Conservatives trying to drum up fear as a way of political attack. We have every reason to be responsible and serious about how we protect the integrity of Canadians and the safety of our communities, but quite frankly, illustrations like the one in that question, or, for example, the attack ads the Conservatives put out that featured footage of ISIS executions, for political gain, are below the norm and should not be acceptable in Canada. The Conservatives will have a lot to answer for if they are going to keep up that same approach in the upcoming election.

• (1500)

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is actually running away from his responsibilities here. It is a cop-out. I would like to remind everyone that the Prime Minister has not hesitated in giving special treatment to terrorists, such as offering classes for returning terrorists in poetry and podcasting, and of course he loves writing cheques for \$10 million. Canadian ISIS terrorist Abu Huzaifa is walking freely on our streets, even though he publicly confessed to joining a terrorist group, sadistically enforcing sharia law, and slaughtering dissidents like they were animals.

When will the Prime Minister finally imprison ISIS terrorists instead of allowing them to use Canada as a safe haven?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again we saw this approach by the previous government in the last election. It does not work to try to scare and divide Canadians. Our security agencies take all potential threats very seriously and use the full tool kit of measures, including surveillance, the no-fly list, revoking passports, and laying criminal charges when sufficient evidence exists. The expertise of Canadian security and law enforcement professionals is highly respected around the world. Our security services are doing their work in spite of over a billion dollars in cuts they suffered under the Harper government.

Oral Questions

HEALTH

Ms. Irene Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Mr. Speaker, this Friday, Canada will be held accountable for its human rights record at our third periodic review at the UN. Safe and equal access to abortion is the right of all Canadians, yet this access remains shockingly inconsistent. Women living in rural areas often travel unacceptable distances to access an abortion clinic. It is unconscionable.

When will the government use the Canada Health Act to grant all Canadians their right to safe and equal access to abortion?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member opposite for her hard work in standing up and fighting for women's rights right across the country. We agree with her. We know that safe and easy access, responsible access, affordable access to reproductive health services, including abortions, is of fundamental importance to all Canadians. That is why we moved forward on ensuring that all provinces are offering that. We continue to work right across the country to ensure that the Canada Health Act is brought in. We will always be unequivocal in standing up for a woman's right to choose.

An hon. member: It is not a right.

[Translation]

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach (Salaberry—Suroît, NDP): Mr. Speaker, what we have just heard is awful.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order, order.

The hon. member for Salaberry—Suroît has the floor.

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach: Mr. Speaker, this is a right, and everyone needs to understand that.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach: The UN is about to embark on its periodic review of Canada's human rights performance. Safe and equal access to abortion is one of those rights.

While the Prime Minister boasts about being a feminist at five-star receptions with the rich and famous, many Canadian women are struggling to access treatments they are entitled to. That is unacceptable.

What concrete steps is the Prime Minister going to take to ensure that every woman has access to safe abortion?

Oral Questions

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, from the day we took office, we have been working with provinces where access to these services was inconsistent or non-existent and making sure they started offering women reproductive health services and protection and respecting women's choices. We on this side of the House, along with the NDP, understand that women unequivocally have the right to decide what to do with their bodies, and we are always going to stand up for that right, regardless of what the Conservatives think or say.

* * *

ETHICS

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this Prime Minister is once again selling Canadians down the river, and that is no fish tale.

Everyone knows that the Liberal Party always favours its friends over clear, fair, transparent, and equitable processes.

The Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard likely meddled in the granting of fishing licences for popular and lucrative shellfish. Why did he once again favour his friends, rather than keeping the much-desired peace with the first nations?

• (1505)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, reconciliation with first nations also involves creating economic opportunities for them. We are proud of the approach we have taken to create economic growth for indigenous communities.

With regard to the Arctic surf clam, I am very proud of what we are doing, and we will continue to create opportunities for indigenous peoples. If they have questions or concerns, I suggest that our friends across the way speak to the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner. However, I can say that everything is being done by the rules on this side of the House.

[English]

Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Mr. Speaker, recently released court documents in the surf clam legal battle reveal that the group called Five Nations that was supposed to satisfy indigenous involvement in the fishery is actually 75% owned by the brother of a Liberal MP.

What we have also learned through the recently released documents is that Five Nations is headed by Gilles Theriault. Who is Gilles Theriault, one might ask? He is none other than cousin of the minister's wife.

Was the Prime Minister aware of the minister's family connections in this bid?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in this House, as we have seen from time to time, there are accusations of ethical impropriety thrown as political attacks.

What we have is a Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner, who is in charge of evaluating the facts and making dispassionate findings that Canadians can have confidence in. If members are making accusations around ethics and conflict of interest, they should work with the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner to ensure that everything is being followed.

I can assure members that on this side of the House, we respect the work of the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner and follow their instructions.

Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the minister personally intervened in the surf clam process. He ordered the department to award the lucrative contract to a group that did not have a boat, that did not have multiple first nations partners, that were not even incorporated. What they did have was close family ties to the minister and to the Liberal Party.

Does the Prime Minister think it is appropriate that the minister is awarding million-dollar contracts to the Liberals and his own family members?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we understand that for the Conservatives mudslinging is just a way of doing politics and personal attacks are all they seem to have to go on, because it is really hard to attack us on the number one growth record in the G7 and on the creation of 600,000 jobs. They stick with the ethical attacks, which is fine, but Canadians need to know that we have a Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner who is there to look into the facts of the matter and make determinations on whether or not the mudslinging is grounded or groundless.

* * *

*[Translation]***ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Mr. Paul Lefebvre (Sudbury, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as a business owner, I am familiar with the challenges of attracting investments and funding to transform an idea into a profitable business.

We are in an international race for innovation, so we must ensure that our business owners have quick access to funding to transform their ideas into reality. This is why I was happy to hear recently that Salesforce would launch a new venture capital fund worth more than \$100 million.

My question is for the Prime Minister. What are we doing to make it easier for our business owners to access funding?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Sudbury for his question and for his work.

We support Canadian entrepreneurs by helping them access capital and gain technical expertise. The Canada Trailblazer Fund, recently launched by Salesforce, is a wonderful example of how our business owners can attract international investments.

We are also investing \$400 million to make late-stage venture capital more accessible in Canada. This could inject up to \$1.5 billion into Canada's economy to help the middle class.

Oral Questions

[English]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Hon. Erin O'Toole (Durham, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Taiwan is being blocked from participating in the World Health Assembly, which is meant to bring countries together to work on health issues. Fifteen years ago, Canada and Taiwan were on the front lines of the SARS crisis, and that shows why Taiwan should be a participant.

Will the Prime Minister show some global swagger and take a public position in support of Taiwan joining the World Health Assembly, or will he remain silent due to his admiration for basic dictatorships?

• (1510)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it has come up a few times in this question period that the Conservatives seem to have an issue with the idea of swagger, the idea of Canadians being strong and proud on the world stage, of Canadians understanding that being back on the world stage, being positively engaged, being confident about our investments in AI, our investments in new technologies, and our investments in the economy of the future, are things to be proud of here in Canada.

No, we will not apologize for swaggering when it comes to talking about Canada and being confident in the future that we are building together.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order. The hon. member for Durham will come to order. Order. It would be nice to be proud of the decorum in this place.

[Translation]

The hon. member for Beloeil—Chambly.

* * *

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Matthew Dubé (Beloeil—Chambly, NDP): Mr. Speaker, New Brunswick is currently grappling with the worst flooding seen in recent years. Water levels are starting to go down, but the situation remains urgent, and normalcy is still far off.

Many roads are still closed, and residents are still waiting to find out when they can go home. We know the damage will be significant, and a lot of cleanup and decontamination will be required.

What is the government going to do to help the province and flood victims get back on their feet quickly?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we know that places across the country, such as Kelowna, Alberta, Ontario, and especially New Brunswick, are facing many challenges associated with flooding.

As always, we are working very closely with local authorities so we can be on the spot if federal intervention is needed. We are very pleased with the collaboration so far. We have dispatched the Coast Guard to help New Brunswick. We are going to continue to be there to provide constant support to flood victims, their families, and communities right across Canada.

[English]

Mr. Wayne Long (Saint John—Rothesay, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, people in New Brunswick, including in my riding of Saint John—Rothesay, have been hit hard by flooding. There have been evacuations, road closures, power outages, and boil water advisories because of possible sewage contamination. We are very grateful for the first responders and everyone else who has been helping friends, neighbours, and strangers impacted by the floods.

Can the Prime Minister tell us how the government is supporting response and rescue efforts?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I said, all our thoughts with the people across the country affected by floods and with the first responders and volunteers working so hard to keep them safe. I thank the member for Saint John—Rothesay for his question and his New Brunswick colleagues for the work they have done to help their constituents during this tough time.

We have responded to all of the provinces' requests for assistance, including Coast Guard rescue boats and RCMP security patrols. We are, as always, in very close contact with provincial authorities in New Brunswick and across the country and we remain ready to respond quickly to any additional requests.

* * *

[Translation]

PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT

Hon. Steven Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have learned that, tomorrow, the Prime Minister will finally visit the riding of Saguenay, which has been without an MP for months now.

This will be a good opportunity for him, in between selfies of course, to finally keep the promise he made in January, because Saguenay needs icebreakers for its economic development. Thousands of jobs depend on them. The Coast Guard fleet is aging, and it is urgent that the Prime Minister make a decision now to prepare for next winter.

Will the Prime Minister finally award the Davie shipyard the contract to build four icebreakers, including the *Aiviq*, in order to help people in Saguenay continue to prosper?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we recognize the excellent work of Davie workers, who did an outstanding job delivering the *Asterix*. We recognize how important it is to continue to support them through good jobs that create opportunities for Canadians, including those in Saguenay.

As I said, we are in the process of negotiating a contract for a number of icebreakers with the Davie shipyard. We are still negotiating to find the best approach for Canadians and workers. That is what we will continue to do.

Points of Order

● (1515)

[English]

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, a little known and anti-democratic provision of the trans-Pacific partnership appears to be making its way into NAFTA. It is called chapter 25 in the TPP. What it does is reduce the abilities of governments to pass regulations in the public interest and expand the powers of foreign corporations to object to regulations.

My question for the Prime Minister is, is this true? Is the so-called regulatory coherence provision from the TPP entering NAFTA, and will this Parliament have a full opportunity to study, debate, and vote on NAFTA before we sign the bottom line?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for her question on the good regulatory practices chapter of the NAFTA negotiations. Making sure nothing impedes our government's ability to implement needed regulations is an important principle in which we believe. This is about encouraging regulatory harmonization where it makes sense to do so.

As with any agreement, it will be tabled in the House. At this point, we are still in the negotiating process, but the Minister of Foreign Affairs would be happy to provide a briefing on this topic to the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands, or any other member, if they request it.

* * *

PRESENCE IN GALLERY

The Speaker: I would like to draw to the attention of hon. members the presence in the gallery of His Excellency Timo Soini, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Finland.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: I would also like to draw the attention of hon. members to the presence in the gallery of the finalists for the 2018 Shaughnessy Cohen Prize for Political Writing: Carol Off, Sandra Perron, Ted Rowe, and Tanya Talaga.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

* * *

POINTS OF ORDER

ORAL QUESTIONS

Hon. Maryam Monsef (Minister of Status of Women, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Heckling at the best of times in the House is disruptive. Today you heard an offensive echo from the member for Provencher that women do not have the right to choose.

I humbly request that you ask him to withdraw his assertion.

The Speaker: I am afraid that this is a question of debate, and we have opportunities to have debates on this subject—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

[Translation]

The Speaker: Pursuant to order made on Thursday, April 26, the House will now resolve itself into a committee of the whole to welcome athletes of the 2018 Pyeongchang Olympic and Paralympic Games.

* * *

[English]

CANADA'S OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC ATHLETES

(House in committee of the whole to recognize the 2018 Winter Olympic Games and Paralympic Games athletes, Mr. Geoff Regan in the chair)

[*And Canada's 2018 Olympic and Paralympic athletes being present in the chamber:*]

The Speaker: On April 26, 2018, the following motion was adopted by the House of Commons:

That, notwithstanding any Standing Order or usual practice of the House, following Question Period on Wednesday, May 9, 2018, the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole in order to welcome the athletes of the 2018 PyeongChang Olympic and Paralympic Games; provided that: *a)* the Speaker be permitted to preside over Committee of the Whole from the Speaker's chair and make welcoming remarks on behalf of the House; *b)* the names of the athletes present be deemed read and printed in the House of Commons Debates for that day; *c)* only authorized photographers be permitted to take photos during proceedings of the Committee; and, *d)* when the proceedings of the Committee have concluded, the Committee shall rise.

Members are invited to join our guests at the reception immediately following in Room 237C. As many athletes are being recognized by us today, we will welcome them into the chamber in two waves. I therefore ask for members' patience, as I will take a moment each time to acknowledge the athletes and their accomplishments.

Now it is my pleasure to welcome onto the floor of the chamber many of the athletes who competed in the 2018 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games in Pyeongchang last February. These athletes have competed in alpine skiing, para-alpine skiing, biathlon, bobsleigh, cross-country skiing, curling, wheelchair curling, figure skating, and ski jumping.

Canadians from across the country are justly proud of them. Like them, we appreciate the years of training and sacrifice and determination it takes to become a world-class athlete.

We want to be athletes, but know nothing about it.

You are all champions and an inspiration to your fellow citizens. Through your efforts, Canada finished with the highest ever Canadian winter medal count.

We are all looking forward to seeing you shortly at the reception, so I now invite the athletes to make their way through the chamber to the reception room, where members will join them shortly so we may welcome the next group of Olympians and Paralympians.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

•(1525)

[*Translation*]

The Speaker: These athletes participated in the following sports: hockey, para ice hockey, short track speed skating, ski cross, ski jump, snowboard, para snowboard, and speed skating. Canadians across the country are proud of you.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

[*Members sang the national anthem*]

•(1530)

[*English*]

The Speaker: As we can see, some of the best things around here are unscripted.

[*Translation*]

Like other Canadians, we appreciate the years of training and sacrifice and the determination it takes to become a world-class athlete. You are all champions and an inspiration to your fellow Canadians. Thanks to your hard work, Canada finished the 2018 Pyeongchang Winter Olympic Games with a record number of medals.

[*English*]

Today is also an opportunity to recognize coaches, mission staff, and the Canadian Olympic and Paralympic committees for their hard work and dedication. Many of them are sitting in the south gallery, and I would ask them to stand.

Congratulations again. Thank you all for representing Canada so well at the Olympic and Paralympic Games, and good luck in your future endeavours:

James Anseeuw, Cynthia Appiah, Brooke Dori Apshkrum, Mark Arendz, Rob Armstrong, Steve Arseneault, Larkyn Austman, Dahria Beatty, Sarah Beaudry, Jordan Belchos, Zoe Bergemann, Charlie Bilodeau, Ivania Blondin, Laurie Blouin, Alex Boisvert-Lacroix, Kim Boutin, Noah Bowman, Mackenzie Boyd-Clowes, Kevin Boyer, Kasandra Bradette, Carle Brenneman, Billy Bridges, Baptiste Brochu, Phil Brown, Cendrine Browne, Kristen Bujnowski, Alex Cairns, Jane Channell, Kali Christ, Jesse Cockney, Charle Cournoyer, Joanne Courtney, Dominic Cozzolino, Candace Crawford, Tess Critchlow, Christine de Bruin, Vincent De Haitre, Ben Delaney, Ann-Renee Desbiens, Pascal Dion, Adam Dixon, Ben Donnelly, Kevin Drury, Laurent Dubreuil, Chloé Dufour-Lapointe, Justine Dufour-Lapointe, James Dunn, Sam Edney, Ina Forrest, Sébastien Fortier, James Gemmell, Piper Gilles, Samuel Girard, Alex Gough, Valerie Grenier, Dave Greszczyszyn, Alexis Guimond, Sandrine Hamel, Charles Hamelin, Tyrone Henry, Liam Hickey, Kevin Deon Hill, Rachel Homan, Elizabeth Hosking, Brittany Hudak, Kaillie Humphries, Mark Ideson, Kaylin Irvine, Lewis Irving, Haley Irwin, Calynn Irwin, Olivier Jean, Mollie Jepson, Rebecca Johnston, Gilmore Junio, Russell Kennedy, Mikael Kingsbury, Josh Kirkpatrick, Alex Kopacz, Justin Kripps, Genevieve Lacasse, Kim Lamarre, Dominic Larocque, Erin Latimer, Catrine Lavallee, Jack Leitch, Brady Leman, John Leslie, Colton Liddle, Derek Livingston, Melissa Lotholz, Jesse Lumsden, Braydon Luscombe, Jamie Macdonald, Valérie Maltais, Mac Marcoux, Michael Marinaro, Philippe Marquis, Barrett Martineau, Alexander

Routine Proceedings

Massie, Tyler McGregor, Brian McKeever, Heather McLean, Kimberley Mcrae, Erin Mielzynski, Meaghan Mikkelson, Curt Minard, Emma Miskew, Kirsten Moore-Towers, John Morris, Denny Morrison, Keri Morrison, Josie Morrison, Heather Moyses, Andi Naude, Joey Nemet, Mercedes Nicoll, Emily Nishikawa, Sarah Nurse, Kurt Oatway, Spencer O'Brien, Meryeta O'Dine, Cindy Ouellet, Mel Pemble, Britt Phelan, Nick Poloniato, Marie-Philip Poulin, Mirela Rahneva, Alana Ramsay, Roni Remme, Mike Riddle, Alysia Rissling, Chris Robanske, Audrey Robichaud, Olivier Rochon, Derek Roy, Michelle Salt, Jillian Saulnier, Kirk Schornstein, Ben Scrivens, Julianne Séguin, Kelsey Serwa, Cassie Sharpe, Bryan Sholomicki, Nathan Smith, Corbyn Smith, Seyi Smith, Justin Smith, Natalie Spooner, Christopher Spring, Laura Stacey, Marianne St-Gelais, Laurence St-Germain, Alexandre St-Jean, Cam Stones, Dennis Thiessen, Yuki Tsubota, Blayne Turnbull, Brianne Tutt, Lenny Valjas, Jennifer Wakefield, Tristan Walker, Reid Watts, Lisa Weagle, Isabelle Weidemann, Greg Westlake, Natalie Wilkie, Marie Wright, Neville Wright, Emily Young, Derek Zlotinsky.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

•(1535)

[*English*]

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, four reports of the Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group.

The first report concerns the Canadian/American Border Trade Alliance conference held in Ottawa, Ontario, from May 7 to 9, 2017.

The second report concerns the meeting with members of the United States House of Representatives held in Windsor, Ontario, from September 14 to 16, 2017.

The third report concerns the annual National Conference of the Council of State Governments held in Las Vegas, Nevada, U.S.A., from December 14 to 16, 2017.

The fourth report concerns the annual winter meeting of the National Governors Association held in Washington, D.C., U.S.A., from February 23 to 25.

Ms. Leona Alleslev (Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian Delegation of the Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association respecting its participation at the Sub-Committee on Transatlantic Economic Relations and Science and Technology Committee, Ottawa, Ontario; Yellowknife, Northwest Territories; Resolute Bay, Nunavik, Canada; from September 11 to 15.

Routine Proceedings

[Translation]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

INDIGENOUS AND NORTHERN AFFAIRS

Hon. MaryAnn Mihychuk (Kildonan—St. Paul, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 13th report of the Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs concerning Bill C-262, An Act to ensure that the laws of Canada are in harmony with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

The committee studied the bill and decided to report it to the House without amendment.

[English]

ACCESS TO INFORMATION, PRIVACY AND ETHICS

Mr. Bob Zimmer (Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 14th and 15th reports of the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics.

The 14th report is entitled “The Protection of Net Neutrality in Canada”. Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee requests the government table a comprehensive response to this report.

The 15th report is entitled “Main Estimates 2018-19: Vote 1 under Office of the Commissioner of Lobbying, Vote 1 under Office of the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner, Vote 1 under Office of the Senate Ethics Officer, Vote 1 and 5 under Offices of the Information and Privacy Commissioners of Canada”.

* * *

● (1540)

PETITIONS

CHILD LABOUR

Mr. David Sweet (Flamborough—Glanbrook, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have a petition to present today signed by dozens of constituents.

The petitioners call on the Government of Canada to compel Canadian companies to publicly report on what they are doing to address child labour and modern slavery in global supply chains.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Ms. Sheri Benson (Saskatoon West, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is always an honour to table petitions and to help citizens' voices be heard in Parliament. Today I am tabling two petitions.

The first petition is from citizens who oppose the Kinder Morgan pipeline.

EATING DISORDERS

Ms. Sheri Benson (Saskatoon West, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the second petition is from citizens who request the Government of Canada initiate discussions with the provinces, ministers, and all stakeholders to develop a comprehensive pan-Canadian strategy for eating disorders.

POSTAL BANKING

Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise to present a petition in the House today from residents of the West Kootenay region of my riding. It is a petition in support of postal banking.

The petitioners point out that two million Canadians desperately need an alternative to payday lenders; that 3,800 Canada Post outlets already exist in rural areas where there are few banks or credit unions; and that Canada Post already has the infrastructure to make a rapid transition to include postal banking.

The petitioners call on the government to enact Motion No. 166 to create a committee to study and propose a plan for postal banking under the Canada Post Corporation.

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise again today to table petitions on behalf of my constituents from coastal British Columbia, calling on the government to create a national strategy to combat plastic pollution in our waterways.

The petitioners call on the government to address plastic pollution by regulating single-use plastics and banning polystyrene and the use of it in our waterways. They call on the government to fund beach cleanups and education around ocean plastics and plastics in our waterways. They call on the government to invest in education and redesign the plastic economy. They call on the government for producer responsibility as well.

I am honoured to table this petition on behalf of the B.C. coastal people.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Ms. Tracey Ramsey (Essex, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise today to present a petition from petitioners across Canada. The petition is on NAFTA, which is of a timely nature.

The petitioners request that the Government of Canada, during the NAFTA renegotiations, make no more concessions to undermine our supply-managed systems. They demand the removal of ISDS provisions, the elimination of the energy proportionality provisions, that significant improvements to enhance the enforceability of the agreements on labour and environmental standards are made, and that the government resist further patent extensions and to ensure a fair intellectual property regime.

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Irene Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions to present.

*Routine Proceedings***QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURNS**

The first petition is in regards to the Thames River. As members will recall, the previous government stripped environmental regulations covered in the Navigable Waters Act, leaving hundreds of rivers vulnerable, including the Thames River in London, Ontario.

The current government has promised, but failed, to reinstate the environmental protections that were gutted from the original act. Therefore, the petitioners call on the Government of Canada to support my bill, Bill C-355, which would commit the government to prioritize the protection of the Thames River by amending the Navigation Protection Act. Of course, this would extend to all lakes and rivers that we cherish.

• (1545)

POSTAL BANKING

Ms. Irene Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the second petition is in support of postal banking. As has been stated, nearly two million Canadians desperately need an alternative to payday lenders. They are predators in our neighbourhoods. Often it is the poor, marginalized, rural, and indigenous communities who suffer most.

Therefore, because there are 3,800 Canada Post outlets in rural areas not covered by banks and credit unions and Canada Post has an incredible infrastructure and could easily make the transition to include postal banking, the petitioners ask the Parliament of Canada to support Motion No. 166 and create a committee to study and propose a plan for postal banking to the benefit of all Canadians.

ANIMAL WELFARE

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition on behalf of 25 members of my community who call on the government to discard plans for a goat dairy prison farm at Joyceville Institution, to prevent the use of animals in prisoner rehabilitation programs except under sanctuary animal therapy models.

I would add that I find it extremely important to always represent my constituents and bring forward petitions as they present them to me. Unfortunately, with this petition, I would not particularly agree with the content of it, and my previous speeches in the House speak to that. However, I do see the need to ensure their voices are heard. As a result, I present this to the House today.

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Mr. Speaker, there are more bulk carriers anchored in the Salish Sea than we have ever seen before. Therefore, today I table petitions in the House, which are a continuation of thousands of signatures we have received.

The petitioners call on the transport minister not to approve five new bulk anchorages proposed for Gabriola Island where I live. Five new anchorages, each for 300-metre freighters, risk oil spills, habitat destruction, and the jobs dependent on the sport fishing industry.

There are signatories from Abbotsford, Surrey, Fort McMurray, Saskatoon, Nanaimo, and Gabriola Island. We commend the petition to the transport minister.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if the government's response to Question Nos. 1595 to 1609 could be made orders for returns, these returns would be tabled immediately.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[Text]

Question No. 1595—**Ms. Marilyn Gladu:**

With regard to costs related to the Development Finance Institute Canada (DFIC) Inc.: (a) what are the estimated start-up costs for the DFIC, broken down by type; and (b) what are the yearly projected operating costs, for each of the next five years starting in 2018-19?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1596—**Mr. Bob Zimmer:**

With regard to applications for the 2018 Canada Summer Jobs program: (a) how many applications were rejected due to a failure to sign the attestation; (b) what is the name and riding of each applicant in (a); (c) how many applicants were requested to re-submit their application, due to a failure to sign the attestation; (d) what is the name and riding of each applicant in (c); and (e) how many applicants in (c) actually did re-submit their application and were awarded funding?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1597—**Mr. Bob Saroya:**

With regard to travel to India in February 2018 taken by the Prime Minister and other Ministers: (a) what are the details of all invoice or contracts received to date related to the trip including (i) vendor, (ii) amount, (iii) date, (iv) description of goods or services provided, (v) file number; and (b) what is the total amount spent on travel to and from India by the government in February 2018 including the amount spent on (i) government aircraft, (ii) commercial air travel, (iii) other travel, (iv) accommodations, (v) other expenditures?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1598—**Mr. Todd Doherty:**

With regard to the statement from the Government of India in February 2018, that "the government of India, including the security agencies, had nothing to do with the presence of Jaspal Atwal at the event hosted by the Canadian high commissioner in Mumbai or the invitation issued to him for the Canadian high commissioner's reception in New Delhi. Any suggestion to the contrary is baseless and unacceptable.": (a) does the government consider the statement to be accurate; and (b) does the government consider any portions of the statement to be false and, if so, which portions?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 1599— Mr. Peter Kent:**

With regard to international relations: (a) did the Prime Minister, a minister, or any other government official extend congratulations to (i) Russian President Vladimir Putin upon his re-election in 2018, (ii) Chinese President Xi Jinping upon his re-election as General Secretary of the Communist Party of China in 2017, (iii) Chinese President Xi Jinping upon the National People's Congress adopting a constitutional amendment removing term limits for the President of China, (iv) Chinese President Xi Jinping upon his re-appointment as President of the People's Republic of China in 2018, (v) Iranian President Hassan Rouhani upon his re-election in 2017; and (b) for each of the answers in (a) which are affirmative, what are the details of the message, including (i) date, (ii) sender, (iii) recipient, (iv) type (phone, letter, in person, etc.), (v) summary or description of message?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1600— Mr. Tom Kmiec:

With regard to Canada hosting the 10th Clean Energy Ministerial and Fourth Mission Innovation Ministerial Meeting (CEM10/MI4) in Vancouver in May 2019: (a) did the Minister of Natural Resources direct his department to issue a call for tenders in selecting a host city for the Meeting; (b) what criteria did Natural Resources Canada use to form its recommendation to the Minister of Natural Resources to announce Vancouver as a host city for the Meeting; (c) was there an open and fair process for Canadian municipalities to submit a bid to host the Meeting; (d) what other Canadian municipalities were considered to host the Meeting and why was Vancouver chosen over them; (e) was there an analysis made of the economic boost that the Meeting is expected to bring to the City of Vancouver; and (f) did the Minister of Natural Resources, his ministerial staff, or departmental staff at Natural Resources Canada hold any meetings or interactions concerning selecting a host city for the Meeting with (i) energy ministers and other high-level delegates from the 24 member countries of Clean Energy Ministerial and Mission Innovation, (ii) municipal representatives from any Canadian cities, (iii) representatives from Canada's energy natural resource industry?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1601— Mr. Kerry Diotte:

With regard to the Canadian military deployment to Mali: (a) is it a peacekeeping mission and, if so, which sides are currently at peace with each other; (b) what are the precise objectives which the Canadian Forces aim to achieve in Mali; and (c) what measures will the government use to determine if the mission's objectives have been achieved?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1602— Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:

With regard to Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Dairy Farm Investment Program, as of March 20, 2018: (a) what is the total amount of funding approved through grants to applicants; and (b) what is the total number of applications which have been received, including for each the (i) name of the applicant, (ii) full mailing address, (iii) project description, (iv) date of the application, (v) amount applied for, (vi) approval status, (vii) total amount of funding approved, if funding has been approved, (viii) project status, (ix) federal riding which the business is located in?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1603— Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:

With regard to the Canadian Surface Combatant (CSC) procurement and media reports that the solicitation to industry was optimized for a particular bidder: (a) is there a report from a Fairness Monitor, Auditor, or a comparable professional source, which indicates the CSC solicitation was conducted with integrity and, if so, what are the details of such reports, including (i) author, (ii) findings, (iii) date report was finalized, (iv) website location of report; (b) were any ministerial or departmental officials involved in the request for proposals approached by, or met with lobbying interests from BAE or from the Government of the United Kingdom prior to the request for proposals and, if so, what are the details including individuals involved and dates; (c) if the answer to (b) is affirmative, did any such engagement(s) influence the CSC requirements as they were solicited to industry and, if so, which ones; (d) does any of this influence referenced in (c) remain today; (e) were the planned number of ships to be procured, the quality of the product, or the projected budget altered in any manner as a result of undue influence by one of the bidders and, if so, how; (f) was the Fairness Monitor responsible for this procurement made aware

of any the outside influence on the procurement process referred to in (a) through (e); and (g) what specific actions are being taken to reassure the defence industry and to dispel these suggestions of bias and bid-rigging in the media, so to ensure that there are no residual negative impacts on future major capital procurements for the Canadian Armed Forces?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1604— Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:

With regard to Atomic Energy Canada Limited: what is the number of individuals who were exposed to radiation as a result of the 1952 NRX reactor leak and the 1958 NRU uranium rod fire, and their subsequent clean-up efforts, broken down by (i) event, (ii) nationality, (iii) profession (iv) illness, impairment, or medical condition caused by the exposure?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1605— Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:

With regard to expenditures or contracts with Cambridge Analytica, Strategic Communication Laboratories, Eunoia Technologies Inc., or Christopher Wylie since November 4, 2015, and broken down by department, agency, Crown Corporation or other government entity: (a) what are the details of each expenditure including (i) vendor, (ii) date and duration of contract, (iii) amount, (iv) description of goods or services provided; and (b) for each expenditure related in (a), has the government sent a copy of the contract and related documents to the Privacy Commissioner for review, and if so, when?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1606— Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:

With regard to Mr. Brett Thalmann, Director of Administration and Special Projects in the Prime Minister's Office: (a) what is the list and summary of special projects which he has been assigned to work on since beginning his employment in the Prime Minister's Office; (b) of the projects in (a), which ones involve data mining; and (c) of the projects in (a), which ones involve Facebook?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1607— Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:

With regard to government expenditures with Facebook, since January 1, 2016, broken down by department, agency, Crown Corporation or other government entity: (a) what are the total expenditures with Facebook, broken down by year; and (b) what is the description of goods or services offered by Facebook in relation to the expenditures in (a)?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1608— Mr. Todd Doherty:

With regard to federal government employees working in the province of British Columbia: (a) how many federal government employees work in British Columbia, broken down by (i) department and agency, (ii) titles and corresponding pay scales of the full-time equivalents for each department and agency; (b) performance pay for employees at the executive (EX) or higher level during 2017, broken down by department and agency; (c) how many individuals received performance pay; and (d) what is the total amount paid out during 2017 on bonuses?

(Return tabled)

*Government Orders*Question No. 1609—**Ms. Sheri Benson:**

With regard to Canada's asbestos ban regulations (Prohibition of Asbestos and Asbestos Products): (a) which ridings have mines, companies, manufacturing or processing facilities or lobby organizations involved with asbestos; (b) what are the names and addresses of these mines, companies, manufacturing or processing facilities and lobby organizations; (c) what is the nature of the business or activity of these mines, companies, manufacturing or processing facilities and lobby organizations; (d) which mines, companies or manufacturing or processing facilities have applied for an exemption; (e) which individuals from these entities have met with the Ministers of Health and Environment and Climate Change or departmental officials, including Ministerial Exempt Staff, and what are the details of all meetings related to the asbestos ban, including (i) dates, (ii) lists of attendees, (iii) locations, (iv) agendas; (f) which individuals from these mines, companies, manufacturing facilities and lobby organizations have corresponded with the Ministers of Health and Environment and Climate Change and departmental officials, including Ministerial Exempt Staff, and what are the details of all correspondence since November 1, 2016, including (i) dates, (ii) senders, (iii) recipients, (iv) titles, (v) subjects, (vi) summaries, (vii) file numbers; (g) which individuals from these mines, companies, manufacturing facilities and lobby organizations have met with which Ministers, including Ministerial Exempt Staff, Members of Parliament or Senators, and what are the details of all meetings related to the asbestos ban, including (i) dates, (ii) lists of attendees, (iii) locations, (iv) agendas; (h) which individuals from these mines, companies, manufacturing facilities and lobby organizations have corresponded with which Ministers, including Ministerial Exempt Staff, Members of Parliament or Senators, and what are the details of all correspondence since November 1, 2016, including (i) dates, (ii) senders, (iii) recipients, (iv) titles, (v) subjects, (vi) summaries, (vii) file numbers; (i) which elected officials (municipal or provincial) in Quebec have corresponded with which Members of Parliament and Senators on the subject of exemptions on behalf of these mines, companies, manufacturing or processing facilities, and what are the details of all correspondence since November 1, 2016, including (i) dates, (ii) senders, (iii) recipients, (iv) titles, (v) subjects, (vi) summaries, (vii) file numbers; (j) which elected officials (municipal or provincial) in Quebec have met with which Members of Parliament and Senators on the subject of exemptions on behalf of these mines, companies, manufacturing or processing facilities, and what are the details of all meetings related to the asbestos ban, including (i) dates, (ii) lists of attendees, (iii) locations, (iv) agendas; (k) which elected officials (municipal or provincial) in Quebec have corresponded with the Ministers of Health and Environment and Climate Change, including Ministerial Exempt Staff, or any other government Minister and their Ministerial Exempt Staff, on the subject of exemptions on behalf of these mines, companies, manufacturing or processing facilities, and what are the details of all correspondence since November 1, 2016, including (i) dates, (ii) senders, (iii) recipients, (iv) titles, (v) subjects, (vi) summaries, (vii) file numbers; (l) which elected officials (municipal or provincial) in Quebec have met with the Ministers of Health and Environment and Climate Change, including Ministerial Exempt Staff, or any other government Minister and their Ministerial Exempt Staff, on the subject of exemptions on behalf of these mines, companies, manufacturing or processing facilities, and what are the details of all meetings related to the asbestos ban, including (i) dates, (ii) lists of attendees, (iii) locations, (iv) agendas; (m) which Members of Parliament and Senators have corresponded with the Ministers of Health and Environment and Climate Change or any other government Minister, including Ministerial Exempt Staff, regarding an exemption to the ban for a mine, company, manufacturing or processing facility, and what are the details of all correspondence since November 1, 2016, including (i) dates, (ii) senders, (iii) recipients, (iv) titles, (v) subjects, (vi) summaries, (vii) file numbers; (n) which Members of Parliament and Senators have met with the Ministers of Health and Environment and Climate Change or any other government Minister, including Ministerial Exempt Staff, regarding an exemption to the ban for a mine, company, manufacturing or processing facility, and what are the details of all meetings related to the asbestos ban, including (i) dates, (ii) lists of attendees, (iii) locations, (iv) agendas; (o) have any exemptions been granted? If so, when and to whom? What are the details of the exemption; (p) are there any pending applications for an exemption? If so, who are the applicants, and what is the status of these applications; (q) what, if any, management strategy will be in place to protect the health and safety of workers who will be exposed to asbestos?

(Return tabled)

[*English*]

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

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

MOTIONS FOR PAPERS

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

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*Translation*]

CUSTOMS ACT

The House proceeded to the consideration of Bill C-21, An Act to amend the Customs Act, as reported with amendment from the committee.

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

[*English*]

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.) moved that the bill be concurred in.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): When shall the bill be read the third time? By leave, now?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Hon. Ralph Goodale moved that the bill be read the third time and passed.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to have the opportunity to begin the debate on Bill C-21 now at third reading stage in the House of Commons.

Government Orders

The Public Safety Committee has carefully considered this legislation and reported it back to the chamber, with a great deal of consensus and support. I would like to thank the committee for the hard work that was done, and note that one amendment related to the length of time that exit information may be retained after it is collected was adopted by the committee. The original version of the legislation allowed for this time limit to be set at some future date by regulation. The NDP put forward an amendment for a 15-year retention period in the law itself, and this amendment found majority support among committee members.

I believe the amendment makes the bill stronger and the government is very happy to accept it.

Before I discuss the specifics of Bill C-21, I cannot stress enough how important a smooth, secure, and well-functioning border is to both us and the United States.

• (1550)

[*Translation*]

Every day, around 400,000 people and \$2.5 billion in bilateral trade cross the Canada-U.S. border in both directions. We and our American counterparts have frequently reiterated our shared commitment to creating an even safer border that promotes even greater prosperity, two goals that go hand in hand. The bill before us today is a big step toward achieving those goals.

[*English*]

Bill C-21 would help us not only ensure that our border with the United States is more secure but also would ensure that our immigration system and social benefit system are better equipped to perform as intended.

Many Canadians would probably be surprised to find out that we do not currently have a system to track when somebody departs Canada. In fact, we have never had that kind of system. Most other developed countries keep track of who leaves as well as who arrives. Canada, of course, does an excellent job of taking note of who is entering the country. However, we need to address the security loophole and catch up to the rest of the world on who is leaving the country. Canadians might also be surprised to know that the Canada Border Services Agency has very few powers in the law to stop goods from leaving Canada, even if it is aware that the goods should not leave the country. Therefore, the legislation needs to be fixed, and Bill C-21 deals with both of these issues.

First, Bill C-21 would amend the Customs Act to enable the collection of basic exit information when someone leaves our country. With a clearer picture of who is exiting Canada, we can ensure the efficient movement of legitimate trade and travel, and keep our border more secure. Currently, this information is only tracked on foreign nationals and permanent residents leaving Canada by the land border for the United States.

It would be helpful to consider some examples of how the new legislation would be useful to the CBSA. It could, for instance, help to determine if a foreign national is overstaying his or her visitor visa. Canada is a welcoming country, but we expect those who are visiting us to abide by the terms of their visas and travel documents, including any expectation that when their visa has expired, they

would return to their home country. At the moment, without Bill C-21, we can never know for sure.

Another example is tracking the exit of those who are inadmissible to Canada and have been issued a removal order. Currently, many individuals in that situation simply board a flight at their own cost and depart on their own initiative. However, with no way to track exit information, the Canada Border Services Agency cannot close the file. The result is often the issuance of immigration warrants for people who may already have left the country.

The exit information that would be collected is brief, basic, straightforward, and unobtrusive. It includes name, nationality, date of birth, gender, and the issuing authority of the travel document—in other words, nothing more than is found on page 2 of everyone's passport—along with the time and place of departure. This information would be gathered without imposing any new requirements on the travelling public.

When a person leaves Canada by land, the person would, as usual, show his or her passport to the U.S. border officer and the U.S. would automatically send that basic information back to Canada. This is a reciprocal arrangement with the U.S., which is in fact already receiving information about people departing that country and arriving in Canada via the land border. For those leaving by air, air carriers would collect the basic passport data from passenger manifests and provide it to CBSA before departure.

In addition to the benefits I outlined earlier, Bill C-21 would be of great use to law enforcement. Canadian authorities would be better able to combat cross-border crime, respond to national security threats, prevent the illegal export of controlled goods, ensure the integrity of our immigration system, and protect taxpayers' dollars by making it easier to identify cases of identity fraud and abuse in certain government programs.

A good example is in the event of a kidnapped child and the ensuing Amber Alert that would be issued. When an Amber Alert is issued and shared with the CBSA, the CBSA would be able to create a lookout for the missing child or for a suspected abductor. If those individuals should cross the land border, U.S. border officials would send the exit information back to CBSA almost instantaneously. When the name of the child matches the Amber Alert, CBSA would be able to inform the RCMP that this particular person has left the country. The RCMP could then coordinate with American counterparts to locate the child and apprehend the offender, or if the lookout matches someone on the passenger manifest of an imminent outbound flight, police could possibly intercept the abductor right at the airport and rescue the child before takeoff.

The same principle would apply in the case of known high-risk travellers. Currently, those on the passenger protect program list, or what we call the no-fly list, can be denied boarding if they attempt to travel overseas to join a terrorist organization. However, to be listed on the passenger protect program, the government must have sufficient evidence or intelligence to merit the listing. That is a rigorous process.

A target at the early stages of an investigation might not yet meet the threshold for formal listing and could still freely travel out of the country, leaving authorities with no way to know that the person is gone. Bill C-21 would create a record of that departure, which could help our intelligence and police agencies build a future case. If the person has been flagged to CBSA by either CSIS or the RCMP, those agencies could get advance warning that the individual is leaving several days before his or her flight departs, and for investigative purposes, that is very useful information.

It would also be an important tool for Canada's efforts to combat human trafficking. For example, if police are investigating a case of human trafficking, border officials could alert the RCMP if any of the suspects leave the country or are planning an outbound flight. This could help police determine the location of a suspect, or a victim of human trafficking. It could help determine the travel patterns of suspects or victims, which in turn makes it easier to identify human smuggler destinations, or implicated criminal organizations, and it could help police to identify other suspects or victims by learning who is travelling with the individual in question.

● (1555)

Bill C-21 would also help immigration officials make better-informed decisions and better use their resources. For instance, a permanent resident who is applying for citizenship must have physically spent at least 1,095 days in the past five years in Canada. Without exit information, this can be very difficult for both the government and the citizenship applicant to prove.

Bill C-21 would also help protect taxpayer dollars by reducing fraud and abuse of certain federal programs that have residency requirements. By establishing when people leave Canada, we would be better able to determine who is and is not eligible for certain benefits that are tied to Canada being a person's official country of residence. Of course, when people are entitled to benefits based on their residence in Canada, those benefits are properly and generously provided by Canadian taxpayers. However, eligibility criteria exist for a reason, and Canadians would expect the government to administer these programs responsibly. That means making sure the rules are properly adhered to.

Seniors currently collecting old age benefits in accordance with the law, for example, old age security, would not be affected. That is because once somebody has 20 years of residence in Canada as an adult, OAS becomes fully portable no matter where the person lives. Medicare eligibility would also not be affected because exit information would only be used in the administration of federal programs. The information would not be shared with provinces.

This bill also includes measures that would strengthen the ability of the Canada Border Services Agency to deal with smuggling and the illegal movement of goods out of Canada. Members will remember that this issue featured prominently in the report of the

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Auditor General in the fall of 2015. That report found that improvements were needed to combat the unlawful export of controlled or dangerous goods, including illegal drugs and stolen property. Even more importantly, as we are in the midst of NAFTA negotiations, these new powers would help ensure the CBSA could better combat the flow of counterfeit goods to our neighbours to the south, as well as the illicit diversion or transshipment of strategic products such as steel or aluminum.

Currently, the Customs Act only prohibits the smuggling of goods into Canada but not out of Canada. This legislation would address that gap in the law by making it an offence to smuggle prohibited, controlled, or regulated goods out of the country.

Prior to tabling the legislation, Public Safety Canada proactively reached out to the Office of the Privacy Commissioner. This was an issue of interest to the standing committee. Privacy impact assessments have already been completed for the current and previous phases of implementation of this program involving the collection of basic data for non-citizens, and summaries of those assessments have been made available on the CBSA website. An additional assessment will be done once this new legislation is passed and the new framework is in place. This is all to ensure the requirements of Canada's privacy laws are properly adhered to by this important measure.

As we have seen with the debate on Bill C-59, which is our national security legislation, in particular the information-sharing provisions in Bill C-59 related to national security, many members of this House are concerned about the prospect of sharing personal information between federal departments, that is, within the government overall but between one department and another. Let me be clear, however, that under Bill C-21, before any information could be shared between CBSA and any other federal agency or department, a formal information-sharing arrangement must be established. Such an arrangement would include information management safeguards and privacy protection clauses.

● (1600)

The exchange of information with the United States would also likewise be subject to a formal agreement to establish a framework governing the use of any information and to set up mechanisms to address any potential problems.

Let me repeat something that I mentioned earlier, because it is very important when considering the impacts of this legislation on a traveller's privacy: the only information that we are talking about in Bill C-21 is the basic information, the basic facts, that appear on page 2 of everybody's passport, which all travellers now voluntarily provide to the customs officers of other countries when they enter those countries. This is simply a matter of making sure that the same information is available to Canadian customs officials so that it works both ways.

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The benefits of Bill C-21 are clear, and I am glad to note that there has been broad consensus and support in the House for this measure. It would help ensure the efficient flow of trade and travel, which are essential to our country's prosperity, and make sure that it continues with a secure border. It would help law enforcement agencies with everything from human trafficking to amber alerts, help the immigration department run its programs with more clarity and certainty, help to ensure government benefits go to those who are eligible for them and not to those who are ineligible, and help to ensure Canada can help to prevent prohibited goods from leaving the country. All of this can be achieved with virtually no impact on travellers and with robust privacy protection measures in place.

In short, this bill is good for Canada. I look forward to seeing it come into force at the earliest possible time and I thank the House for its consideration.

• (1605)

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am glad to have the opportunity to rise to raise my concerns in this place regarding Bill C-21.

New Democrats take the personal information and privacy concerns of Canadians very seriously. It is clear that since the bill was first introduced in June 2016, Canadians have become increasingly concerned about the privacy of their personal information, as we have seen numerous troubling situations of data breaches, unscrupulous data collection and mining, and targeted misinformation campaigns based on collected personal data, just to name a few things.

Just last month we learned that Facebook estimates that over 620,000 Canadian users had their data improperly shared with Cambridge Analytica. In 2017, we found out that Equifax, one of the three largest credit agencies in the world, had been hacked and that the personal, financial, and identification information of an estimated 19,000 Canadians had been stolen.

While these data breaches were in the private sector, we know that these kinds of data breaches can occur in the public sector as well. In 2016, we learned of an employee at the Canada Revenue Agency improperly accessing personal accounts. We learned as well of the loss of a DVD containing the confidential tax information of 28,000 taxpayers in the Yukon.

Canadian taxpayers also had to pay roughly \$17.5 million when the government settled a class action law suit at the end of 2017 over the loss of personal information for roughly 580,000 Canada student loan recipients that had occurred five years ago.

Regarding the data that would be collected under Bill C-21, Professor Wesley Wark, a security intelligence expert, stated that "There's been a lot of concern over the years in Canada and elsewhere about data breaches where various malicious actors—criminal groups, hackers, foreign governments—are going after information held by the Canadian government, and this big database will be an attractive target."

It is our duty as elected representatives to take the privacy and security of our constituents' personal information very seriously, and we must ensure the utmost care any time authorization is given for the collection of their data. We must be even more careful when we

authorize that data to be shared if we have no jurisdiction or control over what other entities may do with it.

Bill C-21 does just that. I and my New Democratic colleagues are concerned that the Liberal government is not taking the privacy concerns of Canadians and the recommendations of experts on these matters as seriously as they should.

We saw this in Bill C-59 and again here in Bill C-21. This bill would amend the Customs Act to allow for the collection and sharing with United States authorities the exit information on all persons leaving Canada, including Canadian citizens. Currently no authority exists in the Customs Act to collect exit information from travellers, including Canadian citizens, and there is only limited authority to question travellers departing from Canada.

Bill C-21 would be a significant departure from the current situation. When he spoke on the bill, my esteemed colleague from Beloeil—Chambly spoke about how the government continues to suggest that there is nothing to worry about, that this is just the collection and sharing of basic information, just information that is found on page 2 of a passport.

However, as I said, any time we are expanding our data collection, we need to be sure that we actually need to do so, that this data will be adequately protected, and that it will not lead to any undue harm for Canadians. That third piece is the most important.

The role of the Canada Border Services Agency is not to hand over Canadian information to foreign authorities; the role of the Canada Border Services Agency, first and foremost, is to protect Canada. Once the CBSA turns over data to the United States, there is no way to know how the information will be used. There is no way to know how long those records will be kept. More troubling, there is no equivalent to the Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada in the United States.

• (1610)

In fact, when my hon. colleague, the member for Salaberry—Suroît, spoke to this bill, she pointed out the alarming surveillance that occurs in the United States, which the world learned about through the whistle-blower Edward Snowden.

As we debate this bill at third reading, given the length of time it has taken to reach this stage, we need to acknowledge and examine how things have changed in the nation with which we will be routinely sharing this information since this bill was first tabled. The election of Donald Trump has brought a very real anti-immigration, anti-foreigner streak to the highest level of office in the U.S. We see this not just with refugee claimants crossing into Canada at irregular intervals from the United States and hoping that the Canadian system will provide them a fair opportunity to hear their case, but in also in the numerous instances of Canadians being mistreated and profiled based on the colour of their skin when they were entering or attempting to enter the United States.

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American authorities, emboldened by a president who pursues shutting down American borders to Muslims and building a wall to keep Mexicans out, have subjected Canadians to inappropriate questioning and profiling when Canadians attempted to make a routine border crossing. In fact, I rose in this place three times in February 2017, on the 9th, 13th, and 22nd, asking the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness and the Prime Minister what actions will be taken to ensure Canadians will not be subjected to racial profiling while attempting to cross the border into the United States.

We heard about Fadwa Alaoui, a Muslim Canadian born in Morocco, whose Canadian passport was not enough. She was berated by the U.S. border guards about how often she attended her mosque and what her views were on the president, and was even asked if she knew the people killed in the Quebec City mosque attack. After four hours of feeling humiliated, she gave up and drove home.

The Liberals kept assuring parliamentarians and the public that Trump's travel bans and rhetoric would not impact Canadians, but the stories continued. We heard about 19-year-old Yassine Aber, who was a student at Sherbrooke University and a member of the school's track and field team. As part of the team, he was travelling into the United States to participate at a track meet. Mr. Aber was born in Canada and was travelling on a Canadian passport that did not expire until 2026. His parents came to Canada from Morocco over 25 years ago.

He was subjected to similar harassment for five hours. His phone was seized, and he was forced to give the agent his phone's password. He was the only person of the 20 to be subjected to this, and only Mr. Aber was ultimately refused entry. He was told he was not allowed to cross because he did not have a valid visa.

Canadian citizens with valid passports do not require visas to enter the United States. These were acts of discrimination and profiling, plain and simple.

It was also brought to my attention through the sharing of an access to information request that dozens of Canadians born abroad have had their card revoked for vague reasons. It is within this context that we would be passing and enacting Bill C-21.

In addition to the fact that there is no U.S. equivalent to our Privacy Commissioner, President Trump signed an executive order explicitly stating that persons who are not U.S. citizens are now excluded from the protections offered under United States privacy legislation. It is within this context that the CBSA will be turning over information on Canadian citizens to their American border counterparts.

Canada's Privacy Commissioner has expressed concerns regarding Canada's privacy framework. In 2016 he stated:

The issue is that if you allow greater information-sharing, the legal standards authorizing this activity should be such that law-abiding Canadians, ordinary Canadians who should have nothing to fear from surveillance activities of the state, are not caught by the information-sharing regime.

Canadians should also hear about the impact of certain surveillance measures on democratic rights and privacy. A more balanced and comprehensive national discussion is needed.

●(1615)

When it comes to the collection and sharing of their personal data, I believe that we would easily find that most Canadians have moved well beyond the idea that if they have nothing to hide, they have nothing to worry about. Canadians are wary of their personal information being shared among government agencies and Canada's foreign partners because of previous acts passed, such as the Harper government's Bill C-51.

The current government's plan to collect and share even more personal information, without proper independent oversight of our national security agencies, is of great concern to New Democrats. The Canada Border Services Agency was never required to collect information on those exiting Canada, as that was the responsibility of the agency where the individual was travelling to. There is a real concern that Canadian authorities are being asked by foreign governments to hand over the personal information of Canadians. That should not be the responsibility of the CBSA. Our border agency's full purpose is to protect Canada, not to hand over Canadian information to foreign authorities. In the case of extenuating circumstances, where such information needs to be shared, such as threats to national security or criminality, the relevant police agencies, such as the RCMP and CSIS, are already in contact with their international counterparts. In these cases, existing legislation and practices are already applicable. Therefore, in many ways, Bill C-21 is a solution in search of a problem.

To date, the government has failed to truly show this House why this legislation is needed and has failed to provide real assurances that the risks of this additional data collection and data sharing would be properly addressed and mitigated. Given the current context that we would be entering into this new level of data collection and sharing, it is my opinion, and my colleagues', that Bill C-21 needs to be opposed.

During his appearance at the public safety committee on the study of Bill C-21, my colleague questioned the Privacy Commissioner on whether information-sharing programs implemented under the former, controversial Bill C-51 would apply to data collected at the border under Bill C-21. The Privacy Commissioner stated:

Yes, the information collected under Bill C-21 on people leaving Canada could very possibly be shared through the measures established under Bill C-51.

The Privacy Commissioner went on to reaffirm the following, saying:

As you know, I have commented on Bill C-51 as to the standard under which information-sharing is permitted. In my opinion, the standard established under Bill C-51 is too permissive when it comes to information sharing. I stand by those comments.

Once again, we have no ability to control what American authorities do with this data once it is shared.

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As I illustrated in examples earlier, we know that Canadians are being impacted at the border by President Trump's rhetoric and policies. Instead of standing up for Canadians who are being targeted and profiled by Canadian border agents on the basis of their skin colour and religion, the Liberal government appears, instead, to be committed to offering to make the agents' jobs easier by collecting for them and turning over more personal data.

It is the responsibility of the government to protect public safety and to defend civil liberties. The government has failed to show that Bill C-21 would do either of these things. Until it is able to do so, the government needs to shelve this bill.

•(1620)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am not sure to what degree the member really understands what the bill would do. She has confused me a bit on it.

My understanding is that what the member takes great objection to is that when Canadians cross the border, a U.S. immigration agent will ask to see their passports. On page two of the passport, there is some very basic information. That information is often collected by the U.S. The communication of information is not coming from Canada to the U.S.; it is the U.S. communicating it to Canada.

Is the member saying that we should not be looking for that kind of information? I do not quite understand what her position is on that issue. What specifically is it that the member and the NDP find so offensive? The information gathered is on page two of the passport, and the agents are looking at the passport anyway. The information collected is actually given to the Canadian government.

Ms. Jenny Kwan: Mr. Speaker, perhaps the member did not pay attention to my speech. If he had, he would realize the points I raised as to why the NDP is concerned about Bill C-21.

Specifically, at committee, this question was asked of the Privacy Commissioner. Let me repeat this for the member's clarity. During his appearance at the public safety committee on the study of Bill C-21, my colleague questioned the Privacy Commissioner on whether information-sharing programs implemented under the former, controversial Bill C-51 would apply to data collected at the border under Bill C-21. The Privacy Commissioner stated:

Yes, the information collected under Bill C-21 on people leaving Canada could very possibly be shared through the measures established under Bill C-51.

If that does not ring alarm bells for the member, it should. Canadians have already voiced grave concerns about Bill C-51, and now we would bring another provision that would very possibly allow further information sharing, which the Privacy Commissioner actually raised at committee.

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, would the hon. member not concede that the very thing she is complaining about in Bill C-51 is, in fact, being amended, improved, and changed in Bill C-59? Bill C-51 was the Conservative bill. Bill C-59 is the current bill that is being dealt with by this Parliament to correct the problems existing in C-51.

Ms. Jenny Kwan: Mr. Speaker, I would much rather see the Liberal government repeal Bill C-51. I think that is what Canadians

wanted to see. However, we did not have that. Let us be clear about that.

With Bill C-21, there are concerns the Privacy Commissioner raised and brought to the attention of the committee. In terms of privacy and information sharing and the data that has been collected, what will happen with that data? At a time when we have so many concerns about data breaches and privacy, why would the government embark on a process that would allow for further information to be shared? If the minister and the government really want to address this issue in an adequate way, they might actually start by repealing Bill C-51.

Hon. Ralph Goodale: Mr. Speaker, that exchange proves exactly the point from the last election: Canadians were not prepared to trust the Conservatives with their privacy, and they were not prepared to trust the NDP with their safety. This example has exactly proven the point.

Ms. Jenny Kwan: Mr. Speaker, I am so enjoying this debate. Let me say this. The Liberals promised Canadians many things in the last election, and Canadians trusted them. They believed them. The Liberals said that they were going to bring in a new electoral system. What did they do? They failed to abide by that commitment, and they betrayed Canadians. That is exactly what the current government is doing.

That is not the only issue. Another issue is Kinder Morgan. The government promised Canadians, promised British Columbians, that it would not allow Kinder Morgan to go through under Harper's process. What did the Liberals do? They did exactly that. They approved Kinder Morgan under Harper's process.

If we want to talk about betrayal, Canadians know, and I hope they remember, what the current Liberal government did—

•(1625)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): The hon. member for Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman is rising on a point of order.

Mr. James Bezan: Mr. Speaker, I would ask that the member get back to the point on Bill C-21. We are talking about border crossings, entries, and the way we handle visas and passports. She is off on a different tangent altogether.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): As I have said in the past, I think it is important that we allow members to take whatever course they may get to the point they want to make.

The hon. member for Vancouver East, should she want to finish up and bring it back to the pertinent point.

Ms. Jenny Kwan: Mr. Speaker, yes, I would like to finish up.

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My point was in response to the Minister of Public Safety on how Canadians chose the Liberals and not the Harper government. He is right. They did. However, Canadians also expected the current government to follow through on the commitments it made to Canadians, and it has failed on multiple levels.

On these issues of safety, security, and information sharing, we, the New Democrats, believe that Canadians want more from the government. I do not believe that they want our privacy information to be shared with the United States, with zero accountability by the United States, because we will not know what the U.S. will do with our data.

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am listening to the arguments put forward by the NDP member in disbelief.

The member is worried about privacy, but every time she walks up to the border, she is providing her passport voluntarily, with all her private information. For those of us who have NEXUS cards, we already provided that private information to U.S. Customs and Border Protection so that we could get our NEXUS cards. Of course, the NDP is making the argument that we should let all the undocumented, illegal border-crossers jump the queue and come running across and flood our system here in Canada without providing the proper identification.

It is beyond me that NDP members are willing to trade away privacy and security in one area but then say the complete opposite when it comes to Canadians actually having to work with our U.S. neighbours so that we can have an expedited process in clearing the border.

Ms. Jenny Kwan: Mr. Speaker, when we go to the border and show our passports, they do not collect the information as data. That is the difference. They would be collecting the information as data, but then they will be sharing the information with we do not know who. By the way, the President himself made a clear statement saying that this information will not be subject to the laws of the United States in terms of privacy. Our own Privacy Commissioner raised concerns at committee about this. Maybe the member is telling us not to worry about it and that it is all good.

On the issue of asylum seekers, the fact of the matter is that these are irregular crossers who are coming over. Canada is a signatory to the UN Convention and Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees, and because of that, we accept asylum seekers when they come to this country. After they arrive in this country, they will be processed accordingly and go through all the screening to determine whether they are valid refugees. If they are, through the IRB, they will have status here. If not, they will have to leave the country.

Members know this very well, but they persist in ensuring that misinformation is put out there in the broader community. All for what? It is to fearmonger, which is really the purpose of the Conservative Party's approach to asylum seekers, and that is just shameful.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre Nantel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I invite my colleague to listen carefully because we had a pretty good chuckle over how much the parliamentary secretary

underestimated our immigration critic's ability to respond and her knowledge of the file.

This government thinks that it can do what it wants and sincerely believes that the public will accept any of its nonsensical policies. Is that not the problem with this government?

• (1630)

[*English*]

Ms. Jenny Kwan: Mr. Speaker, indeed, the whole point of this is ensuring that Canadians have the assurance of the government that it has their best interests at heart. However, with this bill, New Democrats do not believe that the government has taken measures to ensure the interests of Canadians. Government members have not, frankly, answered the question the Privacy Commissioner put on the table.

[*Translation*]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Order. 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 Nanaimo—Ladysmith, Status of Women; and the hon. member for Saskatoon—Grasswood, The Environment.

[*English*]

Hon. Erin O'Toole (Durham, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am happy to rise in debate for the second time on Bill C-21 and speak about changes to the Customs Act.

I am going to premise my remarks upon the fact that many people in this House of Commons change over time. Sometimes the change is dramatic. I have highlighted the dramatic change of the deputy House leader of the Liberals, my friend from Winnipeg North, who speaks in this House far more than everyone else. He is just a treasure trove of contrary positions on a whole range of issues, particularly how hurt he was personally during the Conservative government whenever there was an omnibus bill or use of time allocation. Now he organizes the use of time allocation for his House leader.

There are also ironies in looking at the long-time member from Saskatchewan, who is now our Minister of Public Safety, because he has been on both sides of every issue. He is doing so wonderfully today. He gave a speech that extolled the virtues of a common entry-exit system with respect to the United States. He also talked about tracking exit information of Canadians for a variety of reasons and how good those reasons were. What did he say about it in 2011? The entry-exit issue has been part of the beyond the border initiative the Conservative government worked with President Obama on for many years trying to make sure goods were delivered faster, that there was exchange of workers across the border, and that security protocols were respected.

What did the minister who is now pushing this rapidly through the House say in February 2011? He said:

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If we have a common entry and common exit system, does it not follow that Canada no longer has sovereign Canadian control over immigration and refugees? Canadians need to know what is at risk.

It is ironic in 2018 to hear that minister talk about sovereign Canadian control over our border when his press conference earlier this week in Quebec with several other members of cabinet showed their inaction and incompetence has essentially surrendered any sovereign border controls in this country. This is due to inaction, due to the desire to keep their centre left coalition alive. They will not even do the basic enforcement of border rules and regulations. It is astonishing.

When the Conservatives were exploring the entry-exit system, it was a high priority for our American friends under the Obama administration. The minister expressed concern about it at the time, and now he is driving it through. What else did he say about this in February 2011? He conceded in many ways that if Canada, under the Conservatives, were to go to a common entry-exit system information sharing with the United States, it only should be done under specific circumstances. He said, "Could the Prime Minister at least guarantee minimum gains for Canada?"

What the minister was saying at the time was if Canada was to relent to the American request for the sharing of entry and exit information across our border, we should at least extract something in return. What is going to be the guaranteed minimum gains for Canada? That is what he asked for in opposition. In fact, why did the Conservative government not complete entry and exit information sharing with the American administration? We were fighting for Canadian jobs related to the Keystone XL pipeline. We wanted a gain. We wanted to be treated as a mature partner in the Canada-U.S. relationship. We were fighting for that gain so we did not rush through a bill like Bill C-21.

What has Canada achieved under the U.S.-Canada relationship under the Liberal government? What is the minimum gain we are getting now for this entry-exit sharing? Nothing. In fact, NAFTA is at risk. Our steel and aluminum exports are at risk.

•(1635)

We are not even consulted on decisions of a security nature made by the United States. The government cannot even get its answers straight on whether it is talking to the Americans about fixing the gap in the safe third country agreement.

The minister suggests they are talking. The immigration minister—

Ms. Jenny Kwan: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, we are debating Bill C-21. The member highlighted that himself, and he knows that. Now he is talking about something else entirely, not related to Bill C-21.

Hon. Erin O'Toole: You should listen better.

Ms. Jenny Kwan: Actually I was listening quite intently. Frankly, he is not on topic. I leave that in your capable hands, Mr. Speaker.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Once again, as I had mentioned earlier, I leave it to the members. I am sure no one elected anyone incompetent or anyone who cannot put together an argument. I am going to trust the ability of the individual members to come back to the issue. I am sure the hon. member will

come back to the issue that we are discussing. He is just trying to make a point and is grabbing facts and figures to bring forward. I will leave it to his discretion and hopefully he will be debating the issue at hand.

Hon. Erin O'Toole: Mr. Speaker, through you to the member, I would recommend to her to use research as opposed to anger in her interventions here in the House.

I am talking about the minister who just gave a speech and was questioning her in her questions and comments on his views on Bill C-21—

Ms. Jenny Kwan: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I take offence to the comment the member has made about me. When I raise the issue, yes, I am passionate about the issue, and so are many other members in this House who have expressed their point of view. I take offence to the fact that he has specifically highlighted my passion on this issue as somehow, by his interpretation, to be anger. I ask the member to withdraw that comment.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): I will leave it to the individual member, but I believe that was an observation of his. It is more debate than anything else.

Hon. Erin O'Toole: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is basically underscoring my point. My questions relate to when the minister was in opposition. He opposed this very type of legislation. He opposed the common entry and exit system that is at the underpinnings of Bill C-21, if people want to delve into what is in the legislation. That minister, who spoke promoting the bill, opposed it for several reasons in 2011. He said it would give up our sovereign control of our immigration and refugee system. I am suggesting it did not. He said it did at the time.

He also said if Canada is to make an agreement acceding to this request by the Americans to share entry and exit information, we should extract gains for our national interest in the process. We have not secured any gains.

This is a Customs Act decision related to the travel of our citizens and our residents between our country and the United States, the country Canadians, including people in British Columbia and my province of Ontario, travel to the most. We should be very clear that if we are going to streamline that with the Americans, we receive in return respect and things that would help our national interests. We are not receiving that in return for Bill C-21.

NAFTA is at risk. The steelworkers I met with this week who normally support the NDP would probably be shocked that it is the Conservatives who are standing up for them in the House. Our aluminum exports are at risk. When the minister asked that Canada get gains for giving the type of power that Bill C-21 would give, I would like to see what Canada has secured in return, because it looks like the Canada-U.S. relationship is eroding.

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We are imposing more exit requirements on Canadians travelling back and forth across the Canada-U.S. border at a time when that government is ignoring the basic laws that require people to report for a CBSA border check.

All of these issues are deeply related, including Bill C-23, which is a companion piece of legislation to Bill C-21. I have spoken to both bills at length.

The changes to pre-clearance should also concern Canadians, because information will be shared when they leave and go. The minister alluded to the fact that benefits are tied to these. It is clear the government is going to go after Canadians for tax purposes, for eligibility for a series of benefits, and sharing that information with the United States.

People may want to delve into what section 94 of the act provides, but changes to section 94 would give border officials upon exit the ability to ask any question of a Canadian going down to the United States for a holiday or a business meeting.

I have already told how the Liberal government has failed to get assurance as part of these discussions on entry and exit, that the American immigration and custom enforcement, the ICE office, the U.S. equivalent to the CBSA here in Canada, will remove the marijuana question from its screening questions.

This bill means that CBSA will be able to ask any question possible of a Canadian leaving our country and that information on Canadians will be shared with the United States, yet we are legalizing marijuana and the government has not even received assurance from the Americans that their border agents, their ICE agents, will not ask Canadians questions about marijuana use, whether medicinal or legal, eventually. Why should that concern people? It could lead to a ban on travel to the United States and could impact someone's employment.

Bill C-21 and Bill C-23 are together the border package presented by the Liberal government. There is nothing to actually solidify and secure our immigration and refugee system and our asylum claim process.

I have said countless times the best way to make sure we keep a high level of Canadian confidence in our system from the people that are in the queue now, from the people that are looking to come to Canada through our refugee system or through our immigration system, is that it run by a rules-based, fair process. That is fair. Canada is a rules-based country.

● (1640)

While we are looking at that, the minister is passing the bill but is not able to get any new assurances with respect to the safe third country agreement. I would note that the minister, referring back to the comments I said he made in 2011, was also a member of the Chrétien government in 2002, which negotiated the safe third country agreement with the Americans.

It is interesting that John Manley, with Tom Ridge as the U.S. Homeland Security secretary at the time, negotiated the safe third country agreement with respect to asylum claims and seeking asylum, meaning that if people are fleeing persecution, they claim asylum in the first country they go to, and that would be recognized.

If it were Canada, it would be Canada. If it were the United States, it would be the United States. By circumventing proper border checks, someone who has been called an irregular asylum claimant is also breaking the law by crossing the border.

The system provided for that, and what was said by the Liberal minister at the time, who was a colleague of the Minister of Public Safety? He said the safe third country agreement, which my friend in the NDP wants to toss out or set aside or temporarily suspend, was the Liberal government's response to UN rules with respect to refugees and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. In fact, John Manley referred to those two documents in the House of Commons on May 7, 2002, when he said, referring to the Convention on Refugees and the Charter of Rights, "Both of these have driven us to the conclusion...that it would be necessary to negotiate a safe third country agreement."

The last major border agreement with the United States was by John Manley. The current Minister of Public Safety was in cabinet with him. The next set of border arrangements with the United States is through the current minister, through Bill C-21 and Bill C-23, which gives American customs agents the ability to search Canadians on Canadian soil, but the Liberals will not even touch the loophole in the safe third country agreement.

Therefore, Canadians should be concerned. I raise this matter because there has been a lack of attention to the border, to a rules-based system with respect to asylum claims and immigration. There has been a risk that our border will become thick for commercial transit. That is a real risk for just-in-time manufacturing, particularly for the auto industry. That risk touches my riding, Windsor, and Oakville. If the border thickens and goods and people are slowed, we will lose jobs and investment in Canada.

In 2011, when the Conservatives looked at the Beyond the Border initiative with this entry-exit piece to it, this minister said that the then Prime Minister had better get something for Canada out of it, but the minister is now urging the House to support it, and our relationship with the United States is atrophying. In fact, even NAFTA is at risk under this government. I would like the minister to say what will be gained in Canada's national interest from Bill C-21 and its companion bill, Bill C-23.

The minister also mentioned human trafficking, an issue that concerns both sides of the House, and tried to suggest that we have to support Bill C-21 if we want to combat human trafficking. It is a compelling argument, because he knows members on this side are concerned. Our former colleague from Manitoba, Joy Smith, has dedicated most of her life to fighting human trafficking, and my colleague from Elgin—Middlesex—London has hosted some events in relation to this issue. We are concerned about this. I find it telling that the minister raises human trafficking as a reason to get behind Bill C-21 but did not defend the national plan to combat human trafficking, which the government let expire in the last budget.

Government Orders

A \$20-million plan was started by the Harper government to actually combat human trafficking, not just have it held up as a reason to vote for entry-exit information sharing.

• (1645)

The minister had the gall to raise human trafficking in this House as a reason we should get behind this bill, yet his cabinet and the Prime Minister let the only national program we have to combat human trafficking expire and not be renewed, even though the problem is worse.

It reminds me of the fact that the Prime Minister seems to think that Stephen Harper is still the leader of the Conservative Party. He goes so far as to even cancel programs that combat human trafficking because they originated with the Conservatives. When someone is brought into Canada, across maybe the U.S. border, against the person's will, to be involved in the sex trade or abused in other circumstances, that was the only major program that was cut, largely because it was a Harper initiative. That is sad. The minister now suggests that we should get behind Bill C-21 because of its potential to combat human trafficking. It is unbelievable.

If members look at the minister's viewpoint with respect to entry and exit going back to when he was in opposition, as I said, there is zero consistency. In fact, going back to the safe third country agreement, the Liberals said that they negotiated it to maintain our international obligations with respect to asylum in conjunction with the charter. Now they are allowing it to be eroded and public confidence in it to be eroded by it being circumvented. Suggestions that we apply the spirit and the principle of it to the entire border is mocked, even though the underlying principles with respect to declaring asylum in the first country following persecution was at the basis of the agreement.

We have a quandary. As members can tell, I have been doing my best to show a bit of the hypocrisy of the minister on this specific issue.

Going back to the start of my comments, we actually initiated this under the Conservative government. This is one time that we will not hear the minister referring to the Harper government. The Liberals blame the Harper government for anything. If it rains in Canada, it is because of the Harper government. However, now they are basically implementing a Harper government initiative. The Liberals are not calling it "beyond the border". They are calling it Bill C-21, and they will not mention Harper. They make it sound like it is their own idea, and they are doing it to support human trafficking and by the way, they are cutting the program on human trafficking.

Here is my quandary: I support the bill, but I do not support them because Canadians cannot trust them. We just need to look to the record.

I invite Canadians following this debate to do some of the basic research that I do. On the Open Parliament website, if we printed out the listing for the Liberals' deputy House leader, it would fill 18 volumes of nuggets he has given us over the years showing his inconsistencies. As I said, we are trying to get to the heart of this and show the minister that we appreciate he is picking up the Harper mantle on the border when it comes to the beyond the border

initiative. We appreciate that he is starting to understand why trade is important.

I am not sure if the minister was around in the 1988 election when the Liberals ran against U.S. free trade. I am glad they are coming around to the importance of trade and good relations with the United States, but I would sincerely hope that the next time the minister speaks to Bill C-21 he would thank Stephen Harper for this legislation.

• (1650)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Michel Picard (Montarville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Durham. We miss him in committee.

It is too bad that my colleague is so focused on human trafficking, because it is just one example of many.

Does the member not think that the concerns the minister raised back in 2011, which the member referred to, are the same concerns and challenges that guided him in drafting this legislation? Now that he is in a position to do so, did the minister not want to introduce a good bill to guarantee that any action, regardless of who is doing it, must be protected by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which acts as a safeguard from any threat of foreign overreach?

[*English*]

Hon. Erin O'Toole: Mr. Speaker, I enjoyed my time on the public safety committee with my colleague, or kind of with him, because the government has parliamentary secretaries who sit there and observe, but unfortunately, they are not as involved as really they should be. That member has considerable experience in public safety issues, and that would be appreciated in the discourse.

As I said, the Charter of Rights, which grew out of the Diefenbaker Canadian Bill of Rights, is something all Canadians can be proud of. It is why the safe third country agreement, like any type of traffic across the border, including the exit of Canadians under Bill C-21, must respect charter rights.

Bill C-23 would allow American ICE officials to search Canadians, including body searches of Canadians, on Canadian soil. As I said, Bill C-21 and Bill C-23, read together, are the most profound two bills on our border our Parliament has seen.

The safe third country agreement handled asylum claims. I talked about how John Manley and his colleague, the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, thought it was appropriate to have a rules-based system that was consistent, in their words, with the charter, with the Geneva conventions, and with international obligations with respect to refugees, and that is what we should all support.

Government Orders

What we should be worried about is that this bill is being introduced under the premise of human trafficking, yet the Liberals are cutting the national program to combat human trafficking. This bill is also being premised upon improving the use of the border, while at the same time, the government is not even speaking on one page with respect to the safe third country agreement. We need a rules-based system to make sure that Canadians maintain confidence in our world-class system.

• (1655)

Ms. Julie Dabrusin (Toronto—Danforth, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I found that to be a very interesting speech. It reminded me of when I was in law school, and one of the things we would do is flip to the end of a decision to find out what the conclusion was, and then we could read through the long reasons. When I flip to the conclusion on this one, what I hear is that, in fact, he supports this bill, which is wonderful to hear from my colleague. I am happy to hear that. We will stick with that, because that is the most important part from his comments.

As a parent, one of the things that really drew my heart was how the functionality could work with the Amber Alert. I heard the minister speak a bit about it earlier today and also at committee, because I am also a member of the committee. We could find out more quickly when people were leaving the country. That would have safety implications for our youth and our children. Perhaps the member could speak to why this is important to help protect our youth when we have a situation such as an Amber Alert.

Hon. Erin O'Toole: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the member for Toronto—Danforth's taking me back to law school as well, where often, with those long decisions, we would want to flip to the end to see what they were getting to. However, the member should note that the ratio for my decision here today is that the minister and the government need to be more consistent on these issues. The Liberals did not support the beyond the border initiative, because they said they wanted Canada to get a big win vis-à-vis the United States. They should state what that win is in return for Bill C-21 now. It is as much about consistency as it is about supporting the underlying elements of this bill.

The member did highlight something important. I have my social media feeds tied to the Amber Alert and the Missing Children Society of Canada to leverage the power of the network effect to tackle these. This bill would help us share information at the border in kidnapping or custodial situations. We should applaud that.

I said that publicly when the government finally moved on the no-fly list kids with respect to names on the no-fly list, which could be removed in the United States through the redress system. We did not have a redress system, and we saw that there was bad data. It was unfair to Canadians, and it was also bad data that was going to make our security assessments complicated. I praised the government when it listened to many members from all sides of this House to provide families with that.

We are only going to be travelling more. That is why we have to be able to rely on the programs and have Canadians aware of the fact that they may have to answer any question at the border and that their information will be shared. However, the border itself also has to be respected.

We cannot ignore public policy challenges just because they are difficult issues. Yes, it is difficult to govern, but that is what we are here for. Inaction, and actually, the sideshow we have seen lately with respect to our border, are slowly going to erode public confidence. That is something all parliamentarians should work against happening, because we have benefited throughout our entire history from a safe, effective, and generous immigration and refugee system.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre Nantel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, not many people know this, but before I came to the House, I trained to become a border officer, so I know that these officers already have a lot on their plates. They have a lot to do. I have to wonder what my colleague thinks of their being given an extra duty to collect all of this confidential information to give it to the United States.

Why should we do this work for our neighbours, who are already more than adequately equipped to do so?

Hon. Erin O'Toole: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his question. I have great respect for our police forces and our border services officers.

[*English*]

I am very happy to hear the member knows about the great work done by our men and women at the border. Absolutely, he is right that the bill and its companion, Bill C-23, do complicate their roles. They already have immense challenges at our border, particularly as we have seen in Quebec lately.

This is why, in many ways, we provided additional peace officer powers for CBSA agents in the last government. We armed agents at the border for the first time in our history. It is not that we do not like having the world's longest undefended border, and I think Canadians are very proud of that, but when we task CBSA agents to go after drugs, to go after illegal weapons brought in from the United States, which is where the problem is, and not the way the government has been suggesting lately, when we ask them to go after those organizations, we have to ensure they have the tools to do the job, the training to do the job, the numbers to do the job.

Bill C-21 and Bill C-23 are huge enhancements and not all of it can be done through computerization, particularly at the frequency.

Now we have a situation where border resources are stretched thin. There are additional requirements. There will be American ICE agents as part of Bill C-23 on our soil searching Canadians. We have an IRB process that the minister's own documents warn, due to the government's inaction, will go to 11-year wait times for IRB processing, which is remarkable. The social cost associated with that, mainly for the provinces, in four years alone, will be \$2.9 billion.

Government Orders

I know my colleagues in Quebec, in the Conservative caucus and certainly in the NDP as well, have been looking at how they can ensure our CBSA agents have the tools they need to do the job and how they can ensure decisions related to the border, Bill C-21 and others, do not overstress the social costs on our provincial partners. That, too, will erode overall confidence in the system.

I am supportive of Bill C-21, but I want to see a much more serious approach taken with respect to travel across our borders.

● (1700)

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal (Surrey—Newton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to share my time with my esteemed colleague, the member for London North Centre. I am also pleased to rise today to speak to Bill C-21, which would amend the Customs Act to make our borders and streets safer.

Even though the NDP has some concerns about collection of information, I want to assure Canadians that the proposed legislation will enable the collection of only basic information when someone crosses the border to leave Canada. I certainly would love to ask the hon. members on the NDP side to support the bill, as it would improve our ability to prevent people from travelling overseas to join terrorist organizations, combat human trafficking, better respond to Amber Alerts, and ensure the integrity of certain social benefit programs with residency requirements. The bill would also help prevent controlled goods from being smuggled out of the country.

Over the years, there have been many discussions with our American neighbours about strengthening our relationship that currently sees 400,000 people and \$2.5 billion in trade cross the border every day. One of the key goals that both countries are committed to is establishing an entry and exit system through the improved collection of information.

Currently, no information is collected from most individuals exiting Canada. The practice of tracking exit information is followed by many nations around the world, and it is a loophole that needs to be closed in our country.

Currently, CBSA only has the authority to collect exit information on foreign nationals and permanent residents leaving Canada at land border crossings. Bill C-21 would grant CBSA the authority to collect basic information for all people leaving this country, whether by land or air. We have to ensure that when individuals leave Canada, we are able to keep track of their exit, so we can prevent people from joining terrorist groups abroad and prevent people from fleeing from Amber Alerts.

At the same time, we have a duty to ensure the protection of Canadians' privacy, which is why I want to be very clear that the information that would be collected is very basic. No information other than what is on page 2 of the Canadian passport, such as name, date of birth, and gender would be recorded, along with the time and from where one would be exiting Canada.

We have worked closely on this matter with the Privacy Commissioner and we will continue to do so to ensure that the information is only disclosed in accordance with Canadian law.

Before CBSA shares any information, there would have to be a formal information sharing agreement that would govern the use of

personal information. Once these agreements are in place, police investigations across Canada will be able to benefit from the information as they will be able to identify if someone they are investigating has fled or is trying to flee Canada.

When we discuss responding to Amber Alerts, controlling the flow of illegal drugs into Canada, or responding to national security threats, knowing who has entered Canada is important. It is also equally important to know who has left.

● (1705)

For example, if police are involved in an investigation of a murder or abduction, they will have the ability to consult with CBSA and be alerted if the suspect arrives at any one of our borders in an attempt to escape. At this point, that person can be stopped. If the person has already left Canada, Canadian police forces can work with their American counterparts to apprehend the suspect and return he or she to Canada.

We regularly see Amber Alerts for children who have been abducted and taken out of the country. It is heartbreaking to imagine the trauma that children and their loved ones go through. This bill would ensure we could do more to locate these children and bring them back to safety.

The importance of and the need to pass the bill is not just to collect information to target those who may be fleeing from a crime. The bill is also important to help the CBSA catch and stop the smuggling and illegal flow of drugs and other goods out of Canada.

These initiatives are important advances in protecting our borders, increasing safety in our streets, while maintaining the privacy of Canadians.

It is important to also add that none of these changes will obstruct or slow the time it takes to go through CBSA at borders or airports. Law-abiding Canadians will continue to simply show their passports and cross borders as they normally would.

People collecting social benefits in accordance with the law will not be affected by Bill C-21. Anyone who has spent at least 10 years in Canada as an adult is entitled to receive old age security regardless of what country they live in. This bill would ensure that we would protect taxpayer money by making it easier to identify fraud and abuse of social benefit programs with residency requirements.

Another benefit of implementing an entry-exit system for all travellers includes identifying visitors who do not leave Canada at the end of their authorized period of stay. This will allow immigration authorities to make more effective use of resources by eliminating wasted time and resources spent conducting investigations on people who have already left the country.

We have brought forward these measures and many others contained in the bill, with the understanding that we have a duty to protect the privacy of Canadians and, at the same, their safety and security. For that reason, we have worked closely with the Privacy Commissioner of Canada to take concrete steps that the information that is collected is limited and protected from being misused.

Government Orders

I hope everyone in the House will join me in supporting the bill to strengthen our borders, to protect Canadians, and to support our police forces with the information they need to successfully conduct investigations.

• (1710)

Mr. Robert Kitchen (Souris—Moose Mountain, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member claimed that Bill C-21 would help crack down on people joining terrorist groups. Why, then, has the Liberal government reduced the penalty to as little as a fine for joining terror groups if it truly takes the legislation seriously?

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal: Mr. Speaker, I want to assure the hon. member and all Canadians that the minister, the Prime Minister, and this government are committed to the safety and security of Canadians. There is no room in Canada, on Canadian soil, for any terrorist or any terrorist activities.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre Nantel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to ask my colleague across the aisle to cast his mind back two or three years to the time when his party was outraged by several elements of Bill C-51. Regardless, he pledged to vote for the bill and amend it once his party came to power.

Now we are faced with Bill C-21, which is essentially an extension of that other bill. Bill C-21 could give Canadian citizens legitimate grounds to fear that their cellphones will be confiscated for the purpose of accessing their data and seeing if there is any information worth giving or disclosing to the Americans.

Is he aware that his own party promised to amend Bill C-51 and make it less intrusive?

[*English*]

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal: Mr. Speaker, I would tell the member on the other side that the visionary and very experienced Minister of Public Safety has brought this bill forward, first and foremost, keeping in mind the responsibility for Canadians' safety and security; and second, making sure that the information we are collecting is safe and shared only in certain ways. There is only one way, and that is the Canadian way.

Ms. Ruby Sahota (Brampton North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am glad to hear that covering this hole we have in our system will be done through Bill C-21. It was also very interesting to hear my colleague talk about the genuine concerns that our own citizens have.

My office constantly has seniors coming in with OAS issues. Sometimes even those who are very genuine about their travel history have lost a passport or have not documented accurately the trips they have taken outside Canada, and it becomes very difficult to prove when they left and when they entered the country. This can sometimes cause a great hindrance to the seniors' ability to provide for themselves.

I wonder if the member could expand on what he sees in his riding when it comes to helping vulnerable seniors.

• (1715)

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for Brampton North for all the great work she does with those wonderful seniors.

My riding is very similar to Brampton North, and these are the types of difficulties that seniors face every day. To apply for social benefits, they have to have been in Canada for 10 years, and sometimes it is very hard for them to find copies of boarding cards, medical records, and whatnot. However, the bill we have brought forward in relation to the entry and exit system would make it very easy for those seniors to compile their data and prove that they have completed 10 years of residency in Canada so that they will be entitled to those benefits without any of the hassles they face today.

Mr. Peter Fragiskatos (London North Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today in support of Bill C-21, an act to amend the Customs Act. Simply put, the proposed changes would provide the Canada Border Services Agency, or CBSA, with the legislative authority to collect basic exit information on all travellers leaving Canada. The information we are talking about is simple biographical data, such as name, date of birth, and nationality, just enough to know who left the country and when.

Up to now, this has been something the CBSA has not been able to do. The CBSA collects information on all travellers entering Canada, but it collects exit data only for non-citizens who leave by land. Bill C-21 would close this information gap by providing a remedy. It would authorize the CBSA to collect exit information on all travellers. For those leaving by land, it would get it from U.S. Customs and Border Protection, which collects the same information on entry into the United States. For those leaving by air, it would get it from the airlines. In other words, travellers would not have to provide any additional information or be otherwise inconvenienced in any way.

The process by which information would be collected and exchanged under Bill C-21 was the subject of extensive consultations. The government has made privacy a paramount consideration in the development of this legislation. The Office of the Privacy Commissioner has been extensively engaged on this subject. In fact, when the commissioner testified before the public safety committee, which I have the honour of sitting on, he said that the information in question is "not particularly sensitive".

Even so, the new system of exit data collection would require that privacy impact assessments be carried out, potentially by a number of federal organizations, before being implemented, always, of course, in accordance with Canadian law. This is in line with our commitment to accountability and transparency, particularly in the realm of national security. Canada now has the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians, and Bill C-59 would create a new review agency for security and intelligence activities. In addition, the public safety minister has said clearly that the government is examining options for a specific review body for CBSA.

Government Orders

All of this should give Canadians confidence that the measures in Bill C-21 would be implemented with the utmost consideration for rights and freedoms, including the right to privacy. The Privacy Commissioner said at the committee that Bill C-21 would serve “important public policy objectives”, and I certainly agree with that.

It would, for example, address several security blind spots caused by the fact that we do not currently keep track of who leaves our country. For example, at the moment, very curiously, we have no way of knowing if wanted individuals are fleeing Canada to escape prosecution. Similarly, we might not know that an abducted child who is the subject of an amber alert has been taken out of the country, or that someone who is radicalized is leaving Canada to join a foreign terrorist group.

This lack of information also creates administrative problems. For instance, it complicates the administration of social benefit programs with residency requirements and applications for citizenship and permanent residence, because there is no quick and reliable way of knowing that an applicant spent the requisite amount of time in this country.

The public safety committee heard from a senior immigration department official, and I will quote this because it is very important to get it on the record. She said, “I cannot stress enough how access to this information will enhance program integrity across multiple lines of business by providing IRCC's officers with a tool to objectively confirm an applicant's presence in, absence from, entry into, or departure from Canada.”

Immigration officials also told the committee that Bill C-21 would help to ensure that people who are entitled to Canadian citizenship and permanent residence can get it with a minimum of hassle. Rather than requiring applicants to produce documentation to prove their travel history from years past and expending department resources to conduct investigations and verifications, reliable and accurate information about who was in the country, and when, would already exist.

Bill C-21 would address these and other gaps, improving Canada's ability to combat cross-border crime, effectively administer immigration and social benefit programs, and continue to manage the border in a way that contributes to the safety and prosperity of Canada and Canadians.

• (1720)

Most of our allies, including those in the Five Eyes, have similar systems already in place and this is for good reason. This legislation would bring Canada in line with our international partners in ways that we have not seen before.

As hon. members well know, our highly trained CBSA officials play a critical role in keeping our borders secure and facilitating the flow of legitimate trade and travel 24-7. No matter how well we train our border services officers, we must understand that their effectiveness depends on having the right tools. This includes complete and accurate data. That is why the bill is about accurate, timely, and complete information for border services officers in both Canada and the United States.

We owe it to the country's citizens to close the information gaps that exist in our current border operations, and in this light, I ask all members to support the bill.

Mr. Robert Kitchen (Souris—Moose Mountain, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the bill gives the already overburdened CBSA officers the discretion to collect biographical data on travellers as they leave Canada. I have six border crossings on the south side of my riding and I know they are busy as all get out. It is not only happening with illegals entering the country, but it is a tremendous burden.

What does the government envision so as not to overload our agencies in taking too much data to the point where the data becomes useless?

Mr. Peter Fragiskatos: Mr. Speaker, as I said in my remarks, the bill is a result of wide consultation. Something this government places great importance on is the security of Canadians. It is the paramount responsibility of any state and any government to make sure that security is emphasized and policies are brought forward that underline and protect Canadians' security.

The hon. member talks about resources. With all due respect to the hon. member and the party opposite, it was their government that cut resources from our security agencies when they were in power. We are working with those security agencies and making sure that they receive the funding they are entitled to.

Just a few weeks ago, the party opposite voted against funding for the CBSA, for the RCMP, and for other initiatives that are security focused. This is very concerning and they have some explaining to do on that front. This government and all of us on this side of the House will continue to take security very seriously. We will fight for that every step of the way.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Michel Picard (Montarville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when I travel to the United States using the NEXUS card, I enter quickly and easily because of its privileges. When I return, I do not even go through customs. It takes me five minutes and my information is recorded. The only customs officer I meet is the one I give my declaration card to in order to leave the airport.

However, at the same time, I realize that my information has already been recorded and that both countries share all the information. It is not about whether there is a heavy workload, but rather whether the sharing of information compromises the privacy of Canadians.

• (1725)

[*English*]

Mr. Peter Fragiskatos: Madam Speaker, the member makes a very good point. I have the privilege of working with him at the public safety committee. He brings a great deal of insight to that committee because of what he did in his previous life, if I can put it that way.

Private Members' Business

As I said, this puts us in line with our allies, particularly the Five Eyes. They are doing similar things. It is about convenience and about ensuring that Canadians do not have to dig up data when questions are asked of where they have been. I know constituents of mine have expressed this concern. Unfortunately, they have been flagged in the past with constant questions about their whereabouts at particular times. This fixes that and brings us in line with international allies and other commitments that we have to Canadians.

Mr. David Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC): Madam Speaker, the minister said the bill would help protect taxpayers' dollars by reducing fraud and abuse of certain federal programs with residency requirements and by establishing when people leave Canada we will be able to better determine who is and is not eligible for certain benefits.

The bill gives CBSA the discretion to follow up on this information. If that information reveals that a permanent resident or citizen is living abroad avoiding taxes and only returning to use social services and benefits, what penalties is the government going to be applying to them because it now refuses to revoke citizenship?

Mr. Peter Fragiskatos: Madam Speaker, there are laws in place to address those sorts of concerns. This only relates in part to what the member has asked, but the exit information would only be disclosed in accordance with Canadian law and would adhere to disclosure provisions in both the Privacy Act and the Customs Act. My hon. colleague seems to have a concern that perhaps this is not done, but when citizens have not abided by their legal responsibilities and obligations, there are laws in place to meet those concerns.

The bill is not focused on the concerns the member raises. This is about ensuring we have a more adequate and efficient system. Again, it is in line with what international partners are doing.

Hon. Michelle Rempel (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Madam Speaker, I have spoken to Bill C-21 already, which is an act to amend the Customs Act. The majority of its content is supportable, but my issue is that right now there is absolutely nothing in it to deal with one of the most emergent problems facing Canada right now, which is that tens of thousands of people are streaming across our border from the United States illegally. There is no signal from the government whatsoever that it has any plan to amend the safe third country agreement.

Frankly, this is a more pressing concern than Bill C-21, given the fact that this has placed an enormous strain on the Canadian Border Services Agency. By the minister's own admission, 99% of the people who have come to Canada illegally over the last year are still in Canada. Our colleague, who is the shadow minister for public safety, spoke about how he had heard from CBSA that the amount of hours spent screening people who were entering the country via this mechanism had been reduced by 400%.

I do not understand why the government is putting forward this legislative priority before the summer when there is nothing in here that is going to deal with the issue we have at Roxham Road in Quebec. This is an abdication of responsibility, and I welcome the chance to talk about this at great length during the next reading of the bill.

● (1730)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I apologize that I have to interrupt, but the hon. member for Calgary Nose Hill will have eight minutes the next time this matter is before the House.

It being 5:30 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*]

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES ACT

The House resumed from April 25 consideration of the motion that Bill C-354, An Act to amend the Department of Public Works and Government Services Act (use of wood), be read the third time and passed.

Mr. Marc Serré (Nickel Belt, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to speak to Bill C-354, an act to amend the Department of Public Works and Government Services Act regarding the use of wood, and to say that the government supports this bill as amended at committee.

I also want to thank the member for South Okanagan—West Kootenay for introducing the bill.

The government supports this bill with the committee's amendments because it aligns well with the government's goals of supporting the Canadian forest industry and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. These objectives must be consistent with the government's commitment to ensure a procurement process that is fair, open, and transparent for all suppliers.

[*English*]

The Standing Committee on Natural Resources passed an amendment that the government views as achieving this balance. That is why I call on all members of the House to support the bill as amended. Let me take this opportunity to explain the background of the amendment.

During debate at second reading, we had the opportunity to emphasize the importance of Canada's forestry industry. The forestry industry is one of the industries that built our country. As I said earlier, the industry contributes significantly to Canada today. Last year alone it accounted for \$22 billion of Canada's gross domestic product.

The forestry industry puts food on the table for the families of more than 200,000 Canadians. This includes 9,500 jobs in indigenous communities, making the forestry industry one of the leading employers of indigenous people. That is why initiatives like Bill C-354, aimed at supporting the Canadian forestry industry, are deserving of the government's full attention.

Private Members' Business

The government is committed to fairness, openness, and transparency in the procurement process. These are fundamental values in the policies of Public Services and Procurement Canada.

[*Translation*]

In addition, witnesses raised some questions and concerns regarding our domestic and international trade obligations during the study of this bill at the Standing Committee on Natural Resources, of which I am a member. I want to thank all members of the Standing Committee on Natural Resources for their thorough review and careful analysis of this bill. I also want to thank my colleague, the member for Markham—Thornhill, who also sits on that committee and who proposed an amendment to respond to the concerns and questions raised by witnesses during the study of the bill.

[*English*]

If I may, I would like to read the amendment in its entirety:

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

Ultimately, the committee accepted this amendment and referred it back to the House.

This is a very important amendment. It may help make this proposed legislation more effective and ensure this aspect of our support of Canada's forestry industry is on sound footing. It will also ensure fairness, openness, and transparency in federal procurement.

Our discussion today on Bill C-354 also gives us the opportunity to review the measures our government is taking to help Canada's forestry sector embrace innovation and continue to be a vital part of our communities and our economy. The pan-Canadian framework on clean growth and climate change, for example, calls on all levels of government to encourage greater use of wood in construction.

Research is under way on how the National Building Code of Canada can be updated to allow the use of more wood in construction. The National Research Council and Natural Resources Canada are exploring innovative solutions and carrying out cutting-edge research and development on the potential use of wood in buildings of up to 12 storeys.

Currently there are 500 mid-rise wood buildings in Canada that are either completed, under construction, or at the planning stages because of code changes nationally and provincially. It is expected that this number will rise in the coming years as familiarity with the building code changes grows.

These efforts are the result of broad partnerships, including forestry sector research organizations, academia, industry associations such as the Canadian Wood Council, and federal and provincial governments. Collectively, partners have worked together on research, building codes, materials development, education, and outreach to create awareness and knowledge on wood construction. Our government is supporting this move to wood through innovative projects across the country and around the world.

The Brock Commons Tallwood House is both an engineering and architectural showpiece and an environmental game changer, storing close to 1,600 metric tonnes of carbon dioxide and saving more than 1,000 metric tonnes in greenhouse gas emissions. That is the equivalent of removing 511 cars from the roads each year.

In eastern Canada, the government supported the construction of a 13-storey cross-laminated timber condominium building in Quebec City. The Origine project includes a 12-storey mass timber structure on a concrete podium.

● (1735)

[*Translation*]

Furthermore, I want to point out that wood and wood products are already essential components that meet the infrastructure needs of the Government of Canada. At Public Services and Procurement Canada alone, 15% of the \$160 million for office maintenance is spent on wood and wood products.

Buildings produce 23% of greenhouse gas emissions in Canada. The department is working on making government operations more sustainable, mainly by using sustainable materials, optimizing space, and reducing energy consumption at federal buildings. This is part of the government's commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 80% below 2005 levels by 2050.

[*English*]

It is the first federal department to complete a national carbon-neutral portfolio that takes into account all real property related greenhouse gas emissions and energy reduction initiatives the government has undertaken.

The energy services acquisitions program is a great example of one of these initiatives. The goal of this program is to modernize the heating and cooling system that serves about 80 buildings in Ottawa. This includes many of the buildings around Parliament Hill.

Through this program, we are also piloting and testing wood chips for use as a possible biomass fuel. The results will help determine the potential for using biomass fuels at other federal heating and cooling plants. The department will also meet sustainable performance standards such as leadership in energy and environmental design, commonly referred to as LEED, and Green Globes. These performance standards encourage the use of green products and materials with life-cycle impacts that are economically, socially, and environmentally preferable.

As amended, Bill C-354 would support our efforts to reduce greenhouse gas effects, support the Canadian forestry industry, and ensure the integrity of our fair, open, and transparent procurement process. I would encourage my colleagues to support this bill, as amended.

Private Members' Business

● (1740)

Mr. Jim Eglinski (Yellowhead, CPC): Madam Speaker, I rise in the House to oppose Bill C-354, an act to amend the Department of Public Works and Government Services Act, use of wood.

I have always been a strong supporter of using wood in the construction of public buildings. As a former mayor of Fort St. John, B.C., I always pushed for the use of wood products in the development of new municipal buildings, and I was proud that my council supported similar actions.

For example, Fort St. John was one of the communities granted a Olympic legacy project by the British Columbia government. We decided to build what we called the Enerplex, which was completed in 2009, and was designed to reflect the community, create a lasting legacy, and continues to shape the city. It is a large recreational facility that promotes sport, community, and personal wellness, as well as provides an attractive venue for events.

Our council focused on building a facility that would have a low-carbon footprint, and the city continues to take measures to improve the facility's environmental operations.

The Enerplex has exterior building panels that are rated very high in efficiency, the electrical motors were designed with energy conservation pony motors, and the entire facility employs a computerized building control to help control and minimize energy consumption. Everything was considered, right from the lights in the ceilings down to motion sensor sinks. The complex even has the ability to capture 75% of its waste heat, which is used to heat the domestic hot water and spectator areas.

To reflect our economy and the beautiful forests surrounding the Peace River region, we had wooden columns and arches added to the front of the building as a design feature. This was inspired, in part, by the Beijing Olympic facility where the Canadian teams were housed. British Columbian wood was used to highlight Canada's landscape and to honour our forestry industry. I have been there and it is a dramatic piece of design architecture.

We made sure Fort St. John's Enerplex was built with the best, cost-effective and efficient materials available to us in our specific region of Canada. Had we been located in southern Ontario, I am sure the design and materials used would have been very different.

Bill C-354 would amend the Department of Public Works and Government Services Act to require that in the awarding of certain federal contracts, preference will be given to projects that would promote the use of wood. Do we really need an act to mandate the use of wood in the construction, maintenance or repair of Public Services real property?

While I completely support the forest industry, there are a number of problems associated with the bill. It disregards the fact that there are large regional differences across Canada. What makes sense to use for building material in one region might be completely unviable in another. For example, I notice that there are far more houses built with brick in Ontario, yet when I fly back to Alberta, I see lumber used in our construction.

Bill C-354 would favour the economies of certain regions over others. It is a direct contravention of the mission of Public Services

and Procurement Canada, which is to apply an open, fair, and transparent procurement process to obtain the best possible value for the government. It could result in job losses in the concrete and steel industries, which would be an economic substitution. There may not necessarily be new growth, but other sectors could lose contracts and be unable to continue working in the construction sector as concrete, stone or steel is discarded in favour of wood.

The provinces of British Columbia and Quebec have adopted "wood first" policies, British Columbia in 2012, and Quebec in 2013. I was glad to see that, as it made sense for those regions. Approximately, 40 Canadian communities, with strong economic ties to the forest industry, have also implemented their own "wood first" policies.

This decision must remain at the local and regional levels. When we apply this kind of sweeping mandate to the federal level, it pits regions against each other, as well as disrupts the National Building Code.

Speaking of the National Building Code, which is a model building code that forms the basis for all of our provincial building codes, it would certainly be impacted by the legislation. For most construction under federal jurisdiction, the National Building Code of Canada is the applicable code.

● (1745)

These properties include military bases, federal government land, and airport properties that stretch right across our country from coast to coast to coast. Bill C-354 does not take into consideration these far-reaching implications, and makes no attempt to identify or remedy them.

The bill also does not address any safety issues that might arise from giving preferential treatment to wood over other construction materials. Most wood building construction is limited to low to mid-size structures mainly for reasons of fire safety and overall stability.

As stated by the B.C. Chamber of Commerce, this bill would limit and undermine "the freedom of design professionals and experienced contractors to select the most appropriate construction material for its intended function and service."

I strongly support our forestry industry, and I appreciate the enormous value it provides to the Canadian economy. In my own riding of Yellowhead, which is situated partly in the northern boreal forest of Alberta and into the Rocky Mountains, forestry is one of the leading economic sectors. It employs hundreds, if not thousands, of people in Hinton, Drayton Valley, Edson, and the surrounding areas. I continue to fight for action on the mountain pine beetle that is spreading across the Rocky Mountains and into Alberta destroying the forests along the way.

Private Members' Business

I am fully aware of the economic value of the forestry industry and the efforts necessary to protect this renewable resource. However, “wood first” policies should, again, be left up to regional governments to implement where it makes sense for them. The federal government should not be pitting one economic region against another. Instead, it is the duty of the federal government to ensure openness and fairness in its procurement policy approach to all industries.

Furthermore, Bill C-354 would contravene Canada's obligations under its international and domestic trade agreements, such as NAFTA, WTO, and the Agreement on Internal Trade. Favouring one sector of the construction industry over another with explicit ministerial preference runs counter to the free market economy and fair bidding processes supported by Conservatives.

Under the former Conservative government, investments were made to improve the environmental performance and competitiveness of Canada's forest industry by focusing on innovation and new product development to expand market opportunities for Canadian pulp and paper related products.

We also introduced the expanding market opportunities program in 2013, which was designed to help create a thriving forest sector by growing international markets; promoting Canadian forest products as an environmentally responsible choice; expanding wood use in North American non-residential and mid-rise construction; and by demonstrating that Canada is a world leader in sustainable forest management and a preferred source of sustainable forest products. At the same time, we have always been fully supportive of the free market and fair federal project bidding processes.

We understand that policy interjections by the federal government to tip the scales in favour of any one industry can have damaging effects on other sectors of the economy. What has the Liberal government done? It let the softwood lumber agreement, which provided stability and predictability for industry on both sides of the border, expire in October 2015. Now our forestry companies continue to be harmed by U.S. countervailing duties on Canadian softwood products.

There are always ways the Liberals could step up to the plate and assist the forestry industry, but Bill C-354 is not one of them. The federal government should not mandate the use of wood over any other industry. This would be the same if the government wanted to mandate steel over wood.

We should leave it up to regional, provincial, and municipal governments to decide, rather than forcing an expensive and unnecessary regulatory review of each province's building codes, not to mention the potential legal challenges from non-wood construction sectors that would pile on additional government costs.

In closing, all things considered, I do not support Bill C-354, and I urge the member for South Okanagan—West Kootenay to seriously re-evaluate the impacts this bill would have on Canada.

• (1750)

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Madam Speaker, as a member of Parliament proud to represent the fine forest base community at Nanaimo—Ladysmith, at the foundation of our community and still a driver of so many jobs in the region, I am very

pleased to support the bill proposed by my friend and colleague, the member for South Okanagan—West Kootenay, Bill C-354, an act to amend the Department of Public Works and Government Services Act. The bill would create room in the public procurement process for building with wood, achieving climate change savings, and also local economy benefits of building more with wood.

On Vancouver Island, there are more than 100 small and medium value-added wood manufacturing businesses. There are 1,100 employees altogether on Vancouver Island, a major economic driver. This is borne out every year in reports by the Vancouver Island Economic Alliance. We are very committed to forestry and to adding jobs at every opportunity we get. If we are going to cut the trees, we may as well create jobs and get more value-added benefits at home.

Specifically, in my community, since 1988, Coastland Wood Industries has been a value-added innovator. It is North America's number one manufacturer of plywood veneer and fence posts. After peeling the logs repeatedly to get the veneer off, what remains is a perfectly sized fence post? Who knew that Nanaimo would have the number one manufacturer of fence posts in North America?

Coastland is an extremely strong and committed employer. The partnerships that Coastland has with the Snuneymuxw First Nation are a model for businesses across the country. They are working to employ and train Snuneymuxw youth and are very committed to their partnerships around land and being a good neighbour. They also have a firewood program to help Snuneymuxw elders, which is another example of value-added forestry. It is so encouraging.

Also, in our community, both TimberWest and Island Timberlands are major drivers of a lot of good community work. They are very important community partners. I look forward to getting out on the land with them this summer and looking at some of the marmot recovery projects they are helping to fund.

Western Forest Products is in Nanaimo and in Ladysmith. A lot of people go to work at these mills. They are milling red cedar, Douglas fir, hem-fir, yellow cedar, and Sitka spruce from a big region coming into the riding and adding that value.

A number of years ago, Harmac Pacific mill was purchased by its employees, and is now largely employee-owned. They are using residual wood waste from their pulp mill to generate renewable energy, enough to power 18,000 homes. It is at the heart of the economy, good unionized jobs and employee ownership as well. They are a real point of pride in our community.

Private Members' Business

Another really nice partnership on the value-added forestry side is the Vancouver Island University carpentry program. It has strong partnerships with Nanaimo CHBA and other local contractors, the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners Local 527. It also works really well with city of Nanaimo building officials.

My my favourite partnership is with Habitat for Humanity where Vancouver Island University carpentry students got their practicum or their credits. Instead of building a fake building that they frame, built up, and then torn down, they worked with Habitat for Humanity to build new affordable housing in Nanaimo, which was just opened a year or so ago. Those students did everything from framing, to the heavy equipment operators having cleared the site, and the interior decorators having finished off the homes. It was such a point of pride. I am grateful to VIU for helping the young carpentry students get invested from the very beginning in building affordable housing.

All of this value-added work and local expertise fits in with the intention of my colleague's legislation. The groundwork is very well prepared by municipal governments and by the provincial government in British Columbia.

• (1755)

In my riding of Nanaimo—Ladysmith, Ladysmith Town Council passed a resolution in December 2010, which said:

WHEREAS BC's forest industry has been and will continue to be an integral part of the economic, social and business life of the Town of Ladysmith;

AND WHEREAS the BC Government has passed a Wood First Act to facilitate a culture of wood by requiring use of wood as the primary material in all new provincially funded buildings, in a manner consistent with the British Columbia Building Code;

AND WHEREAS the Town Council of the Town of Ladysmith deems that building with wood is consistent with natural resource, economic, and social stability;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Town of Ladysmith will continue to support the development of its wood culture by:

being a wood champion and supporting the BC government's Wood First Act by adopting this Wood First resolution;

ensuring that the performance of wood systems and products are considered whenever appropriate in all municipal buildings to maximize the achievement of Ladysmith's Civic Green Building Policy;

ensuring that all municipal infrastructure projects in Ladysmith receiving provincial or wood industry financial support employ the appropriate structural or architectural use of wood; and

ensuring that where possible, preference is given to the use of domestic wood products.

My colleague from South Okanagan—West Kootenay's legislation is the federal chapter of this work that has moved from local business, to local municipality, to our provincial government in British Columbia, and now into the federal realm to boost the use of wood in federally funded infrastructure projects and institutional buildings. There is so much support for this.

The Forest Products Association of Canada has estimated that a 100,000 square foot wood building would store 5,300 tonnes of CO₂. It would also contribute 2,100 tonnes of avoided greenhouse gas emissions. This net carbon benefit in a single building is equal to taking 1,400 cars off the road for a year.

The Canadian Climate Forum has also lauded the use of the engineering innovations that have allowed us to build tall wood buildings. It says the potential exists to construct low-carbon

emission skyscrapers using mass wood, large wood veneers and beams made from glued laminated wood veneer strands or timber.

There was a great presentation from the British Columbia Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions. It has a whole bunch of ways it wants to see governments amend their forestry policies. It plugged very hard the benefits of storage of carbon in wood products. If we put our wood into paper, it does not last very long. If we put it into big laminated beams and then build it into our institutions, which will last for decades, we are benefiting local economy and jobs and also anchoring in climate change savings.

I support my colleague's bill. It would require the Government of Canada to consider using wood products when building, maintaining, or repairing federally owned buildings. Decisions as to which construction materials would be used would be based both on cost and on a climate calculation.

Although the technology is proven and we have good examples, the challenge today is getting builders and those procuring building materials to seriously consider wood as a structural material, not just a finishing material.

The bill, if passed by the House, and it looks like it will be, is to force the federal government to consider wood when building, to make an honest assessment of the potential materials and then build with what is best. As the largest procurer in Canada, the federal government could give this sector a real boost by using this cutting-edge technology at home.

The only concern I have heard is on the firefighting side, and I might be able to talk about that more in questions. I am certainly cognizant of what I have heard some firefighters in my community say, but I am confident from an engineering perspective and the reassurance we have been given at committee that we are in good hands.

I look forward to seeing the House move forward in a good way on the legislation.

• (1800)

Mr. Robert-Falcon Ouellette (Winnipeg Centre, Lib.):

[Member spoke in Cree]

[English]

Madam Speaker, I am very proud to be here to support this bill, Bill C-354, which is sponsored by the member for South Okanagan—West Kootenay. It is an act to amend the Department of Public Works and Government Services Act and the use of wood. This bill would amend the Department of Public Works and Government Services Act to require that, in the awarding of certain contracts, preference be given to projects that promote the use of wood.

Private Members' Business

The purpose of the bill is to give preference to projects to promote the use of wood when awarding contracts for federal construction, maintenance, or repair projects, while taking into account the associated costs and reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. The amendments to the bill align with the government's stated principles for procurement process and ensure compliance with Canada's free trade agreement. The amendments ask that the minister consider the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions that may allow the use of wood or any other suitable material, product, or resource to achieve this benefit.

Two similar iterations of this bill have been previously defeated in the House. Bill C-429, introduced by Bloc Québécois in 2010, was defeated at report stage on December 15, 2010, and Bill C-574, introduced by Bloc Québécois MP Claude Patry in 2014, was defeated at second reading on December 3, 2014.

I am proud that our government has the following frameworks, policies, and programs in place that will promote sustainable construction, including significant investments to strategically support the forestry sector.

One of those is the forest bioeconomy framework. In September 2017, the Canadian Council of Forest Ministers launched the framework to make Canada a global leader in the use of forest biomass for advanced bioproducts and innovative solutions. The framework focuses on creating green jobs, enhancing supply and demand, and supporting innovation in the forestry sector.

We have also put forward the green construction through wood, GCWood, program. In September 2017, the government announced the GCWood program to encourage greater use of wood in construction projects in Canada. We want to catalyze a broader awareness of, and domestic capacity for, innovative tall wood buildings, timber bridges, and low-rise commercial wood buildings. Building with wood offers many benefits, including GHG emission reductions and opportunities for greater economic growth.

Another program that our government has put forward is the assistance package for the forest industry. In June 2017, the government announced its continued support for the softwood lumber industry in the form of an \$867-million assistance package for the forestry industry, workers, and communities impacted by recent tariffs imposed unfairly by the United States.

We also put forward the pan-Canadian framework on clean growth and climate change. This framework, adopted in 2016, is a comprehensive plan to reduce emissions across all sectors of the economy, accelerate clean economic growth, and build resilience to the impacts of climate change, which I know all of us here in the House believe in.

The framework's actions, supported by announcements in budget 2017, would enable Canada to meet or even exceed its target to reduce emissions by 30% below 2005 levels by 2030. This is important for our children, especially my children. Under the framework, our government has committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions from federal government buildings and fleets by 40% below 2005 levels by 2030.

These actions include collaboration among federal, provincial, and territorial governments to encourage the increased use of wood

products in construction, including through updated building codes. Natural Resources Canada received \$39.8 million over four years through budget 2017 to support projects and activities that increase the use of wood as a greener substitute material in infrastructure projects, to promote the use of wood in construction, and to create new markets for sustainable Canadian products.

We have also been leaders on this side of the House, compared to a former government, to put in place tools to assess environmental impacts. We have committed to assessing the environmental impacts of construction projects. Public Services and Procurement Canada is committed to the use of industry-recognized assessment tools for high environmental performance. These tools would help the department make informed decisions to estimate the environmental impact of construction materials and their use in building projects.

• (1805)

Any amendment made to the Department of Public Works and Government Services Act must be made in accordance with Canada's free trade agreements and abide by the government's procurement principles of fairness, openness, transparency, competition, and integrity.

We have heard there are people who are afraid this may cost jobs. While I agree that sometimes we may fear the future when change happens, what I saw when I used to live in Quebec City was beautiful projects that actually increased the number of jobs in the forestry industry. For instance, in Neufchâtel, a neighbourhood where I lived in Quebec City when I was serving in the Canadian Armed Forces, a soccer complex was built for young people and adults. This complex was entirely built of wood, a gigantic structure with gigantic beams, which were very thick and very solid. Some said that we should not build with wood, but incredibly enough, the mayor of Quebec City, Régis Labeaume, showed leadership. Quebec City even built its new coliseum, or what some have sometimes called the "ice cube", using an awful lot of wood.

This is a Canadian product and it is something we have a lot of here in Canada. It allows us to create more jobs, because construction projects can perhaps be cheaper and so more people can build homes or large-scale structures that will be as structurally sound as any we might find made of steel or concrete.

I had the opportunity of attending the committee for government public works and listening to testimony surrounding this bill. I was surprised to hear support coming not only from people in the forestry industry but also in the engineering trades. People said that we can use this material and demonstrate in Canada that we can build with our wood and then perhaps create markets overseas to show the building codes are just as strong.

We can make sure we build jobs here in our country. It is important to build jobs in many of the rural areas where the forestry products, the primary resources, are found, because there are also indigenous people who would like to work. If we can use more of these resources in a sustainable manner, use things that are renewable, it will be better for Mother Nature, the earth, and all of us and our children in the long term.

Private Members' Business

I am very proud to be here to offer my support to the member for South Okanagan—West Kootenay for his bill and his leadership on this issue. I am very proud of the work that goes on in Winnipeg and Manitoba in support of the forestry industry. I know all my colleagues from Manitoba are also very supportive of the forestry industry.

Tapwe akwa khitwam hi hi.

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am incredibly proud to be here today speaking to Bill C-354, an act to amend the Department of Public Works and Government Services Act (use of wood). I want to thank the member for South Okanagan—West Kootenay for working so hard on the bill. I appreciate that he understands the importance of the forestry sector in the economy and in terms of environmental sustainability.

The bill would require the Government of Canada to give consideration to the use of wood products when building, maintaining, or repairing federally owned properties. Decisions as to which construction materials to use would take into account the cost of the different materials, balanced with the greenhouse gas footprint of the materials. After this assessment, the government could decide whether it was best to use wood or other materials.

The riding I represent has a long history in the forestry sector. We have moved through the boom and bust cycles and have become more environmentally sustainable and creative in the many uses of wood. The days of the many mill towns I used to represent have ended in our riding. We simply do not have the mills we used to. Secondary processing is happening in small community businesses.

Many people are frustrated as we watch raw logs floating on barges down the ocean. Once we processed them, and many of those good paying jobs stayed in our region. They are simply no longer there. The bill asks the government to recognize the many difficulties the forestry sector has faced over the past 20 years.

Great advances have been made in tall wood construction, and it is now possible to construct large, safe wood buildings. It can be done quickly and economically. When we build with wood products, we know that we lower GHG emissions and we sequester more carbon than we do with other products. This is important when we look at the GHG targets Canada has agreed to in the Paris Agreement.

The Government of Canada is the largest procurer in Canada. The federal government can give this sector a real boost by using this cutting-edge technology at home.

Forestry communities are largely small, rural, and often indigenous communities, like the many I represent. They work hard and know that forestry is key to their economic and social development. These communities have had to be incredibly flexible, and they have had to embrace massive changes very rapidly as the forestry industry has changed.

What I think is so important about the bill is that it means addressing the reality that wood does not currently enjoy even access to consideration in the market. Similar policies in British Columbia and Quebec have made real strides in correcting this trend. After two decades of the Canadian forestry sector facing significant economic challenges, the response has been to come up with greater innovation and advances in technology that change and increase

what can be done in building with wood. Here is the challenge, though: getting builders and those procuring building construction to consider wood as a structural material for part or all of these projects. That is why the bill is asking the federal government to take the lead in opening doors and opportunities for the forestry industry. This is very important to ridings like mine, which are still integrated with the forestry sector.

I believe David Foster, director of communications, Canadian Home Builders' Association, said it best:

We recently saw that with six-storey wood frame construction, which moved from a curiosity into something that is fully embraced by our industry. I know that there is huge interest in cross-laminated construction in particular. At every conference of our association that I go to, somebody is showing us amazing pictures of these buildings.

This is really important in the cycle from when an innovation is developed till when it is in full commercial application. From our point of view, that's a process of de-risking something, and often it takes partnerships. It takes government encouraging and facilitating that transfer.

It is so important that the government take a leadership role in de-risking in this area. We need to see these opportunities building. We know it is important for so many communities. This not about making wood more prominent than other areas. It is really about giving it an even playing field and allowing the sector to actually play in this way.

• (1810)

On May 16, I will be travelling to Port McNeill in my riding to celebrate the Inaugural Forestry Proud Day event. People from forestry companies, contractors, consultants, forestry educators, first nations, training organizers, local government, provincial government, and so many more will be there to celebrate the importance of this industry. It is a significant community event in our area.

Across my riding, be it the communities of Zeballos, Woss, Campbell River, Tahsis, Gold River, Port Hardy, Port McNeill, and Powell River just to name a few, forestry has always been a part of the culture, the economy, and the community. It has had to change rapidly with the times.

I think of the program in Woss right now, a 12-week fundamentals in forestry program, with 12 students, that is going very well according to Pat English, manager of economic development for the Regional District of Mount Waddington. These programs are so incredibly important to small communities. They not only help retain young people in the community; they also help to attract young people to see the opportunities that are there. These programs really allow young people to stay in small communities where the industry is still alive.

It is so important that the government remember all sectors, that it remember that small communities are working hard every day to provide opportunities and maintain stability.

I am so happy to be here today to speak in support of the bill. It is time that we remember forestry communities and we provide those opportunities for them to move forward.

Private Members' Business

• (1815)

Ms. Sheri Benson (Saskatoon West, NDP): Madam Speaker, it gives me great pride to rise today in support of Bill C-354, proposed by the member for South Okanagan—West Kootenay.

I am pretty sure there are a few mountains in that part of Canada, and because I made a promise to a childhood friend, which I could not keep, I do want to congratulate Cassie Sharpe, who won a gold medal as a freestyle skier, whose aunt I went to school with in Winnipeg. I said I would say hi, and I could not find her. She was mobbed by everyone. I congratulate her.

Back to the bill, it is a bill that makes so much sense on so many levels. Besides being one of the most well-liked members in the House, my colleague is also a renowned natural historian, and the author of a dozen award-winning books on the natural history of British Columbia. The member for South Okanagan—West Kootenay was also named Biologist of the Year in 1996, and has served on the board of the Nature Conservancy of Canada, and worked with Bird Studies Canada coordinating surveys on the status of bird populations.

Anyone can see that the member's credentials are both impressive and credible. It is therefore not surprising that his private member's bill would propose and promote the use of a renewable resource, which we have in abundance, while at the same time, reduce our carbon footprint.

At a time in our planet's evolution when climate change is wreaking havoc on communities across the globe, while governments are struggling to meet their emissions targets and to make the shift towards more sustainable industries, this bill is a common sense solution that will help Canada do more and do better to meet our own emissions reduction goals.

Canada is and always has been a land of forests. Around the world, we are renowned for our natural beauty and our natural resources. One can hardly find a picture of Canada without seeing majestic forests, except, of course, when looking at a beautiful picture of the Prairies.

The bounty from our forests has supported for centuries the first peoples of this land, the earliest settlers. It has helped build towns, and turned them into cities. It has built our railroads, and telegraph and telephone poles, and so much more, to connect Canadians from coast to coast to coast.

Our forests have given us so much. They have allowed us to be a world leader in pulp and paper production, spurring development in northern and rural communities, providing jobs and livelihoods for generations of Canadians, and the raw material for the publishing industry for decades. Through it all, our forests continue to provide for us a way to commune with nature, to marvel at the magnificence and the diversity of life that we have been blessed with.

Bill C-354 simply proposes that the Government of Canada give consideration to the use of wood products when building, maintaining, or repairing federally owned properties. Decisions as to which construction materials to use would take into account the costs of the different materials balanced with the greenhouse gas footprint of the materials. After this assessment, the government could decide whether it is best to use wood or other materials.

Testimony before the natural resources committee demonstrated that wood does not currently enjoy even so much as access to consideration in the market, but that similar policies in British Columbia and Quebec have led to the realization that the situation could be and should be corrected.

In fact, France, Finland, and the Netherlands, along with more than 50 municipalities in British Columbia, have brought in similar policies. Great advances have been made in tall wood construction, and it is now possible to construct large, safe wood buildings quickly and economically. Building with wood produces lower greenhouse gas emissions and sequesters more carbon than with other products, and so can help Canada reach our greenhouse gas emission targets under the Paris Agreement.

Innovations and emerging technologies, like those that allow and encourage environmentally responsible and sustainable construction, will ensure the future health of the forestry sector. As the largest procurer in Canada, the federal government can play a constructive role by using this cutting-edge technology right here at home. If we can continue to build our prosperity by using materials growing in our own backyard, so to speak, and by doing so reduce harmful emissions to ensure the health of our planet, why would we not?

I would like to end by thanking my colleague, the member for South Okanagan—West Kootenay, for his fine work, and by urging all members to support Bill C-354, which represents a win-win-win for the forestry sector, for Canada, and, of course, for our planet.

• (1820)

Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP): Madam Speaker, I would like to begin by thanking once again the members of the natural resources committee for their collegial work on Bill C-354, and the parliamentary secretary of natural resources and the parliamentary secretary of public works and government services for their co-operative approach.

I would also like to give a shout-out to Structurlam in Penticton. This company was really the inspiration of this bill for me. It, and very few other companies, stands at the forefront of the new way that we will be constructing buildings and other infrastructure in the future.

Engineered wood, mass timber construction, glulam beams, and cross-laminated timber panels will all soon be known as one of the commonest and best ways to create large buildings in the world, and Canada is a world leader in this technology. We are at a place now where government procurement can play a critical role in growing Canadian companies that use this technology, and Bill C-354 can encourage that role.

Adjournment Proceedings

I would like to remind members that this bill was amended in committee to deal with some of the concerns raised in the second reading debate. I am especially thinking of the Conservatives here who, in this debate on third reading, seem to be debating the old version of the bill in which there was clear wording for “preference” and things like that. All of those issues have been cleared up with the amendment that we brought forward in committee.

Earlier, some were concerned that a preference for wood in infrastructure would expose us to international trade disputes or that it would distort the market, making it harder for the cement and steel industries to compete for government infrastructure. That is gone from this bill. This bill, as amended, deals with those concerns while keeping references to the environmental benefits of various structural materials. There is no mention of a preference for any structural material in the new bill. In fact, it simply sets out that:

the Minister shall consider any reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and any other environmental benefits and may allow the use of wood or any other thing — including a material, product or sustainable resource — that achieves such benefits.

We naturally heard strong support for the bill from the forest industry when studying the bill in committee. We also heard from the cement and steel industries, and both testified that they were confident they could meet those environmental considerations in the full life-cycle analysis. We also heard from the National Research Council that large buildings made with engineered wood are as safe as steel and concrete buildings when it comes to fire safety.

This bill will support the forest and construction industries and keep them at the head of their sectors as the world moves toward a new way of building.

We all know that the forest industry is facing headwinds in the form of unfair tariffs and a declining fibre supply. Engineered wood can support the industry in the face of these challenges, allowing Canadian wood to be sold into the U.S. without softwood tariffs, and the value-added benefits will create more good jobs for every piece of lumber that we produce. It will promote the construction of beautiful, environmentally friendly, and safe buildings.

In closing, I would like to once again thank all of those who have supported this bill as it moved through the House, and I urge all members to support it once again when it comes to a vote.

[Translation]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The question is on the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

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

Some hon. members: Yea.

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

Some hon. members: Nay.

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

And five or more members having risen:

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Pursuant to Standing Order 98, the recorded division stands deferred until Wednesday, May 23, immediately before the time provided for private members' business.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

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

• (1825)

[English]

STATUS OF WOMEN

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Madam Speaker, the Liberals promised pay equity 42 years ago. That was a promise made by former prime minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau. They promised it again in 2016, with no rationale at all for the delay. In 2016, a unanimous all-party committee called for pay equity legislation by June of 2017. Here we are, almost a year later, and there is still no legislation. All the women's organizations that testified at committee said there is no reason for delay, and they said repeatedly that justice delayed is justice denied.

In December 2017, the labour minister said, “Our consultations on how to do this are over”, and still we have no pay equity legislation in the House.

The budget documents said that pay equity is essential for women's economic justice, but the budget had no money for pay equity. Barb Byers, who is the former secretary-treasurer of the Canadian Labour Congress, said:

Let us also be mindful that women have been waiting for longer than [14] years. We have been waiting for decades and decades, and while we wait, the debt owed to those who are caught in the wage gap continues to mount.

My team asked the Library of Parliament to calculate the cost of that debt over the 2004-2017 period. The calculation begins in 2004 because that is when the previous Liberal government had a pay equity task force and had legislation and never moved on it. The Library of Parliament calculated that over this period, the wage theft from Canadian women was equivalent to \$678 billion in wages. That figure represents about 33% of the gross domestic product in 2015. That is a colossal effect.

Fourteen years have passed since the pay equity task force called for pay equity legislation, and over those years, Canadian women would have had \$678 billion more in their pockets. Still there is no legislation and no money in the 2018 budget.

Adjournment Proceedings

Last year, an alternative federal budget was put together by progressive NGOs across the country under the banner of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, and it stated that \$10 million a year would fund pay equity. The CCPA also recommended it in last year's budget, and nothing was done. For this year's budget, the Canadian Labour Congress asked the federal government to, at a minimum, fund the establishment of a pay equity commissioner and a pay equity office and the infrastructure needed to implement legislation once it comes. Again there was nothing. No funds were devoted to implement pay equity.

To the minister's representative, why does the government continue to delay justice with respect to funding for the implementation of pay equity, and how much longer will women have to wait to be paid equally for work of equal value?

Mr. Serge Cormier (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Madam Speaker, our government strongly believes in the principle of equal pay for work of equal value, regardless of gender.

[Translation]

However, as we know, that is not the case. Regardless of how we measure it, women continue to be paid less than men. A recent Statistics Canada survey found that, in 2017, Canadian women earned only 88.5 cents for every dollar earned by men. We know that our government must take action, and that is exactly what we are doing. In budget 2018, we committed to implementing a pay equity reform in federally regulated workplaces and to bringing in proactive pay equity legislation by the end of 2018. Ensuring that Canadian women get equal pay for equal work strengthens our economy and families and helps our communities to prosper.

[English]

This historic proactive pay equity legislation will ensure that on average, women and men in federally regulated sectors will receive the same pay for work of equal value.

[Translation]

We know it took a little time. However, we have to acknowledge that reforming pay equity is a complex task. There are examples of proactive pay equity systems, and we can learn from them. However, we also have to come up with pay equity reforms that work for various kinds of federally regulated workplaces, from the public service to small businesses.

We want to be sure we are implementing well-designed, effective policies that will produce positive results.

• (1830)

[English]

A proactive approach would require employers to regularly review their wage systems, identify inequalities between men and women, and take action to eliminate them.

[Translation]

That way, we are presenting Canadians a balanced, sensible, and effective pay equity reform. To get there, we promised them that we would introduce a bill on pay equity before the end of 2018. That is exactly what we will do.

The Special Committee on Pay Equity was set up in 2016. It produced a report with several recommendations, including one to consult stakeholders on developing new legislation. That is precisely what we did. We consulted a huge number of stakeholders. As we move forward with pay equity reform, new legislation will be based on the valuable feedback we gathered during our consultations.

We have also taken measures to impose a zero tolerance policy with regard to workplace violence and harassment. Even though workplace violence and harassment can happen to everyone, women are more likely than men to be victims of this behaviour. We know that this behaviour can have an adverse effect on women's careers and futures.

[English]

We want to help create a society where the contributions of women are recognized and valued, and where everyone is treated fairly, regardless of their gender. Achieving pay equity in the federal jurisdiction is also an important part of that.

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson: Madam Speaker, it is frustrating how the rhetoric of the government does not line up with its legislative or spending priorities. What the member just described in detail, I could have done myself, except for the finish, which has no action associated with it. Therefore, women are not going to get any benefit of pay equity until after the next election, if the government follows through and keeps its word.

At the status of women committee, the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions, the largest nursing organization in Canada, representing 200,000 nurses, who are largely female as it is a gendered industry, said that an important first step for economic justice for women in Canada would be to implement the 2004 pay equity task force recommendations. Why is the government so slow to act?

[Translation]

Mr. Serge Cormier: Madam Speaker, I do not know whether the member heard my response, but I repeat that we will be introducing a bill this fall. We have said this a number of times, and I think that the member has heard us.

We know that we need to do more for women, in particular by implementing effective, well-designed policies that yield positive results. This is exactly what we are doing. For example, we increased support for day care services, we made home care more accessible, and we made massive investments in training for women. We will be introducing a bill this fall. I do not know whether the member heard me, but we will do it. This is a clear commitment from our government.

Adjournment Proceedings

[English]

● (1835)

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Kevin Waugh (Saskatoon—Grasswood, CPC): Madam Speaker, last Friday, May 4, right here in the House, I raised the issue of the Liberal cover-up of the carbon tax with the public safety minister. I explained how this tax would lead to severe negative economic consequences for my province of Saskatchewan. I might add that the minister is also from Saskatchewan. I mentioned how it will reduce Saskatchewan's international competitiveness as an energy exporter. We have many oil companies in our province of Saskatchewan and they are competing directly with the United States.

A tax increase of this size and of this scale affects everyone in my province, in fact, everyone in the country. The carbon tax is everyone's business. Why then is the Liberal government refusing to offer any accountability to Canadians by withholding information on the cost that this carbon tax will have on families in Saskatchewan? We know that families are going to see their heating prices go up. We know that families will be faced with the prospect of a higher price for gasoline: 11.5% is the speculation. Families will see more of their own money disappear due to the policies of the Liberal government and the Prime Minister. We already know the Prime Minister could not care less, because he is a multi-millionaire.

This affects the first-class citizens of my province and our country, the people that go to work from 8 to 4, or 9 to 5, or 3 to midnight, or midnight to 8 in the morning. This tax will affect every man, woman, and child in my province of Saskatchewan.

How can Canadians hold the government to account for critical information being withheld from them on the carbon tax which they will be forced to pay come September? The people of Saskatchewan deserve transparency. They deserve it from the public safety minister who comes right from the city of Regina. They deserve to know the truth about the cost of this legislation coming from the federal government.

However, the Liberals continue to fail to afford them any basic respect at all and instead have chosen to withhold this information, despite multiple requests for information which have been filed by our party.

We have talked to the public safety minister. We have talked to the finance minister. We have talked to the environment minister. We get absolutely no answers on what this carbon tax will cost Canadians, including those in my province of Saskatchewan.

This kind of behaviour from the government signals it has no intention at all of having an open debate on the carbon tax or its costs on Canadians and on our economy.

The Province of Saskatchewan understands the critical negative impact which is at stake. It is going to take this carbon tax all the way to the Supreme Court. It is the only jurisdiction in this country that has stood tall against the federal government.

Why will the minister not defend my province of Saskatchewan and give us the numbers on the carbon tax cover-up? People in my province of Saskatchewan deserve the numbers.

Ms. Kim Rudd (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians know polluting is not free. Severe weather due to climate change is already costing Canadians billions of dollars a year in insurance costs. Across the country, Canadians have experienced first-hand devastating wildfires, extreme flooding, severe droughts, and stronger storms.

Canadians overwhelmingly support action on climate change and a growing economy. We know pricing pollution works. It is a low-cost solution that fights climate change, encourages innovation, keeps our economy strong, and creates good middle-class jobs.

According to the World Bank, nearly half the world's economy is pricing pollution today, including China, California, and the EU. Canada's five major banks, along with many companies in the consumer goods, energy, and resources development sectors also support putting a price on pollution.

A price on carbon pollution gives households and businesses a powerful incentive to save money by making choices like turning down the thermostat and taking transit, or investing in clean solutions like more efficient appliances and vehicles.

We have released an analysis that shows that putting a price on pollution across Canada will significantly reduce carbon pollution while maintaining a strong and growing economy. Our analysis found that a price on carbon across Canada could reduce greenhouse gas emissions by up to 90 million tonnes in 2022. This is as much as taking 23 million to 26 million cars off the road or shutting down 20 to 23 coal-fired power plants for a year. It also shows that carbon pricing reduces pollution without hurting Canada's GDP.

National GDP is estimated to grow by about 2% a year between now and 2022, with or without carbon pricing. This does not include the huge opportunity that clean innovation spurred by carbon pricing will have in helping Canadian companies create jobs and compete successfully in the global shift to cleaner growth, an opportunity the World Bank estimates will be worth \$23 trillion globally between now and 2030.

Real world experience backs that up. Last year, the four provinces with a price on pollution, B.C., Alberta, Quebec, and Ontario, led the country in economic growth. Putting a price on pollution will make Canada's economy stronger over time, help create new economic opportunities, and good middle-class jobs.

Adjournment Proceedings

• (1840)

Mr. Kevin Waugh: Madam Speaker, last Friday, the public safety minister boasted about a speech he had given in his city of Regina on July 20, 2017. I am will quote one of the sections from his speech. It says, “the revenue that comes directly from carbon pricing must go to the people of the province in which it is raised – not to Ottawa...” We have since found out that the government will keep the GST from carbon tax. That is not sharing with my province of Saskatchewan. This is a false document that the Minister of Public Safety gave to the Canadian Club in his city of Regina.

We have done some calculation on gas, and 43 billion litres was sold in 2016. At \$1 a litre, the government of the day would collect over \$2 billion in taxes from the GST alone, yet the Liberals are not sharing this. It is all about transparency.

Why have the Liberals hidden the numbers and the GST numbers from Canadians?

Ms. Kim Rudd: Madam Speaker, carbon pricing, as we know, is the key to any credible climate plan because it is a cost-effective way to significantly reduce pollution while driving clean innovation and creating new jobs. A price on carbon creates a powerful incentive to cut pollution. It encourages people and businesses to save money by making cleaner choices like better insulating their homes or upgrading to more efficient equipment.

Carbon pricing is a foundation of Canada's clean growth and climate action plan. Four out of five Canadians live in jurisdictions that are already pricing carbon pollution today. By ensuring all parts of Canada price pollution at the same standard, we will help ensure we drive down our emissions and grow our economy.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m., pursuant to order made on Tuesday, May 8, 2018.

(The House adjourned at 6:44 p.m.)

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