



HOUSE OF COMMONS
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OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)

Thursday, November 1, 2018

—

Speaker: The Honourable Geoff Regan

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, November 1, 2018

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayer

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1000)
[English]

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

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

* * *

REMEMBRANCE DAY

Hon. Seamus O'Regan (Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, at this time of year, we all struggle to find appropriate words to commend something that most people simply cannot comprehend. From battlefields that are oceans away to the cenotaph outside this very House, Canadian soldiers have stood and fallen in defence of this nation's ideals. Each year at this time, Canadians gather from coast to coast to coast, sharing our recognition, our respect and our reverence for those who have demonstrated the selflessness, the patriotism and the conviction required to don a uniform and serve.

Sir Robert Borden was correct when he said, just months after the First World War:

the spirit of self-sacrifice, of patriotism [and] of devotion...has inspired the Canadian people from ocean to ocean [and] will leave an enduring mark upon our national life.

As we approach the centennial of that war's armistice, it is only natural that we look back at its destruction and its costs, to seek out some meaning, some value or values that emerged from the blood-soaked fields of Europe.

We often find it in the conduct of our soldiers, of the brave Canadians and Newfoundlanders who answered the call in 1914 to serve king and countries. Their incredible service was capped off with a string of victories in the last three months, a period often referred to as Canada's 100 days. Their determination was self-evident during that time, and if it was not self-evident, the 30

Victoria Crosses awarded during those days stand as eternal witnesses to their fortitude.

[Translation]

As we reflect on our army, navy and air force's sense of duty and determination, it behooves us all to remember that we have benefited from their sense of duty and their service.

We must never forget their sacrifice, and we must forever honour the dedication of our proud men and women in uniform.

[English]

We freely debate in this House today because of veterans. We enjoy the comforts of the modern world and are free to exercise our liberties because of veterans. We may be who we are and love who we love because veterans believed that Canadian values, our values, were worth defending and were worth the sacrifice.

It is also important to remember that the ranks of our veterans are not fixed in time. They are not restricted to those who knew the battlefields of the two world wars, the treacherous terrain of Korea, the far-flung towns in Kosovo or Afghanistan, or any of the other international locations where our servicemen and servicewomen have fulfilled their duty. Yes, veterans can be the older gentlemen who fought in the fields of Europe, but today they are as likely to be IT administrators in offices or merchant mariners maintaining international supply lines, or they may be young men and women who are facing challenges reintegrating themselves into civilian life.

• (1005)

[Translation]

We will continue to honour our veterans' achievements. This year, we will do so by commemorating important anniversaries, such as the 10th anniversary of National Peacekeepers' Day, the 65th anniversary of the Korean War armistice, the 75th anniversary of the invasion of Sicily and the beginning of the Italian campaign in the Second World War and, of course, the 100th anniversary of the armistice that ended the First World War.

[English]

The armistice of November 11, 1918 brought about peace and freedom as well as many feelings of relief, but also sadness for the steep price that had been paid. In Belgium, church bells tolled and there was a sense of euphoria. After 50 months of occupation, they were free.

Routine Proceedings

To recreate that moment in time, on Remembrance Day, the Peace Tower bells in Ottawa will ring along with the bells in Mons, Belgium, where I will be leading a Government of Canada delegation, following in the footsteps of our predecessors. Those bells, along with others across Canada, including in my hometown of St. John's, will ring out 100 times at sunset to mark the 100th anniversary of this historic milestone. It will be an important and emotional moment.

However, I extend this challenge to all members of this House and, frankly, to all Canadians: Let us challenge the perception of who and what a veteran can be. When we attend our respective ceremonies here in the capital, across the country and wherever in the world Canadians may be, let us take a moment to think on our personal concept of veterans and what we do as individuals to recognize them.

I have had the opportunity this past year to travel across our great country and meet veterans in big cities and small towns, and in places in between. It is my sincere belief that any person who takes the time to thank a veteran, to recognize their service, will find it to be an experience with few equals.

[*Translation*]

Veterans need to know that they have earned our gratitude and our respect. They also need to know that a truly thankful nation is paying homage to them.

[*English*]

Mr. Phil McColeman (Brantford—Brant, CPC): Mr. Speaker, each year on Remembrance Day we pause to remember the sacrifices made by Canadian men and women in uniform. The service and sacrifices of Canadian Armed Forces members during the time of war, conflict and peace have defined and shaped our country.

Throughout our history, Canadian men and women have bravely fought tyranny and evil around the world, defending our country, our values and our way of life.

This year's ceremony takes on a very special meaning. Canadians will not only be marking Remembrance Day but the 100th anniversary of the armistice on November 11, 1918.

The Canada and Newfoundland of November 1918 was a much different place from the land we live in today. Streetcars and automobiles still shared the road with horse-drawn carriages. Canadians and Newfoundlanders fought for King and countries. To this day, July 1 holds additional meaning for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

It would be another year before we could begin gathering around radios for news and entertainment. Most would first learn of the armistice from their daily newspaper or ecstatic neighbours who had already read the news. Together, they would flood into the streets. "PEACE" read the bold banner headline of the Toronto Star, but beneath that headline and deep inside the pages would come news foreshadowing great misery to come.

The Globe and Mail would report that the terms of surrender were a humiliation to Germany, but on that day and in that moment there was no room for fear or worry. Peace had been achieved. Canadians would soon see themselves projected onto screens by grainy

newsreels that recorded the happiness that drove them and millions more across the world into the streets, where they rejoiced in the war's end.

Perhaps it was the images and memories of that day that would encourage Canadians to join each other a year later to mark the very first Remembrance Day.

Perhaps it was that the Great War, the war to end all wars, had scarred our nations so deeply and cost us so immensely.

Perhaps it was that the war spared no one and had exacted such a heavy and personal toll from everyone that people all across the Commonwealth would see fit to begin marking its end together.

We know for certain what Kenneth Lawrence, a World War I veteran from my riding of Brantford—Brant, was thinking. He was the last Canadian to be wounded in World War I and was quoted at the time as saying that there were thousands who were physically wounded like him, and thousands more not physically but mentally and morally wounded. It would take our nation generations to come to terms with those mental wounds that Kenneth Lawrence spoke of.

Those dispatches, buried under the headlines heralding peace, foretold of future war, a war that would trace its roots back to the fragile peace of November 1918.

Indeed, Canadians would be called upon time and time again to leave the comfort of their lives, don their country's uniform, deploy to foreign lands and once again display a willingness to sacrifice all to achieve another peace, from World War II to the Korean War, to Afghanistan, to the fight against ISIS and everything in between.

The men and women of the Canadian Armed Forces have not wavered in their resolve to defend our country, our values and our way of life, so let us take time today to not only pay tribute to those who have sacrificed all, but to thank those who stand ready today to do the same.

This Remembrance Day, I urge all members to join me in extending a heartfelt thank you to Canadian veterans and those serving today. Let us not forget that on that first Remembrance Day there was great sorrow, but along with it great joy in the peace that had been achieved.

● (1010)

I would like to read a poem. It is not the poem members might think I would read today. This is a poem, a stanza of which all of us as members of Parliament who attend various Remembrance Day ceremonies in our communities and around the globe will say as an act of remembrance.

This poem, *For the Fallen*, was written by Laurence Binyon during the war. He had been on the front lines and witnessed what was happening in the Great War. He writes:

With proud thanksgiving, a mother for her children,
England mourns for her dead across the sea.
Flesh of her flesh they were, spirit of her spirit,
Fallen in the cause of the free.

Routine Proceedings

Solemn the drums thrill: Death august and royal
Sings sorrow up into immortal spheres.
There is music in the midst of desolation
And a glory that shines upon our tears.

They went with songs to the battle, they were young,
Straight of limb, true of eye, steady and aglow.
They were staunch to the end against odds uncounted,
They fell with their faces to the foe.

They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.

They mingle not with their laughing comrades again;
They sit no more at familiar tables of home;
They have no lot in our labour of the day-time;
They sleep beyond England's foam.

But where our desires are and our hopes profound,
Felt as a well-spring that is hidden from sight,
To the innermost heart of their own land they are known
As the stars are known to the Night;

As the stars shall be bright when we are dust,
Moving in marches upon the heavenly plain;
As the stars that are starry in the time of our darkness,
To the end, to the end, they remain.

Lest we forget.

● (1015)

The Speaker: I want to thank the hon. member for Brantford—Brant for reciting that entire poem. I do not think many of us have heard the entire poem before, yet we all have heard that one stanza. I appreciate it very much. It is a very moving and powerful poem.

The hon. member for Courtenay—Alberni.

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise in this Parliament and pay tribute to veterans, especially so as we approach the 100th anniversary of Canada's 100 days and the armistice that ended the First World War on November 11.

On behalf of New Democrats, our elected officials, constituents, party members and supporters, I thank our veterans and their families for their service and sacrifice. Canada's very existence as a thriving free and inclusive society is thanks to their service and sacrifice. Ypres, the Somme, Vimy Ridge, Passchendaele, Amiens, Canada's 100 days, are words and events that every Canadian should know and remember.

More than 650,000 Canadian men and women served in uniform during the First World War. More than 172,000 of them were wounded and more than 66,000 gave their lives. It is hard to imagine the enormous struggle and burden carried forward by surviving veterans who were expected to reintegrate into our society while suffering from various physical, emotional and psychological challenges for which diagnosis and treatment were simply not available. The families: The loss of parents, children, siblings,

cousins and other kin and the love and devotion they gave survivors was the burden carried by families on our behalf.

In addition to the First World War, we also take this time each year to remember the service and sacrifice of other veterans and families who have selflessly defended our country and our interests in many conflicts and operations: the South African or Boer War, the Korean War, the Second World War, the Persian Gulf War, Afghanistan, the ongoing battle against ISIL, and the numerous NATO and United Nations peacekeeping operations. Of course, I also thank all of our women and men in uniform who diligently stand on guard for our country at home and abroad in peacetime each and every day.

For our part, New Democrats remain committed to improving the lives of Canada's veterans. We see our work for veterans as having three important aspects: communicating with veterans, their families and their advocates to find the most appropriate ways our government can honour their service and serve them moving forward; proposing ideas and policies that will honour their service and sacrifice and provide them with the care and love they deserve; and working with all parties in this place to enact effective legislation and hold our government to account should it fail to meet its sacred obligation to our veterans and their families.

I would also like to mention some specific injustices and work that must be tackled by parliamentarians for our veterans and their families as we move forward. This place and our assembled committees should commit to studying the possible side effects that exposure to mefloquine and related drugs may have had, and could have, on the quality of life of veterans and their families. Homelessness is an enormous social injustice that we must commit to ending, but particularly so for our veterans. We owe our veterans safe, clean and affordable housing, and we should not stop working until each and every veteran has it.

While we honour the service and sacrifice made by all veterans, including first nations veterans, we have failed to honour the same contributions made by Métis veterans. Today, New Democrats recognize the service and sacrifice of our Métis veterans of the Second World War. We hope that one day the Government of Canada will join us and provide Métis veterans with the same recognition, support and benefits as those they so bravely fought beside.

In closing, I ask all members of this place and Canadians from coast to coast to coast to draw from the harshest of lessons from our past. Let us continue to stand together united against authoritarianism and intolerance in all its forms, and in defence of human dignity, peace and freedom.

Lest we forget.

● (1020)

[*Translation*]

The Speaker: Is there unanimous consent for the hon. member for Repentigny to add her comments?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Routine Proceedings

Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, next week is Veterans' Week. This year is even more significant, as it marks the 100th anniversary of the armistice of November 11, 1918. That terrible war ended 100 years ago. So many young lives were destroyed, so many people were injured and so many families were torn apart forever. It was a horrible war, and very little consideration was shown for human life. Our soldiers served in some of the worst conditions imaginable, and now we are fortunate to be able to live comfortably, something that we too often take for granted.

The main lesson to be learned from that conflict was a popular refrain at the time: never again. That is really what everyone hoped for, and why the League of Nations, the predecessor to the United Nations, was created. It was meant to open dialogue and find ways to prevent future conflicts.

Thanks to the sacrifices made by our soldiers and by all of our citizens, we came to value and appreciate peace. Their sacrifices are what taught us to value human life.

Unfortunately, other conflicts followed and tore so many lives apart, specifically during the Second World War, the Korean War, various peacekeeping missions we have been involved in, and more recently, the conflict in Afghanistan and the fight against ISIS in Iraq.

This week is an opportunity for us to say thank you to all those who gave their lives and all those who served in any conflict or in any Canadian Armed Forces mission to defend our freedom. This week also serves as a reminder for us as legislators that it is our duty to do everything in our power to prevent the events of the last century from happening again.

We must also do everything in our power to support our veterans in their hardships. We know that the problems are many. We are talking about an alarming suicide rate, mental health problems, homelessness, addictions and the list goes on. We need to be there for them and help them in any way we can.

Veterans' Week is also an opportunity to thank the families of veterans and of all those currently serving in the Canadian Armed Forces. They are often forgotten, but the families of soldiers suffer greatly when their father, mother, son, daughter, brother or sister is serving abroad. It is an enormous sacrifice they are asked to make. We must also remember the civilians who endure great suffering in times of conflict. I am talking about the civilians in Europe and Korea at the time, but also those in Iraq, Syria and elsewhere in the world today. Civilians are always the first victims of armed conflicts. As legislators, let us ensure that we never forget them. I would also like to thank our colleagues in the House who served both here and abroad.

On November 11, let us remember those who sacrificed everything so that people in Canada and other parts of the world could live in peace.

• (1025)

[English]

The Speaker: Is there unanimous consent for the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands to add her comments?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[Translation]

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank all my colleagues for giving me the privilege of taking part in the debate on veterans.

Today, we are keenly aware of the sacrifices they made.

[English]

We are aware now of all those lives lost, and we think of those lives lost. I do not want to reflect in generalities, but I want to pay regard to one of the singular privileges of being a member of Parliament, namely how I have come to know so many veterans within my own riding, men like Commander Peter Chance, who commanded 13 different vessels over his long and distinguished career. He was a member of the Royal Canadian Navy and volunteered from a very young age. He still serves his community and is on every volunteer board imaginable.

Major Charles “Chic” Goodman is one of my dear friends. I hope that the Minister of Finance will at long last get rid of something called the “gold-digger clause”, so that spousal benefits to veterans like Chic can go to his wife. I want to mention that because Chic would want me to. Major Chic Goodman was one of the Canadians who liberated the horrible Nazi death camps in the Netherlands.

Ken Curry is one of the men in my riding who joined the forces before he was of age, needed a note from his mother to go overseas and fought at Dieppe.

These are spectacular stories, but the tears come to their eyes very quickly when they think of the young men who were on those battlefields and the ones who did not come home. They remember them as if it were yesterday. They remember their experiences in war as if it were yesterday.

Just outside my riding in Nanaimo is Trevor Greene. Everyone in this place will know his story. My friend from Nanaimo—Ladysmith is nodding because he lives in her riding. Trevor Greene was the young Canadian soldier in Afghanistan who, in showing respect to the elders he was meeting in a hut in Afghanistan, took off his helmet and was attacked from behind by a man with an axe. He is so heroic. Heroism runs through the veins of the veterans we are speaking about today, but Trevor Greene is still trying every day to get up and get out of his wheelchair. Of everything he might be committed to, Trevor Greene is committed to climate action. He is one of the most spectacular, brave human beings, as are his wife and kids, to be taking every step in courage, every day, to be able to again walk fully and participate.

Every one of the people I mentioned was not drafted. Every one of them stepped up to serve. The survivors of the First World War and the Second World War are dwindling. However, with our recent military of Afghanistan, Syria, and ongoing conflicts and increasing peacekeeping missions, we know there will continue to be veterans who come home shattered and need our help.

Routine Proceedings

In that, I want to pay special tribute to the people from whom we buy poppies. It is important that they fall off and we have to buy them again, because the work of the Royal Canadian Legion is so important. It provides help for veterans who have PTSD. We need more service dogs trained for the veterans with PTSD. We need more services. All of us together in this place today, without a trace of partisanship, know we owe our lives and our democracy to the sacrifices of millions of Canadians who went before us, those who came home and those who never came home.

Lest we forget.

● (1030)

The Speaker: I would like to thank all members who spoke this morning.

[*Translation*]

This subject is important to all Canadians.

I invite hon. members to rise and observe a moment of silence to commemorate Veterans' Week.

[*A moment of silence observed*]

* * *

CANADA LABOUR CODE

Mr. Simon Marcell (Mirabel, BQ) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-420, An Act to amend the Canada Labour Code, the Official Languages Act and the Canada Business Corporations Act.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I was a union member before I became an MP, and I always cared deeply about the working conditions of the workers I served. As we know, Canada's labour legislation is 30 years behind that of Quebec. That is why I have the honour of introducing my first bill in the House of Commons today. The purpose of my bill is to amend the Canada Labour Code to give all Quebecers working in Quebec for a federal work, undertaking or business the same protections and rights that we enjoy in Quebec.

The bill would make it an offence for employers to hire replacement workers to perform the duties of employees who are on strike or locked out. That is a good anti-scab provision. It would give pregnant and nursing employees the same occupational health and safety rights, including preventive leave, that are provided for under Quebec's legislation but not federal legislation. Lastly, it would make all federal works, undertakings and businesses operating in Quebec subject to the requirements of the Charter of the French Language.

(Motions deemed adopted, bill read the first time and printed)

* * *

CITIZENSHIP ACT

Mr. Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-421, An Act to amend the Citizenship Act (adequate knowledge of French in Quebec).

He said: Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to introduce a bill on citizenship and adequate knowledge of French in Quebec.

The French language is a defining characteristic of Quebecers as a people, and we are extremely proud of that. To ensure that French

survives and thrives, it has to be the common public language in Quebec, as stated in our Charter of the French Language. It constitutes the common good of all Quebecers of all origins.

Under Canada's current law, knowledge of one of its official languages, English or French, is required. It is high time that adequate knowledge of French was required for obtaining citizenship in Quebec, which has been recognized as a nation by the House of Commons.

(Motions deemed adopted, bill read the first time and printed)

* * *

● (1035)

[*English*]

PUBLIC SERVANTS DISCLOSURE PROTECTION ACT

Mr. Nick Whalen (St. John's East, Lib.) moved for leave to introduce an Act to amend the Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act (broader criteria).

He said: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for Winnipeg North for this opportunity today to introduce what I hope is an important bill.

Our committee, the government operations and estimates committee, last fall, did a study of whistleblower protections, and we made a number of recommendations. Among those, there were a few that were broadly accepted by all members of the committee. I felt that rather than letting the perfect be the enemy of the good, I would propose a private member's bill to get rid of that low-hanging fruit.

In summary, the changes that I am proposing would expand the classes of persons protected against reprisals for certain actions under the act, allow for a protected disclosure to be made to any supervisor or officer within the portion of the public sector where the public servant is employed, extend the period in which a reprisal complaint may be fielded, add to the list of wrongdoings in respect of which the act applies, broaden the circumstances in which certain disclosures of information are permitted, including by amending requirements to act in good faith and to reverse the onus of an applicant to do that.

While I am on my feet, I move:

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

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

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

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Speaker: In my opinion the nays have it.

And five or more members having risen:

Government Orders

The Speaker: Call in the members.

● (1115)

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

(Division No. 926)

YEAS

Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Amos	Anandasangaree
Arya	Ayoub
Bagnell	Baylis
Beech	Bibeau
Bittle	Blair
Boissonnault	Bossio
Bratina	Brison
Caesar-Chavannes	Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)
Casey (Charlottetown)	Chagger
Champagne	Cuzner
Dabrusin	Damoff
DeCoursey	Dhaliwal
Dhillon	Drouin
Dubourg	Duclos
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Dzerowicz
Easter	Ehsassi
El-Khoury	Ellis
Erskine-Smith	Eyking
Eyolfson	Fergus
Fillmore	Fisher
Fonseca	Fortier
Fragiskatos	Fraser (West Nova)
Fraser (Central Nova)	Fuhr
Gerretsen	Goodale
Gould	Graham
Grewal	Hardie
Hébert	Hehr
Hogg	Holland
Hutchings	Iacono
Joly	Jordan
Jowhari	Khalid
Khera	Lambropoulos
Lametti	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)
LeBlanc	Lefebvre
Leslie	Lightbound
Lockhart	Long
Longfield	MacAulay (Cardigan)
Maloney	Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)
May (Cambridge)	McCrimmon
McDonald	McGuinty
McKay	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McLeod (Northwest Territories)	Mendès
Mihychuk	Monsef
Morneau	Morrissey
Nassif	Nault
Ng	O'Connell
Oliphant	Oliver
O'Regan	Paradis
Peschisolido	Peterson
Petipas Taylor	Philpott
Picard	Poissant
Qualtrough	Ratansi
Rioux	Robillard
Rogers	Romanado
Rudd	Ruimy
Rusnak	Sahota
Saini	Sajjan
Samson	Sangha
Scarpaleggia	Schiefke
Schulte	Serré
Sgro	Shanahan
Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)	Sidhu (Brampton South)
Simms	Sorbara
Spengemann	Tabbara
Tan	Tassi
Vandal	Vandenbeld
Vaughan	Virani
Whalen	Wilson-Raybould

Wrzesnewskyj
Young

Yip
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NAYS

Members

Albas	Albrecht
Alleslev	Allison
Arnold	Aubin
Beaulieu	Benson
Benzen	Bergen
Bezan	Block
Boucher	Boulerice
Boutin-Sweet	Brassard
Brosseau	Calkins
Cannings	Carrie
Chong	Choquette
Christopherson	Clarke
Clement	Cooper
Deltell	Diotte
Doherty	Donnelly
Dreeshen	Dubé
Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)	Duvall
Eglinski	Falk (Provencher)
Fast	Finley
Gallant	Garrison
Glady	Harcastle
Harder	Hoback
Hughes	Johns
Jolibois	Julian
Kelly	Kent
Kitchen	Kusie
Kwan	Lake
Laverdière	Liepert
Lloyd	Lobb
Lukiwski	MacGregor
MacKenzie	Maguire
Malcolmson	Marcil
Martel	Masse (Windsor West)
Mathysen	May (Saanch—Gulf Islands)
McCauley (Edmonton West)	McColeman
Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound)	Moore
Motz	Nantel
Nater	Nicholson
Obhrai	O'Toole
Paul-Hus	Pauzé
Poilievre	Quach
Rankin	Richards
Saroya	Schmale
Shields	Shipleigh
Sopuck	Sorenson
Stanton	Ste-Marie
Strahl	Stubbs
Sweet	Tilson
Trost	Trudel
Viersen	Wagantall
Warawa	Warkentin
Waugh	Webber
Weir	Wong
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PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*Translation*]

BUDGET IMPLEMENTATION ACT, 2018 NO. 2

Mr. Joël Lightbound (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.) moved that Bill C-86, a second act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on February 27, 2018 and other measures, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Government Orders

He said: Mr. Speaker, hon. members, I am pleased to rise in this august chamber to speak to Bill C-86, the second act to implement this year's budget.

This bill represents the next step in the government's plan to strengthen the middle class and to help those working hard to join it so that every Canadian has real and equal opportunities to succeed.

From the beginning of its mandate, our government has rejected austerity measures and cuts. Instead, we implemented a long-term plan with targeted investments that create the conditions for economic growth that benefits everyone. These investments are making a difference and will continue to do so. They will result in better opportunities for our children to achieve their dreams, find good jobs and give back to their community.

Before I speak about the budget implementation bill, I would like to point out some of the government's main achievements to date.

We instituted a new support system to help Canadian families with the high cost of raising children. The Canada child benefit is simpler, more generous, tax-free and better targeted than the former benefit system, and it has helped nine out of 10 families get ahead.

The Canada child benefit provides even more financial assistance to the low- and middle-income families who need it most, which is in line with our commitment to offer all Canadians equal opportunities to succeed. Single-parent families account for about 65% of recipients who receive the maximum Canada child benefit amount, and over 90% of these families are led by single mothers.

I calculated what my mother would have received when she was raising me and my brother as a single mother, and it would have made her cry to see how generous the benefit was and to see what an incredible difference it would have made in our lives, in the same way it is making a huge difference in the lives of many Canadians. The difference is noticeable in my riding and in local Saint Vincent de Paul shops, because our approach is much more progressive than the former government's program, which sent cheques to millionaires' families.

In budget 2018, the government also introduced measures to index the Canada child benefit to the cost of living as of July 2018, two years earlier than planned.

From day one, our focus has been on strengthening the middle class and economic growth. To help Canadians keep more of their hard-earned money and use it as they see fit, one of the first things the government did upon taking office was cut taxes for the middle class, a move that is helping over nine million Canadians.

A typical middle-class family of four will receive about \$2,000 more each year as a result of the middle-class tax cut and the Canada child benefit.

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

Because of these changes, more families will be able to pay for things like healthy food, back-to-school clothes and new winter boots for growing kids.

These are changes that will actually improve the lives of children and parents across the country.

• (1120)

[English]

Since 2015, the government has made historic investments to support our communities in infrastructure, innovation, science and research.

The government has also secured new and modernized trade agreements. In fact, we are the only G7 country to have trade agreements with every other G7 country. The recently negotiated United States-Mexico-Canada agreement, USMCA, will give those in the business community the confidence they need to continue to invest in Canada. They can rest assured that this critically vital trading relationship is safe and secure.

With all of these measures in place, it is no wonder that the economic picture at home is encouraging. Our economy is strong and growing. Our economic growth, which stood at 3% in 2017, was the highest in the G7, and we expect to stay among the fastest-growing economies this year and next.

On another good news front, thanks to the hard work of Canadians, the past three years have seen the creation of more than half a million new full-time jobs. These new jobs have pushed the unemployment rates to nearly 40-year lows.

There is yet more good news on wage growth. For the average Canadian worker, wage growth is outpacing inflation. In fact, if current trends hold, 2018 could mark one of the strongest years of wage growth since the great recession of 2008-2009.

With more money in their pockets, Canadian consumers have a reason to feel confident about their financial situation. Consumer confidence is near historic highs. This is not only the case with individual Canadians, but also for the companies they run.

After-tax profits for Canadian businesses have nearly doubled since 2015. This means that companies have more money available to invest, to create good new jobs and to spur economic growth.

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

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The second budget implementation act before us is intended to implement items from budget 2018 that put people first. By passing the measures in this bill, we will take further steps to invest in Canadians, grow the middle class and help those working hard to join it. Through this bill, more people will have an opportunity to succeed.

[*Translation*]

This bill includes an important measure to stimulate economic growth, namely the new Canada workers benefit, or CWB.

Starting in 2019, the new CWB will represent an improved version of the current working income tax benefit. The CWB is designed to encourage more people to enter the workforce and to help more than two million Canadians who are working hard to join the middle class.

With increased maximum benefits, the new CWB will provide even more support to the people who receive it. In addition, the CWB's expanded eligible income range will ensure that more workers are entitled to it.

Under the new CWB, a low-income worker who earns \$15,000 annually could get almost \$500 more in benefits in 2019 than she is getting this year. That amount of money can really change things for many Canadians.

Starting in 2019, the government also plans to improve how this support is distributed by allowing the Canada Revenue Agency to calculate the benefit amount for all tax filers who did not apply for the benefit. Automatic payment of the benefit to eligible tax filers is a measure that would be particularly useful for people with limited mobility, those who live far from points of service and those who do not have Internet access.

It is estimated that, as a result of this measure, an additional 300,000 low-income workers will receive the new CWB for the 2019 tax year. Overall, improvements to the new CWB will lift approximately 70,000 Canadians out of poverty by 2020.

I would now like to talk about another main component of this bill, and that is greater equality. Although Canadian women are among the most educated in the world, they are less likely to participate in the labour force than men and are more likely to work part time. Canadian women are often called upon to meet unpaid work demands, which prevents them from pursuing opportunities that would help them reach their full potential.

What is more, the under-representation of women in leadership positions remains a reality. The vast majority of Canadian businesses are run by men. It goes without saying that our economy is not operating at full capacity when the women who want to participate in it and hold leadership positions cannot do so.

For us, it is clear that gender equality would benefit everyone. The participation of women in the labour market has been one of the strongest sources of economic growth in recent decades. Over the past 40 years, the increased number of women in the labour market accounted for approximately one-third of real per capita GDP growth in Canada. Higher female workforce participation rates have also increased household incomes and helped families move into the middle class.

However, there are still far too many missed opportunities because of the gender gap. There are many factors that contribute to that gap, but taking action to close it is not just the right thing to do, it is also the smart thing to do to strengthen the middle class and grow Canada's economy.

● (1125)

According to RBC Economics, if the labour force participation rates of women and men were equal, Canada's GDP could see a boost of as much as 4%. That would be enough to partially offset the impacts of an aging population.

Our government recognizes the essential role of gender equality in building a strong economy that benefits everyone. That is why we are committed to developing budgets taking into account the fact that the choices made and policies adopted affect different people in different ways. Reviewing proposed budget measures from a gendered lens is one way to ensure a more equitable and efficient use of government resources.

In order to ensure that this is achieved immediately, the bill before us today enacts legislation to promote gender budgeting. This measure will ensure that government policies to advance gender equality and inclusion are not just an option but rather a requirement in the preparation of future federal budgets. Since rules are not enough to bring about real change, this legislation also introduces reporting requirements to ensure proper accountability.

There is also another way in which this bill would foster opportunities for women and men and help all Canadians realize their potential and fully participate in the economy. For most Canadians, the best time to start a family coincides with the parents' prime career-building years. Right now, new parents can use EI benefits to ensure their financial security while they are taking time off from work to care for their children. However, there is strong evidence to suggest that the burden of child care still falls disproportionately on women. We know that women and families are better off when parental responsibilities are divided more equally. That is why the government wants to make the EI system more flexible and encourage a more balanced sharing of responsibilities, so that both parents get to spend time with their young children while pursuing careers.

To support young families and promote gender equality at work and at home, the act proposes a new EI parental sharing benefit that will encourage a more balanced sharing of family and work responsibilities by providing five additional weeks of benefits in cases where both parents agree to share their parental leave. This period will be extended to eight weeks if the parents opt for extended parental benefits. This optional incentive will encourage the second parent in two-parent families to share equally in parenting responsibilities. New mothers will have more flexibility to return to work sooner if they wish. Equitable parental leave could lead to fairer hiring practices, which would reduce conscious or unconscious discrimination against women by employers.

In budget 2018, the government took an innovative approach to the systemic undervaluation of women by announcing legislation to reduce the gender wage gap in federally-regulated workplaces. This legislation is included in the bill we are debating today. Requiring equal pay for work of equal value is an effective means of reducing the gender wage gap, promoting an improvement in women's gains and increasing women's contribution to the economy. That is why the government is now introducing pay equity legislation for federally-regulated sectors.

The new pay equity act, which will apply to approximately 1.2 million Canadian employees, requires federal public and private sector employers that have 10 or more employees to establish and maintain a pay equity plan. This plan would identify and correct differences in compensation between men and women for work of equal value. The legislation also establishes a pay equity commissioner who will report annually to Parliament on the administration of the act to ensure it has a real impact. The commissioner's role in facilitating dispute resolution, conducting compliance audits and imposing monetary penalties for violations of the act will ensure enforcement and proper accountability.

• (1130)

[English]

A last major aspect of the second budget implementation act is the steps it takes to protect our environment. Canadians know that polluting is not free. Costs are paid with droughts, floods, wildfires and our health. Canadians expect polluters to pay, because it is the right thing to do for future generations.

Climate change is expected to cost our economy \$5 billion a year by 2020. Simply put, if we are to reduce the greenhouse gases causing climate change, pollution can no longer be free in this country. To act otherwise would be a betrayal of our responsibilities as federal lawmakers and a betrayal of future generations of Canadians, and I would argue, of my generation.

Putting a price on pollution is central to the government's plan to fight climate change while growing the economy and building a brighter future for all Canadians. Pricing pollution is the most effective way to reduce emissions, because it creates incentives for businesses and households to make cleaner choices and find innovative solutions.

This act legislates a pan-Canadian approach to pricing carbon pollution with the aim of having pollution pricing in place in all provinces and territories in 2019. As part of this plan, the government has established a Canada-wide federal standard for

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reducing pollution and has given provinces and territories the flexibility to choose a system that meets this standard and that works best for them.

Furthermore, all proceeds from pollution pricing from jurisdictions that have signed on to the federal system will be returned directly to the government of these jurisdictions. In provinces that have not committed to pricing carbon pollution, the federal government will return the bulk of direct proceeds directly to individuals and families residing in those provinces through climate action incentive payments. For most households, these payments will help offset or exceed their increased costs related to pollution pricing. The remaining proceeds that are not returned directly to households will go towards providing support to sectors within these provinces that will be particularly affected by pollution pricing.

The government is serious about addressing the costs of pollution and is taking concrete steps to back its commitments. This is the only responsible course of action to take as we see increasing signs of climate change all around us, and we have stepped up to that responsibility.

This government is advancing its plans to create a better future for all Canadians by investing in people and in communities. We are building on Canada's economic strengths and advancing our competitiveness by seizing opportunities in global markets. This second budget implementation act contains essential measures to achieve these goals, and I urge all hon. members to support it.

[Translation]

Mr. Alupa Clarke (Beauport—Limoilou, CPC): Madam Speaker, I thank the member for Louis-Hébert for his speech.

At the beginning of his speech he talked about historic investments in infrastructure. Sadly, it is historic in theory only, since we have seen just \$9.3 billion of the \$187 billion announced a few years ago.

Between 2010 and 2015, the Conservative government not only released the \$80 billion from our economic action plan, but we also spent it in real time. Many observers even talked about how effective the plan was, since the money was getting out. I just wanted to set the record straight.

I would also like to ask my hon. colleague when the government plans to balance the budget. He did not mention that in his speech. One of the Liberal government's key promises in 2015 was to balance the budget by 2020. Promises must be kept if we want to reduce cynicism among Canadians instead of fuelling it. This is important to our democracy, and yet, it is clear that the government has shelved this promise and that it has absolutely no intention of keeping it.

When will the government balance the budget?

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•(1135)

Mr. Joël Lightbound: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague from Beauport—Limoilou, whose riding is next to mine.

When it comes to the previous government's plan to stimulate the economy, the opposition parties had to really press the government for that plan because the economy was in need of a kick-start.

Since the hon. member brought up the past, I am pleased to remind him that Canada weathered the 2008 economic crisis so well in large part because, a bit further back in time, Paul Martin, the then finance minister, refused to deregulate our financial industry, which is what he was being asked to do by the opposition leader at the time, Stephen Harper, who was prime minister in 2015. Mr. Harper was quite adamant that we follow the Americans and deregulate our financial industry. That is why Canada was successful in weathering this economic crisis that hit every country in the world in 2008.

As far as the infrastructure plan is concerned, it is true that it is historic. It is a \$180-billion investment over 12 years. To give my colleague an idea of the numbers, it includes \$5.2 billion just for public transit in Quebec. He knows that, in his region, which is mine as well, there is a fantastic keystone project under way to build a tramway in Quebec City. This project was made possible through the federal government's ambitious plan for infrastructure and public transit.

The federal government is helping Quebec City get top-notch public transit because it is one of our government's top priorities and we took the necessary measures to get it done. I can say that there are many people in Quebec City and in my colleague's riding who are quite pleased with this.

[*English*]

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Madam Speaker, I simply do not share the hon. member's rose-coloured point of view, when Canadians are going through a profound family-debt crisis, the worst in the OECD among all industrialized countries. Canadians have more family debt than any other industrialized country in the world. At the same time, in various parts of the country, we are experiencing the worst housing crisis we have ever seen. I can tell colleagues, coming from the Lower Mainland of British Columbia, how profound it is that the federal government is refusing to take any action in any meaningful way in terms of building new housing. The government will, perhaps, if the Liberals are re-elected, they say, but they are not willing to take any action now.

My question is related to this monstrosity. This is the largest omnibus legislation in Canadian history, despite the fact that the Liberals always decried this prior to coming to power. I have been asking all week a very simple question. It is very germane, of course. I have been asking departmental officials how many clauses and subclauses exist in this massive omnibus bill. It is very germane, because if we have 5,000 clauses, with the Liberals bulldozing through this legislation, we may be looking at nine seconds per consideration of each subclause, and nine seconds at committee as well.

My simple question is this, and I have asked it repeatedly. How many clauses and subclauses are in this massive omnibus legislation?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Joël Lightbound: Madam Speaker, I will start by addressing the first part of my colleague's question, which had to do with household debt. I would encourage him to read the study the OECD published this summer, which shows that families in Canada are taxed less than in any other G7 country and that, by this time next year, they will have \$2,000 more in their pockets than they had under the previous government. That is because of steps our government has taken, some of which are in this bill. Our government cut taxes for the middle class. We made the Canada child benefit more generous and more progressive. That is having a major impact on Canadian families because it means they have more money left at the end of the month to buy the things families need.

In that respect, I think anyone who compares our record of the past three years to that of the previous government, which sent cheques to millionaires and increased inequality in this country, will see that the Conservative Party has precious little to teach us. I think the NDP should be applauding these indisputably progressive measures.

With respect to the size of the bill, I would note that a substantial portion of it is the proactive pay equity act, which is informed by best practices in the area of pay equity, such as those in Quebec. The NDP—

•(1140)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I have to let other members ask questions.

The hon. member for Kingston and the Islands.

[*English*]

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I want to thank the parliamentary secretary for engaging in this very important debate and highlighting how important this particular budget is. It addresses a number of key issues, such as pay equity.

Equally important is what the parliamentary secretary brought up toward the end, and that is putting a price on pollution. He talked about how important this is. Climate change is the issue of our day. We have a chance to fix this, and we are the only generation that will be able to fix it.

I wonder if the parliamentary secretary can comment on how significant he sees this part of the bill and what it means if we do not do this and if we do not implement this price on pollution today.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Joël Lightbound: Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for his question. I believe that scientists around the world agree on the importance of taking action on climate change. I think that is where the difference in vision lies. We are working to reduce inequality, while the previous Conservative government was working to increase it.

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If we fail to address the climate challenges our country is facing, it will increase intergenerational inequality. Future generations will be the ones that pay the price. I find it irresponsible that the official opposition does not have a plan to deal with climate change. What is more, it is resorting to obstruction tactics. The Conservatives criticize without ever making any suggestions after they failed to take action for 10 years. It is truly astounding. I think that Canadians will judge them for their irresponsible attitude toward climate change.

[English]

Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Madam Speaker, I find it humorous when we stand in this House and have big city MPs telling us that Canadians are doing far better under their administration than under previous governments and that the carbon tax is not going to punish those living in rural communities.

I challenge that. I have said this time and time again. I challenge our colleagues from big cities to come to my riding, or to go to any rural Canadian riding, to see how the government's policies are failing rural Canadians.

It was Justin Trudeau who promised to have the most open and transparent government. He also promised to be able to—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I have to remind the member that he cannot refer to anyone by name in the House, whether it is the Prime Minister or other members. I would ask him to ask the question because time is of the essence.

Mr. Todd Doherty: Madam Speaker, their very own finance department is telling Canadians that the budget will not be balanced until the year 2045. We know the carbon tax is going to punish everyday Canadians, and yet—

Madam Speaker, I am getting to the point.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): You have to ask the question.

Mr. Todd Doherty: Madam Speaker, why does our hon. colleague feel that it is okay to punish everyday Canadians, yet let the worst emitters off the hook?

Mr. Joël Lightbound: Madam Speaker, Quebec is a beautiful city. I am not sure it is a big city by your standards. I am not sure I am a big-city MP. It is a beautiful city. However, I will tell you that we have had a price on pollution in Quebec for five years through a cap-and-trade system. My cousins who are dairy farmers in rural Quebec all agree with its importance, because they see the impacts of climate change. To refuse to see it is irresponsible.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I want to remind the parliamentary secretary that he is to address comments to the Chair and not to the individual members.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Carleton.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC): Madam Speaker, today I will address the three inevitable stages of every Liberal tax increase.

First, there is the insult. Second, there is the tax increase itself. Third, there is the high-tax hypocrisy. I will give numerous examples of where this exact same cycle has played out every time the Liberals have targeted modest and middle-income Canadians with higher taxes.

Let us start with the issue of income tax. The Prime Minister started his campaign to raise taxes by calling people “too rich” and therefore claiming they needed to pay more. We did not find out until after the election who he was talking about. We thought he was talking about himself, a multi-millionaire who inherited a trust fund, or maybe the finance minister, whose family business was worth \$1 billion.

It turned out he was not talking about those people. It turns out the people he thought were too rich and needed to pay more income tax were moms and dads who have kids in soccer and hockey, students who are spending money on textbooks and tuition, and passengers on public transit. They are the ones who saw their taxes go up. They paid more for kids' sports, because they lost the children's fitness tax credit. They paid more to ride public transit, because the transit tax credit was eliminated. Students paid more for the cost of their education, because they could no longer claim their expensive textbooks as an education expense and the education tax credit itself was eliminated.

Those were the people that the Prime Minister was talking about when he said that the rich needed to pay more. He said that if people could put their kids in hockey, they are rich and get to pay higher taxes. If people go to university or college, they are rich, too rich and should pay higher taxes as well. If people take the bus and do not take a limousine like the Prime Minister, they are rich, too, and therefore they should pay higher taxes as well.

All of this is a little rich coming from the recipient of a multi-million dollar trust fund account from his family. It is also rich coming from somebody who spent most of his life living in publicly funded mansions, and driving around in government-funded limousines. However, according to the Prime Minister that is beside the point. It is also a little rich to say that moms and dads have too much money when the Prime Minister forces those same moms and dads to pay higher taxes so that they can fund his \$30,000 of free nanny services every year that he uses in his household, while Canadians have to pay for their own child care with their own money.

That is the final stage. He started with insulting moms and dads, calling them rich. Second, he raised their taxes, forcing them to pay more for transit, textbooks, kids' sports and more. Third, of course, is the hypocrisy where the Prime Minister ensures that he gets taxpayer-funded child care services that no one else in the country would receive as part of their employment package.

Again, we have insults, tax increases, then high-tax hypocrisy.

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Now we move on to small businesses. Remember when the Prime Minister said, in the last election, that small businesses, according to him, are merely vehicles for rich people to avoid paying taxes. We know that he was referring to plumbers, pizza shop owners, landscapers, shopkeepers and other middle-class people who mortgage their houses to start businesses and employ people in our community. He said that those people are all just tax cheats, and they needed to pay vastly more in order to keep their businesses up and running.

He brought in new penalties. That was the insult. Then came the tax increase. The Prime Minister decided to penalize family businesses for sharing the earnings and work of their business with family members. He then brought in new penalties for small business owners who save for the future within their company. If people keep some money in their company for a rainy day, sick leave, maternity leave, retirement or for a future investment, they would be penalized for any interest earned on that money in the meantime.

● (1145)

The most recent iteration of that penalty is that a small business can lose its small business tax deduction if it has more than \$50,000 in investment income within the company. It is a massive tax increase targeted again at the middle class. There is the second step in the cycle. The Prime Minister starts by insulting the small business owners, then he moves to raising their taxes.

Finally, the last stage is high-tax hypocrisy. Who was not taxed more under the Liberal plan? The Prime Minister was not, to start with. There were no new taxes for his multi-million dollar trust fund inherited from his grandfather's petroleum empire, and no new taxes on the speaking fees he collected from charities while he was a member of Parliament and ought to have been giving those speeches for free like other members of Parliament do. There were no new taxes on those speaking fees, which he earned by the way while having the third worst attendance record of any member of Parliament. He is skipping out on his publicly paid duties to be here in order to give paid speaking engagements that most members of Parliament do on their own time and without charge, and there are no new taxes on any of that.

There we have it again. The Prime Minister started with insulting small business people, then he moved to raising their taxes, then he engaged in high-tax hypocrisy by protecting his own interests from any new costs. He extends that hypocrisy to his finance minister, whose \$1-billion family business saw no tax increase whatsoever under the proposed changes to small business tax rates. His company is big enough to be on the stock market, and all stock market trading companies were excluded from the tax increase altogether.

There we have it: insult the taxpayer, raise the taxes and then engage in high-tax hypocrisy to protect himself and all his friends. That is the three-step approach this Prime Minister takes to every single tax hike.

Now we see it one more time with the carbon tax. The Prime Minister starts off with the insult, which is to call people polluters. Be careful, the polluters are not who we think they are. In the eyes of this Prime Minister, the polluters are grandmothers trying to heat their homes in -40° weather, soccer moms trying to take their kids to soccer practice and single moms trying to take care of their kids or

drive to work. Generally, suburban commuters, anybody who has to purchase gas to move themselves around or to heat their home is, in this Prime Minister's view, a polluter. There we start again with the insults by calling everyday suburban Canadians "polluters" in order to justify raising their taxes.

The second step in every Liberal tax increase is to raise the tax itself, and so the Prime Minister has increased taxes on gas, home heating and other basic energy people require in our modern way of life to survive. These costs will roll out throughout every aspect of human life. If we want to heat our homes, drive to work or buy products transported by truck, train or ship, we will pay for more for all those products. If someone is a small business person who has to heat or energize their factory, they will pay more for that tax as well.

We have the insult, then we have the tax increase, and the last step is the hypocrisy, the high-tax hypocrisy. Who is not going to pay this tax? Large industrial emitters, the big corporations with the smokestacks on the top of their factories. Those enterprises would be exempt from the Liberal carbon tax. Just this week, we learned that coal-fired plants would be exempt from the Liberal carbon tax. In New Brunswick, the Belledune coal-fired plant would be allowed to emit 800 tonnes of greenhouse gases for every gigawatt of electricity absolutely tax-free.

Now, the government admits those coal-fired plants will be in operation for at least another 12 years, and that is if we would believe its promise that one day after it is long out of office that it will be able to shut down those coal-fired plants over a decade from now. In the meantime and in between time, those factories would operate without any carbon tax.

● (1150)

The same is true for large cement plants and other large industrial emitters. They will be exempt from the tax increase.

It is all well and good to exempt those corporations that have powerful lobbyists that influence government, but we have asked why the Liberals have not provided the same exemption to small businesses, to families and to others. We still do not have an answer to that question. Of course, that is the high-tax hypocrisy. We have again the three steps of every single tax increase: insult, tax hike and then high-tax hypocrisy. Those are the three steps that we can count on the Liberal government engaging in every single time it wants more of Canadians' money.

What motivates this three-step approach to increase taxes? The answer is it is to fund out-of-control Liberal spending.

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Spending has grown at 7% a year since the Liberals took office. That is about three times the combined rate of inflation and population growth, depending on the year. In other words, spending is vastly outpacing the need. Those 7% a year spending increases have to come from somewhere. The government has to source that revenue. It started to do so by borrowing. The government's deficit is three times what the Prime Minister promised. Instead of balancing the budget next year, as the Prime Minister promised while putting his hand on heart during the election campaign and saying it would be gone, now Finance Canada says the deficit will continue until the year 2045, under which plan, the debt will grow by nearly half a trillion dollars until then.

This is all happening in a time when the government's own documents admit it has been the beneficiary of enormous short-term good luck. In the government's annual report, which came out about two weeks ago, the government admits that its revenue is higher by about \$20 billion because of factors outside of the government's control: record low interest rates, higher than usual oil prices, a booming U.S. economy, a stronger than normal world economy, a housing bubble, which is slowly coming to an end in Toronto and Vancouver, all of which generate more revenue for the government. In other words, good fortune has fallen out of the sky onto the government's lap. The Liberals admit that in their own financial documents.

If they have an out-of-control deficit that is three times the size they promised in times of good fortune, how big will the deficit become when the luck runs out? The Liberals have not answered that question. I have asked the finance minister, at times painfully, 14, 15, 16 times in one committee session, when the budget will be balanced. He utterly refuses to answer. The Liberals have not told us under what conditions would a government ever balance a budget.

It does not matter what one's economic philosophy is, everyone agrees that there should be some point in the business cycle when the budget is balanced. I believe we should ascribe to have a balanced budget all the time, but even if one is a Keynesian economist, one ought to believe that at least when the world economy is roaring and commodity prices are high and interest rates are low, at that point in an economic cycle, for God's sake, the government ought to have a surplus to squirrel away for when times turn bad. However, even under that Keynesian thinking, the government is not living up to the obligation to balance the budget when times are good.

What are the consequences of having these massive deficits? The answer is that, in the short run, we start to pay higher interest costs. The Parliamentary Budget Officer estimates that by the year 2023, our expenditure on debt interest will go from about \$24 billion to \$40 billion, a two-thirds increase in about half a decade. This means we will be spending more on debt interest than we currently spend on health care transfers. That means more money for bankers and less money for doctors and nurses. Canadians will pay taxes to get nothing in return except to pay off the wealthy and privileged bond holders and bankers that lent us the money and therefore own our future tax receipts.

• (1155)

When I ask residents of my riding what they want their tax dollars spent on, they say roads, hospitals and other essential services that

allow them to live their lives. They never tell me that they want to spend it on enriching bankers and bond holders. That is exactly the consequence of government decisions to pile up new and unnecessary debt on the current generation and on generations yet unborn.

That is the immediate consequence of higher spending, but there is the medium-term consequence which of course is higher taxes. Those consequences are already starting to become known. Middle-class Canadians are already paying \$800 more in income tax than they were when the Prime Minister took office.

As I said earlier, small businesses are paying higher taxes to support the government's spending habit with new penalties for saving within their companies or for sharing income and work with family members. Those tax increases are in addition to the new ones that take effect on January 1, that is, higher payroll taxes for workers and small businesses and of course the carbon tax itself. Deficits today mean higher taxes tomorrow. That is exactly what the government is delivering, both higher taxes and deficits at the same time.

That is the underlying motivation for the three-step Liberal process for raising taxes. We will see it again and it will not be long. Soon there will be another billing which the Liberals will actually give a name to. They call moms and grandmothers polluters. They call small business people tax cheats. They call people who put their children in sports or who take the bus wealthy. Then they proceed, after having demonized those patriotic Canadians, to raise their taxes.

The last step is always to look at the fine print and how much the Prime Minister will have to pay for this tax increase. Oh, he will pay nothing. How convenient. Of course, we could not possibly allow a multi-millionaire trust fund recipient to have to bear any extra burden at all. Life is already too tough living in a government-funded mansion with government-funded nanny services. He and his friends and those who have influence on him are always protected from the costs that they impose on middle-class Canadians.

I propose a different three-step plan: first, control spending; second, balance the budget; and third, lower taxes for all Canadians. That sounds like a three-step plan we can all get behind.

On that optimistic and exciting note, I move:

That the motion be amended by deleting all the words after the word "That" and substituting the following: "the House decline to give second reading to Bill C-86, a second act to implement certain provisions in the budget tabled in Parliament on February 27, 2018, and other measures, since the Bill fails to address the fact that deficits are three times what the Prime Minister promised, that the Department of Finance admits that the budget will not be balanced until 2045, and that the average income tax bill for middle-class families has increased by \$800, not including new carbon taxes and payroll tax hikes.

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● (1200)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The amendment is in order.

Questions and comments, the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance.

● (1205)

Mr. Joël Lightbound (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.): Madam Speaker, before I get into my question on the member's three-step approach, lowering taxes, a balanced budget and controlled spending, I think the Conservatives failed for 10 years on those three fronts. They did not lower taxes. They did not balance the budget. They added \$150 billion to the national debt. Therefore, I would argue that the member has very little credibility. With all of that, they had the worst record on growth and job creation since the Great Depression, so I think that is to be taken with a grain of salt.

The member likes to quote the CBC. Let me quote an analysis that was made public a little over a year ago:

The public transit tax credit did little to increase the use of public transportation. The children's fitness tax credit did little to increase participation and tended to disproportionately benefit wealthier families. Income-splitting similarly resulted in high-income households receiving more than low-income families.

I do not know if the member has been through that, but I have. I was raised by a single mother who had little use for the fitness tax credit because her revenues were so low that she did not have the luxury of having an accountant look at all of those credits, whereas the Canada child benefit, which is not taxed, is much more useful.

The member keeps quoting a study by the Fraser Institute that fails to take into account the Canada child benefit and whose authors describe the Canada—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I am sorry, but I do have to allow for other questions. I will let the member for Carleton respond.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Madam Speaker, I will respond, one by one.

Under the previous Conservative government, we had the best economic record of any country in the G7. We were the last to go into the great global recession and the first to come out of it. We had the lowest debt-to-GDP ratio and lowest deficit-to-GDP ratio, despite those catastrophic global circumstances that we were forced to manage.

This situation is precisely the opposite. Far from having a global economic crisis, the world economy is now booming and other countries are now surpassing Canada in growth. They have balanced budgets and are paying off their debt, while our country under the Liberals' leadership actually adds to the debt and the tax burden.

As for the tax credits, the Liberals are once again attacking moms and dads as being too rich and, according to the Liberal government, they deserve to pay higher taxes.

His concluding point is that his mother never used the children's fitness tax credit. It only came into effect in the year 2007. The member is a very young man, and I will give him that. I am not sure if he was still playing midget hockey at that time, but if he was, I

encourage him to go back and have his mother retroactively claim that tax credit, because she deserves it.

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Madam Speaker, I appreciate the member's work on the finance committee. I am a little surprised by the amendment he just put forward, because what we heard repeatedly in the pre-budget hearings across the country is the issue—

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Because his dad destroyed our economy.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I remind the member for Carleton that somebody else has the floor and he is going to have a chance to answer that person, so he may want to listen to the question.

The hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby.

Mr. Peter Julian: Madam Speaker, it is an important question, so I thank you for setting the member for Carleton right on this.

The member's amendment does not address two of the main considerations that came from the pre-budget hearings. The web giants are getting off scot-free and basically not paying taxes in Canada. As a result, it creates unfair competition and an unlevel playing field for Canadian businesses. We heard that repeatedly in the pre-budget hearings. We also heard about the impacts of overseas tax havens, which for companies that pay their taxes and do the right thing in Canada also creates unfair competition.

Why are those two key elements not part of the amendment he has just offered?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Madam Speaker, we would welcome friendly amendments if the member from the NDP has suggestions on how we can bring more tax fairness.

We agree that the Liberal government has meticulously planned its tax changes to ensure that the wealthiest and those most connected do not pay a penny more. Those Liberal insiders who have accounts in tax havens in the Caribbean get off scot-free under this Liberal plan. Of course, the Prime Minister's trust fund inheritance does not face any new taxes and the finance minister's billion-dollar family business has been protected. There are a whole series of well-connected Liberal interests who are extremely wealthy and have been able to use their wealth to generate more influence around the cabinet table. They have all been protected from the Liberals' tax increases.

The tax burden has fallen on modest-income people. Those with the least always pay the most when government gets big, and that is exactly what is happening right now.

● (1210)

Hon. Kevin Sorenson (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC): Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for his defence of the former Conservative government's record during the global recession. He went through the facts of what happened during that global recession very succinctly and properly. When the Conservatives presented budgets, it was very obvious by every one of those budgets that we were making life more affordable for families and seniors. We were making life more affordable for businesses, as we lowered taxes and created a level playing field, corporate tax against corporate tax in the United States. We wanted an advantage for Canada so jobs would stay here.

Government Orders

My question is specific to seniors. Seniors have called me saying that they are very disappointed there is nothing in this budget for seniors. They rightfully said that when Conservatives were in power, we brought forward pension income splitting, the tax-free savings account and a number of other measures, such as with the guaranteed income supplement to make life more affordable for seniors.

Why is the member disappointed with the lack of measures for Canadian seniors in this budget?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Madam Speaker, the member is absolutely right. Once again, the Liberals have attacked seniors as being too rich. When seniors downsize their houses because they are too big, they turn their home equity into cash. Therefore, we wanted to ensure they had tax-free savings accounts to put that money away and grow it tax free. When a senior's spouse passes away, the inheritance should rightfully be able to go into a tax-free savings account, which is purpose-designed for lower-income people who do not have RRSPs and to ensure the resulting income is not clawed back from GIS and OAS. It is a vehicle for modest-income people and the data from Finance Canada shows overwhelmingly they are the ones who use it.

When our Liberal friends across the way attack seniors as being too rich every time they talk about tax-free savings accounts, we know that it is a little rich coming from them.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Questions and comments, the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance. I would ask that he keep his question to a minute.

Mr. Joël Lightbound: Madam Speaker, when the Conservatives doubled the TFSA limit, which would have put the state in a fiscal straitjacket according to the guy who invented TFSAs, I wonder how many of their constituents would have had \$11,000 at the end of the year to put into their TFSAs. I wonder what the number was.

This summer, the OECD said that Canadian families were the lowest taxed in the G7 and that by this time next year, they would have \$2,000 more in their pockets than they had under the previous government.

The member keeps quoting a study by the Fraser Institute that fails to take into account the Canada child benefit, the authors of which say that the CCB is a transfer program that fosters dependence on government, a disincentive to hard work and independence. People in my riding who are receiving the Canada child benefit are working very hard. They are not dependent on the government, but they find the benefit very useful in making ends meet and in raising their families. Does the member agree with that statement and will he stop failing to take account of the Canada child benefit?

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The hon. member for Carleton has one minute to respond.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: He had a lot more than one minute to ask his question, Madam Speaker.

On the first point, as I said at the outset, the tax-free saving account is not exclusively used by people with their annual income. It is used when major life events cause them to either have an inheritance or downsize their homes, because they no longer live in places where they have to climb stairs, and they want to put aside

their money in a way that shelters it from high taxes by big government.

As for families, the previous Conservative government cut taxes by \$30 billion, which the Parliamentary Budget Officer said overwhelmingly went to low and modest-income people who were better off and received more rewards as a result of their work. It is unfortunate that the Liberal government has targeted those same modest-income people with higher taxes and higher costs, a tendency that the Conservatives will reverse when we form government.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I will let the member know that the member who asked the question was under a minute. I appreciate the member keeping his response within a minute as well.

• (1215)

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Madam Speaker, I will start today by talking about the process of contempt of Parliament that has been undertaken, and you will be judging very shortly the government on this account. I will continue by talking about some of the Potemkin measures in the budget. I then will conclude by talking about what the NDP would be doing if this were a budget implementation act from the NDP and how different it would be. That comparison is very important for Canadians to know.

First, I will talk about the immense and ridiculous size of this record omnibus legislation, which is 850 pages. One can only call it ridiculous in nature when we talk about the number of clauses and subclauses and the amount of time the government is giving us, with its bulldozer mentality, to consider each and every one of the clauses.

When we talk about omnibus legislation, there are a couple of things that are important to read into the record. One is that the current Minister of Public Safety, when he responded to a Conservative omnibus bill that was less than half as massive as what the Liberals have put forward this week, said at the time, "It is a complete dog's breakfast, and deliberately so. It is calculated to be so humongous and so convoluted, all in a single lump, that it cannot be intelligently examined and digested by a conscientious Parliament." That was the Liberals then in referencing something that, as I said, was half as massive as what we are forced to consider this week, the largest and the worst omnibus bill ever presented in Canadian Parliament.

I also want to read into the record, because it is very relevant and pertinent, the Prime Minister's commitment back in 2015 when Canadians voted. At that time, the Liberals had spent years decrying the Conservative penchant to move forward with omnibus legislation, even though I almost think fondly back to those days of Conservative omnibus legislation that was only one-third or one-quarter the size of what the Liberals have put forward. However, there are many aspects that I do not think any Canadian would fondly recall. At that time, the Prime Minister said:

We will not resort to legislative tricks to avoid scrutiny...

Stephen Harper has also used omnibus bills to prevent Parliament from properly reviewing and debating his proposals. We will change the House of Commons Standing Orders to bring an end to this undemocratic practice.

Government Orders

The Liberals have not brought an end to the undemocratic practice. As members know, we are now dealing with the largest and worst omnibus bill in our history. What are the consequences of that?

As I mentioned earlier, I have been endeavouring all week, on behalf of Canadians, to find one simple fact. How many clauses and subclauses are in this legislation? I have asked department officials. I asked at committee. I have asked the parliamentary secretary. None of them have been able to respond to that simple question on how many clauses and subclauses are in this massive bill.

This is relevant, because the Liberals have committed to only 13 hours of legislative scrutiny at the committee level and only a few hours of debate in the House of Commons. Therefore, if we are talking about, as some people are estimating, 5,000 clauses and subclauses, then members can do the math.

An important part of any parliamentarians work is to scrutinize, debate and review legislation to ensure it will do what it purports to do and that it is not full of errors, as we have seen in the past when botched legislation has been sent back by the courts. It costs taxpayers tens of millions of dollars when Parliament gets it wrong. Therefore, I asked repeatedly, but have not received a response.

● (1220)

However, if we take the estimate of 5,000 clauses and subclauses, the Liberals are giving us nine seconds per clause, per subclause. They are giving us nine seconds to review, nine seconds to hear witnesses, nine seconds to speak to each of the myriad of clauses and subclauses the bill. This is absolutely ridiculous, irresponsible and contemptuous of Parliament and the work we have to do as parliamentarians. They should be pulling back on the legislative bulldozer and allowing parliamentarians the opportunity to do the job we are paid to do.

Just this morning at finance committee, I raised questions around just one of these subclauses and was unable to get a response. Major changes are proposed with respect to the charitable sector, basically meaning that a charity is no longer considered as such if there is any indirect support or opposition for a political party.

I asked a very simple question. I asked if it meant that if an environmental foundation that would be in complete disagreement with the Liberal government and the purchase of a massive pipeline mentioned that the Liberal government had purchased this pipeline and the foundation did not agree with that position, that it would be in direct opposition to a political party. I received no answer. It is apparently going to be defined by CRA, and we are hoping to get that information at finance committee in the next few days.

However, that is just one subclause. Our nine seconds have already finished and we have uncovered some complete ambiguity that may have a major impact on the charitable sector. However, there is no answer and so we move on.

Nine seconds for clause or subclause is absolutely contemptuous of this Parliament and of the work of parliamentarians. I would suggest it is contemptuous of Canadians when a massive bill of that nature, which has so many fundamental changes, is brought in and talks about the tax code and the implications of it on the charitable sector. For the Liberals to allocate nine seconds for clause or

subclause is beyond belief and certainly flies in the face of everything they committed to in 2015.

In 2015, the Liberals said that they would be better than Stephen Harper. They are much worse when it comes to these massive budget bills, which they used to decry when they were in opposition. There is no reason for it, no reason at all.

[*Translation*]

What does Bill C-86 contain? It contains a number of bills. Looking at the titles, it seems that it may contain useful legislation, like the one on pay equity, for example. We have been calling for pay equity in the House and in committee for years. Unfortunately, the women of this country will have to continue to wait for years for this measure to take effect. The members of the committee wanted to hear their opinions on that, but since the committee has only nine seconds to examine each section of the bill, it will be impossible to hear testimony that gets to the heart of the matter.

This bill contains even more measures, such as the legislation that calls for the budgeting process to take gender equality and diversity into account, the department for women and gender equality act, the international financial assistance act, and the poverty reduction act. None of these bills have anything to do with the allocation of resources to meet objectives.

This bill is meaningless. It does not allocate the resources and investments needed to do anything other than put titles on these bills. There are at least seven bills that should be deliberated and examined separately, but the government refuses to do so. The government wants this bill to pass even if we do not have enough time to carefully study all these issues.

[*English*]

There is another aspect to this, and I will go back in history because this is an important point.

Grigory Potemkin was a member of the Russian court. When the Empress Catherine was travelling from one village to the other, he would erect Potemkin villages, and this has become part of the English language as well as many other languages, including French. Because of the incredible poverty of the Russian peasants and because of the dearth of any sort of services or supports in these rural areas, he would temporarily erect these villages with false fronts. Once the carriage of the Empress Catherine passed by, he would dismantle these false fronts and take them to the next village.

● (1225)

That is indeed what we are seeing with the budget, which contains a number of Potemkin bills. There is talk about things that are important, like reducing poverty and ensuring there is gender equality and international financial support, but there are no resources beyond that. The Prime Minister, a little like Empress Catherine, is going to be talking to Canadians over the next few months about these wonderful bills he has put forward, but there are no resources to go with the bills. There is nothing that gives meaning to the words and titles of the bills included in this massive omnibus legislation.

Government Orders

Canadians are living through the greatest family debt crisis in our nation's history and, in fact, in the industrialized world. Canada placed last among the OECD countries in terms of family debt. There are crushing levels of family debt, because Canadians are forced to pay for their medication and their housing costs are skyrocketing, while their wages under the previous and current government have stagnated. Given the scope of the family debt crisis, my constituents and I have lived through the greatest housing and homelessness crisis we have seen in our country's history. Seniors, students and families are not able to keep a roof over their heads because the price of housing has soared, and the federal government, since the elimination of the national housing program, has done nothing to build housing, to put roofs over people's heads, so that families can settle in, feel comfortable and not have to feel they have to struggle between paying for food, rent, medication, or their heat in one of the coldest winters on the entire planet.

In the midst of that family debt and housing crisis, we have a series of Potemkin bills brought forward by the finance minister for the benefit of the Prime Minister, in the same way Grigory Potemkin brought forward the Potemkin villages for Empress Catherine. It is not something that has a meaningful impact on the lives of people.

We are hoping that pay equity will have a real impact. It is something the NDP has struggled and pushed for for years, but it still appears to be far off on the horizon, years away. We will not be able to take the time at committee to see how that portion of the bill could even be improved, because the Liberals are allocating, unbelievably, nine seconds per clause or subclause for examination. That is ridiculous.

Anyone on the streets of our country would say it is unbelievable that a government that came to power saying it would put an end to these practices has actually doubled and tripled down and become so much worse than even Stephen Harper was in terms of contempt of Parliament and putting massive pieces of legislation forward that are not subject to proper examination and scrutiny.

This is a hollow shell. It is a massive bill. It has implications for the charitable sector and a whole range of other areas, but the time allowed is so scant and our questions are not being answered in any forthright way, which means that ultimately the Liberals may succeed in ramming the bill through. Canadians cannot take any comfort in this, because no proper legislative scrutiny has been allowed. Also, the simple question that I have asked repeatedly this week, about how many clauses and subclauses there are in the bill, remains unanswered. We are not talking about a trick question. It was very simple. I have pretty well asked it in response to every bill I have had the jurisdiction to examine. Every time there has been an answer. However, this time, with regard to this 850 page bill, there has not been any sort of answer at all.

● (1230)

What approach would we take? How would Jagmeet Singh and the NDP bring forward a budget implementation bill? To start, we would not be putting an 850-page brick in the House of Commons, and ramming it through in a scant few days.

What New Democrats would do is separate out the bills, even if they are Potemkin bills, for proper scrutiny. Pay equity deserves scrutiny and witness testimony from women's groups and unions that

have been strong advocates of it for years. They deserve a hearing, but they will rarely be given one because of the Liberals' intent to ram this through.

We would separate out those bills and subject them to scrutiny. We would meet late at night. As members know, we are considered the worker bees of Parliament. We try to do our homework. We do our best to take on that mandate of examining, scrutinizing and offering better solutions for government legislation. That has always been our place in the House. We are hoping that soon Canadians will chose another role for us, as the Government of Canada. In the meantime, as the second opposition party, we will continue to play that important role.

If it were our budget implementation bill, it would be separated out. We would be talking about different pieces of legislation. We would be allowing that appropriate scrutiny.

More importantly, if it were our budget implementation bill, each one of these initiatives would come with real resources. New Democrats would have tackled fair taxes so that we can feel, with some confidence, that every Canadian is paying their fair share. We heard repeatedly in the pre-budget hearings about businesses that are seeing unfair competition from big, foreign web giants who come here, scoop up the advertising dollars and do not pay a cent into the Canadian economy. No action has been taken on that. No action has been taken on the overseas tax havens that cost us tens of billions of dollars.

This will be embarrassing to the Liberals, because in just a few months' time, the Parliamentary Budget Officer will come out with his analysis. He has finally obtained, after a five-year struggle, first with the Conservatives and then with the Liberals, one in which he threatened to take them to court, the information he needed from the Canada Revenue Agency to measure the tax gap. Within a few months time' we will have the tax gap, the money going to overseas tax havens and to web giants. It will be embarrassing to Liberals not to have taken any sort of action. They have no credibility on this.

New Democrats would be investing in housing now. I did a press conference earlier this year, as members know, with Jagmeet Singh, our national NDP leader, where we said that we needed to accelerate immediately and invest \$2 billion into housing. It is at a critical level. We are seeing seniors and students left on the sidelines. We need to make sure that that housing is put into place immediately.

We would be investing in child care and pharmacare. These are not just smart investments for the quality of life of Canadians. If we are talking about gender equality, not having child care puts the lie to any pretence of the government to actually being a feminist government. If it is not putting in place child care, the government cannot pretend to actually be working for gender equality in this country. Child care also helps our businesses to compete. It helps our labour market.

Government Orders

There is a whole realm of reasons why it is smart economically, as well as socially, to put in place things like child care and pharmacare. As we know, we are wasting billions of dollars more right now on medication that Canadians need. So many Canadians are not even able to access the medication, because we do not have in place a universal pharmacare program. A New Democrat BIA, if it were presented today, would include and put that in place so that Canadians could feel comfortable knowing that they could take their medication and afford it.

New Democrats would be investing in health care and education. We are the health care party, and we always have been. Tommy Douglas, our first leader, founded universal public health care in this country. We would be standing behind that, providing the necessary funding for it, instead of eroding it as we have seen happen under the Conservatives and Liberals.

New Democrats would be making sure that we are taking care of Canadians, because that is best for Canadians. It is also best for our economy, and it is best for Canada.

• (1235)

Ms. Jennifer O'Connell (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance (Youth Economic Opportunity), Lib.): Madam Speaker, my hon. colleague spoke about the size of the budget implementation act, yet the difference between our government and the former Conservative government is that their omnibus bills had nothing to do with the budget. They would sneak in legislation as a way to move things along without transparency.

Our bill actually deals with budgetary matters. The members opposite seem to have an issue with this bill, but we are ambitious on this side of the House because we have a lot of clean-up to do after 10 years of failed fiscal and economic policy by the Conservatives.

The member opposite talked about what the NDP would do if this were their bill. However, the NDP sound like the party of the “coulda, woulda, shoulda”. They campaigned saying that they would balance the budget at all costs, yet today they have said they would have made the proper investments. How would they do that if they were going to balance the budget at all costs while taking on the failed fiscal policies of the Conservatives?

We are introducing pay equity to get it right. How would the NDP do that with its commitment to a balanced budget at all costs like the Conservatives?

Mr. Peter Julian: Madam Speaker, that was a lot of mud slinging, but let us start with what the Liberals promised back in 2015. I need to read this into the record again because I think the Liberals need to hear what they promised.

The Prime Minister said the following:

We will not resort to legislative tricks to avoid scrutiny.

Stephen Harper has...used omnibus bills to prevent Parliament from properly reviewing and debating his proposals. We will change the House of Commons Standing Orders to bring an end to this undemocratic practice.

That was the Liberals speaking.

As colleagues know, yesterday I rose in the House and indicated some of the areas that were not in the budget but are now in this omnibus legislation. If the Liberals are pretending that somehow

they are better than the Conservatives on this, they simply are not. They are practising the same thing the Conservatives did, but two or three times worse than even under the worst days of Stephen Harper. I simply cannot defend this practice.

Second, in terms of the bills themselves, yes, the NDP would be investing real money in child care, housing and pharmacare, the things that people actually need, whereas the Liberals seem to fritter away money on overseas tax havens and provide a “get out of paying any taxes free” card to the web giants. We would take a different and better approach for Canadians.

Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Madam Speaker, the mud slinging is going back and forth. I will offer this to the House as well.

It was on day 10 of the 2015 campaign when the member for Papineau stood and said that under his government the Liberals would be the most open and transparent government and would let debate reign. However, we have seen closure invoked more than 50 times on debate. He also said they would just post a modest deficit and by 2020 or 2019, the budget would then balance itself. However, his own department has now said that the deficit is three times what he promised and that they would not be able to balance the budget until 2045.

When the Liberals stand up, they always say it is the opposition, full stop, who are spreading the seeds of fear by using divisive politics, yet it is their own departments who are publishing reports that discuss the failed policies of the Liberal government. I would like to offer our hon. colleague an opportunity to talk to that.

Mr. Peter Julian: Madam Speaker, the reality is that we are living through the worst environmental, housing and family debt crisis in our nation's history. That is from departmental documents, but it is also from civil society. Anyone who is out there actually talking with regular Canadians knows that the family debt crisis right now is profoundly difficult.

From talking to regular folks across this country, I know they are stretched. They are trying to pay for massive tuition increases. They are trying to pay for their medication. They are trying to pay for increases in their heating costs. They are trying to pay for housing. In so many parts of the country, housing is becoming a luxury. It is inconceivable to me that we are seeing so many Canadians suffering. If one were to go to first nation communities, one would see it firsthand, and yet so little is being done by the government that arrived with such promise.

Three years ago, the Liberals made all kinds of commitments, including stopping this practice instead of accelerating it. They promised they would govern differently, but they are governing just as poorly as Stephen Harper did.

Government Orders

• (1240)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech. He clearly established how this bill is undemocratic and unparliamentary. I especially liked his observation that we have nine seconds to debate each clause, because it shows how absurd the situation is.

My colleague talked a lot about the challenges facing Canadian and Quebec families, such as debt and housing problems, but another thing missing from the Liberal program is a universal public pharmacare system. This is absolutely essential to people, yet Canada just signed a trade agreement with the United States that extends drug patents by two years, which will further drive up the price of prescription drugs.

Mr. Peter Julian: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question. I greatly appreciate the work done by the member for Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie. He asked the best question I have heard today: how much money will we save by establishing a pharmacare plan?

Under the Conservatives the price of drugs increased and this is continuing under the Liberals. This means that Canadians have less money to pay for the drugs they need. These are not optional. We are talking about drugs that they need, and yet, both the patent life and the cost of drugs is increasing, and we also have an excise tax on medical cannabis.

All of the Canadians who need these drugs have no other choice. That is why we are promoting the immediate implementation of a national pharmacare plan for Canadians.

[*English*]

Mr. Francesco Sorbara (Vaughan—Woodbridge, Lib.): Madam Speaker, my finance committee colleague from New Westminster—Burnaby talked about tax fairness in this BIA legislation. In one of the national newspapers, there was an article on the progress being made in this specific BIA on tax fairness. It talks about the following:

- Preventing banks from creating “artificial losses”....
 - Enhancing tax reporting requirements for trust funds....
 - Strengthening rules for limited partnerships....
 - Cracking down on tax-free corporate distributions to foreigners....
 - Increasing ownership transparency for numbered companies and shell corporations....
- The budget also clarified Ottawa’s plan to clamp down on investment income through private corporations.

However, I heard earlier that the member is not satisfied. We have invested a billion dollars in the CRA for a number of initiatives, here and in past budgets.

We recently signed the new USMCA. I am wondering what his position is on that. We understand that some of his colleagues were at a celebration with one of our national unions. Is he supportive of the new USMCA agreement, the trilateral free trade agreement that will support thousands of good-quality jobs across this country, including good union jobs, good middle-class jobs?

Mr. Peter Julian: Madam Speaker, I am going to respond on the issue of taxes, because it is ridiculous for the Liberals to pretend that

the small measures they have taken in this BIA address in any way the massive tax evasion we are seeing by some of the wealthiest Canadians. There is a reason we are seeing more concentration of wealth in this country than we have ever seen before, with two billionaires having as much wealth as almost a third of the Canadian population, over 11 million people. That is a profound imbalance.

We have companies now in which the CEOs pay less in taxes than their secretaries because of this imbalance, because of tax havens, because of the fact that web giants get away with paying no taxes at all. The Liberals respond by paying lip service. As the member just said, they say that they spent a billion dollars on CRA. The reality is that this money went to going after regular families to take away their benefits and going after people with disabilities who were accessing the disability tax credit.

What we need is fundamental change. We need an end to these overseas tax havens and the abuse we are seeing by the web giants, and only the NDP is going to bring that about.

• (1245)

Mr. Shaun Chen (Scarborough North, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise today in this House to speak to the 2018 budget.

Three years ago, I was privileged to be elected by the people of Scarborough North as Canadians from coast to coast to coast put their faith in our government. They sent us to Ottawa so we could fulfill our promise of delivering real change.

I know that every member in this House is here because he or she believes in improving the lives of all Canadians. With unemployment now at its lowest level in 40 years, and strong economic growth across this country, our government’s plan is working, and our efforts are bearing fruit. As we expressed during the campaign and in the years since taking office, we believe in building a strong middle class and creating economic prosperity for all Canadians. Budget 2018, entitled “Equality and Growth: A Strong Middle Class”, would do exactly that.

In my multicultural riding of Scarborough North, hard-working individuals and families are benefiting from the programs and initiatives our government has introduced. Let me share the story of the Zhang family.

A proud mom and dad who recently immigrated to Canada to build a better life and a brighter future for their children came to visit me in my constituency office, along with their newborn baby girl. The Zhang family can rest assured that their daughter will be supported by the Canada child benefit, money that can be used to help pay for such baby essentials as diapers and clothing. Indeed, since our government introduced the Canada child benefit, over 300,000 children across this great country have been lifted out of poverty.

Government Orders

The 2018 budget would ensure that families such as the Zhangs would continue to receive adequate assistance through the Canada child benefit in the long term by indexing it so that it would keep pace with the cost of raising a child.

That is not all. Under the previous government, we saw the continued disappearance of the middle class. Hard-working Canadians saw their wages stall, their hopes and dreams shattered as they struggled to pay rent and put food on the table. That is why our government has introduced, in this budget, the new Canada workers benefit, which would put more money back into the pockets of low-wage earners. This new benefit would encourage Canadians to join the workforce. It would provide real help to over two million lower-income workers and raise over 70,000 people out of poverty. By next year, the Canada child benefit and the new Canada workers benefit, along with our government's national housing strategy and enhanced benefits for seniors, would lift 650,000 Canadians out of poverty. That is real change that will make a difference in the lives of people, not only in Scarborough North but all across this great nation.

What is even more transformative, however, is our government's commitment to gender equality and pay equity. We all know that equal pay for work of equal value is not just the smart thing to do but is the right thing to do. After consulting with key stakeholders, such as employers, organized labour, researchers and other experts, our government is putting forth legislation to establish federal proactive pay equity. When women and girls are given a fair chance to succeed, we all reap the benefits. In fact, gender equality in the workplace could add \$150 billion to the Canadian economy over the next 10 years. Our government is doing the smart thing and the right thing when it comes to equal pay for equal work.

Madam Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Oakville North—Burlington.

Achieving gender equality also requires us to work together for environmental sustainability. All around the world, women and children are disproportionately impacted by the effects of environmental degradation. Here in Canada, Canadians continue to pay for the costs associated with increasing storms, floods, droughts, wildfires and extreme heat. It is clear that there is already a significant cost to pollution. That is precisely why our government is working to protect the environment, while growing the economy at the same time. By phasing out coal, protecting our oceans, and investing in renewables and public transit, our government is investing in Canadians and their future.

● (1250)

Not only have we created 500,000 new full-time jobs over the past three years, our carbon emissions are down, showing that economic prosperity and environmental sustainability go hand in hand. By listening to scientists and engaging with experts, our government would now be putting a price on pollution and growing a cleaner, greener economy at the same time.

Lower carbon emissions, air that is cleaner, emerging business opportunities and more money back in the pockets of Canadians: that is our plan to build a more sustainable and prosperous future for our children and our grandchildren. Speaking of that, investing in future generations remains a key goal of this budget.

I have worked with youth and in public education for most of my professional life, and I can attest to the importance of providing young people with opportunities to succeed, because when youth succeed, our nation succeeds.

Each year, over \$330 million is invested in Canada's youth employment strategy, which enables young Canadians to gain important knowledge and hands-on job experience. Through the 2018 budget, our government would invest an additional \$448.5 million over five years to enhance the youth employment strategy. This investment would fuel the success of our youth, allowing them to gain the skills and work experience needed to secure good, permanent employment through such initiatives as the Canada summer jobs program.

Last August, I met with some of the 260 youth employed at 51 organizations that are doing good work across my riding of Scarborough North. These summer jobs were possible thanks to \$848,000 of federal funding through the Canada summer jobs program.

Budget 2018 would go even further, proposing \$46 million over five years, with an additional \$10 million per year thereafter, for a new program to develop and enhance pre-apprentice training. This program would work in partnership with the provinces and territories, post-secondary institutions, training providers, unions and employers to help Canadians get trained, particularly under-represented groups such as women, indigenous peoples, those with disabilities and new immigrants. They will be able to explore different trades, gain invaluable work experience and develop the skills needed to succeed.

This budget is one all Canadians can be proud of. It would ensure that Canada's economy keeps growing while simultaneously providing more opportunities for the middle class and those working hard to join it.

It strives to improve our youths' present and their future and would take important strides in protecting our environment while simultaneously growing our economy. It would make smart investments and promote equality so that all Canadians can prosper.

All Canadians can feel confident in this budget and the real change our government is delivering, as I am.

Mr. Bev Shipley (Lambton—Kent—Middlesex, CPC): Madam Speaker, the member's last statement was actually the most truthful. People will not believe the changes the Liberal government has made. In a time of a strong economy, with 3% growth, the Liberal government now has a \$60-billion debt that has been added to a total debt of \$675 billion, which Canadians will be required to pay interest on. That is incredible.

If jobs cannot be created in a strong economy, I suspect that Canadians will have to rely on members on this side of the House to bail them out when the crisis and deflation come.

Government Orders

I am wondering if you could tell me why U.S. investment in Canada has dropped 66% while Canadian investment in the United States has gone up 52%.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I just want to remind the member to address his questions through the Chair.

• (1255)

Mr. Shaun Chen: Madam Speaker, our government has worked incredibly hard to achieve the new USMCA agreement between Canada and the U.S. We are looking forward to continuing to build on the economic prosperity that comes from the trade and investment between Canada and our closest ally and friend, the United States.

The numbers speak for themselves. Since our government has taken office, 500,000 net new jobs have been created in this country. Canada has one of the strongest economies in the G7, and in fact, we have the lowest net debt-to-GDP ratio.

Our government has made smart investments in infrastructure and in building the middle class and those working hard to join it so that our economy can prosper and we can build a better Canada for everyone.

In this budget, we would go even further, through pay equity legislation, through equality, and through environmental sustainability so that Canadians continue to prosper on the road ahead.

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Madam Speaker, I wonder how the hon. member's constituents will feel when they learn, from the budget, that the Liberal government, despite promising in 2015 that it would eliminate subsidies for big oil, has not done so.

I wonder how the hon. member's constituents will feel when they learn that in fact the government has not really done very much to address the issues of tax havens, where the top income earners, the wealthiest could actually not pay their fair share of taxes, and the issues of those who are in the middle class and those who are working hard to join it.

Mr. Shaun Chen: Madam Speaker, the facts are these. Our government raised taxes on the wealthiest 1% of Canadians so that we could give a tax break for the middle class. We have made investments to put in the Canada child benefit, ensuring that 300,000 children have been lifted out of poverty. That number continues to go up.

We are certain that Canada is on the right track, because we are working very hard to ensure that environmental sustainability is front and centre in our government's agenda. We also believe that in protecting the environment, we can simultaneously grow the economy. That is why we have made smart investments. We have invested in green infrastructure, creating new economies, so that while we are working hard to protect the environment and reduce emissions, at the same time we are creating good jobs for Canadians.

Canadians have seen the results, the lowest unemployment rate over the past 40 years and unprecedented growth among G7 countries. We will continue to fight hard and do good for Canadians and their families.

Ms. Pam Damoff (Oakville North—Burlington, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure today to speak on the budget

implementation act. The measures being implemented will continue the transformational work of our government to grow the middle class and grow our economy. Perhaps most importantly, we are doing this by ensuring that our most vulnerable citizens are not left behind and by building an equal, competitive, sustainable and fair Canada.

Since we took office, Canada's economy has been fuelled by the hard work of a stronger middle class. Combined with our government's historic investments in people and communities, Canada now has the fastest growing economy in the G7 and has added more than 500,000 good, well-paying jobs since November 2015.

I am extremely proud that the budget implementation act would put in place measures that will move us toward gender equality and fairness for all Canadians.

I am reading a book right now entitled *Runaway Wives and Rogue Feminists, The Origins of the Women's Shelter Movement in Canada*. In it, author Margo Goodhand writes about the role that Chatelaine had in bringing conversations about child care, domestic violence, abortion, equal pay for work of equal value and so much more to the forefront. Under the leadership of its editor, Doris Anderson, Chatelaine pushed Canada to the forefront of feminism in North America. Here we are, almost 50 years later, and, sadly, we are still having these same conversations. However, change is finally coming. I am proud to say that our government is the first to introduce federal pay equity legislation.

In 2017, women made 88.5 cents to every one dollar a man earned. During our study on the economic security of women at the status of women committee, we heard the call for pay equity legislation. The budget implementation act would legislate pay equity here on Parliament Hill, in the federal government and in all federally regulated organizations, like banks, and telecommunications and transport companies. In all, about 1.2 million Canadians would be covered by this legislation. We would also appoint a pay equity commissioner to play both an education and enforcement role.

As we move forward federally, I was saddened to receive an email from both of my local chambers of commerce listing the changes being made provincially to their labour relations legislation through the repeal of Bill 148. I will not debate the merits of provincial legislation in this place, but number three on the list provided by the Ontario Chamber of Commerce was the repeal of equal pay for equal work. In 2018, I am disturbed that anyone or any organization would applaud this move.

Gender-based violence continues to plague our society. In working with community groups, like Sexual Assault & Violence Intervention Services of Halton and Halton Women's Place, I know we must do more. This has certainly been a focus of my work here in Parliament, and the budget implementation act will implement five days of paid leave for victims of family violence. This is a crucial measure for those fleeing intimate-partner violence.

There are a number of other measures in this bill that are also groundbreaking.

Government Orders

Our first study at the status of women committee was on gender-based analysis plus. It is extremely gratifying to see a gender budgeting act included in this bill, which will formalize using a gender lens for all budgets going forward.

Equally groundbreaking is the creation of the department of women and gender equality, which would strengthen our capacity to advance gender equality and grow the middle class through policy, programming and support for equality-seeking organizations and community partners.

By focusing on fairness for all Canadians, I am proud to say that since we took office, more women are now employed and contributing to our shared economic success than at any point in Canada's history. Supporting women's economic participation is not only the right thing to do, but could add \$150 billion to Canada's economy by 2026.

During our study on economic security of women, we also heard about the importance of both parents sharing parental leave to support gender equality in the home and in the workplace. The budget implementation act would implement the new employment insurance parental sharing benefit. The changes would give greater flexibility to parents by providing an addition five weeks of use-it-or-lose-it parental benefits when both parents agree to share parental leave. This use-it-or-lose-it model is already offered to parents in Quebec. There, four out of every five fathers have decided to take advantage of the increased parental leave. In the rest of Canada, this number is only one in 10.

● (1300)

For the first time ever, our government is setting out poverty reduction targets in the poverty reduction act included in this legislation. We will not leave the most vulnerable behind as our economy grows. Measures like the Canada child benefit, or CCB, mean that nine out of 10 Canadian families have more money to help them with the high cost of raising children. Even more importantly, the CCB has helped to lift more than half a million people, including 300,000 children, out of poverty. The CCB, which is targeted to middle-class families and those working hard to join the middle class, is simpler, tax free and more generous than previous child benefit programs.

In fact, residents in Oakville North—Burlington have received payments helping 25,670 children with an average yearly payment of \$4,930. The CCB has put over \$70 million into the north Oakville and north Burlington economies in the past year and over \$245 million into the Halton economy. Not only is that money helping families, it is also growing the economy and creating jobs in the community.

Another critical step we have taken to reduce poverty was the national housing strategy, a 10-year, \$40-billion national housing strategy aimed at reducing homelessness and improving the availability and quality of housing in Canada. Over the next 10 years, the strategy, which will be funded jointly by the federal, provincial and territorial governments, will help reduce homelessness and the number of families living with housing needs and strengthen the middle class.

People think that my community is affluent, but make no mistake. Many in my community are doing very well, but there are also those living in poverty. According to the 2016 census, in Halton there were more than 13,500 children living in low-income households. More than one in 10 children lived in poverty, with Oakville having the highest percentage at 12.4%. Burlington's average rent in 2016 was \$1,329, outdoing its major metropolitan neighbour, Toronto, where average rent was \$1,242 for the same year.

I am proud to work with Habitat for Humanity Halton-Mississauga in my riding, whose goal is for everyone to have a safe and decent place to live. Its CEO, John Gerrard, has stated that it is encouraging to see Habitat's message reflected in the federal government's housing strategy. With a focus on poverty reduction, and programs like the Canada child benefit and the national housing strategy, it is my hope that we will see those numbers drop in my community and across Canada. The budget implementation act would also put in place the Canada pension plan child-rearing drop-in provisions, an important missing piece in the CPP.

With the budget implementation act, we are continuing to implement our plan and Canadians are seeing first-hand that our plan is working. More Canadians are working, unemployment is at its lowest level in 40 years, wages are growing at the fastest rate in close to a decade, businesses are investing because they are confident in our plan for creating long-term growth and Canada's economy is one of the best performing in the G7, with the lowest net debt-to-GDP ratio. A typical middle-class family of four will be \$2,000 better off, thanks to the Canada child benefit and middle-class tax cut.

A strong and growing middle class is driving economic growth across the country, creating new jobs and more opportunities for everyone to succeed. It is my hope that all members of the House will support this important piece of legislation.

● (1305)

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague, with whom I serve on the Standing Committee on the Status of Women, both of us vice-chairs.

We have heard a lot about the importance of pay equity as a mechanism that the federal government could put in place to remove barriers to economic justice for women in Canada. The history goes back a long time. Forty-two years ago, the previous Trudeau Liberal government promised it. In 2004, a task force made very specific recommendations under another Liberal government. Then in 2016, myself and the member for Jonquière put forward a motion to have a special committee study pay equity and re-examine and implement the outstanding recommendations of the 2004 task force report. The special committee, with all-party consensus, said to implement the 2004 task force recommendations on pay equity.

Government Orders

I am glad that we finally have pay equity legislation in the House, but buried in an 800-page bill, it is hard to tease out the details. I am hoping that the member opposite can help me with some of these questions.

A 2004 task force report recommendation was that pay equity is a fundamental human right, so why is this new act's purpose defined in terms of the employers' needs? That is unheard of in a human rights statute and is contrary to the 2004 task force recommendations.

Ms. Pam Damoff: Madam Speaker, it is indeed a pleasure to serve with the hon. member on the status of women committee. I applaud her advocacy on pay equity and a number of other important issues.

As I mentioned in my speech, it was almost 50 years ago that these conversations started, and there has been a lot of conversation over the years. It is frustrating for all of us to think that it has taken this long for the federal government to put legislation in place. However, I have to say I am incredibly proud that we are finally moving there. It is such an important thing for women to be earning the same amount of money as men. Again, it saddens me that we are moving away from that in my province.

Therefore, I would say to the hon. member that I will continue to advocate for pay equity. Having said that, I am really pleased with what has happened and with the legislation that has been introduced, and I think we are moving in the right direction.

Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for Oakville North—Burlington for her advocacy on behalf of vulnerable people in her community and in all of Canada.

I have been reading the McKinsey Global Institute report entitled “The Power of Parity: Advancing Women's Equality in Canada”. It states we could be adding \$150 billion of incremental GDP growth between now and 2026 if we pay attention to equity for women in our economy, but progress has stalled in the last 20 years.

I met this morning with the representative for the Guelph YWCA, and with representatives from YWCA Canada. We discussed the importance of using a gender-based lens when we are looking at budgets.

Could the hon. member help us understand how important a gender-based analysis is in trying to recover the \$150 billion of lost opportunity due to the inequity with respect to women's pay?

• (1310)

Ms. Pam Damoff: Madam Speaker, the hon. member is absolutely correct with respect to the economic impact that would be had in Canada if women were contributing in the workforce in the way they should be. Quite frankly, it is about fairness for all Canadians.

It disheartens me when I hear people, in particular on the opposite side, talk about how women do not want these opportunities and say that we are trying to push women into jobs or positions they do not really want.

In fact, given the opportunity, groups like YWCA Canada do an incredible job of retraining and providing skills to enable women to re-enter the workforce so they can make a good middle-class wage

and provide for their family. Therefore, it is incredibly important, not just because it is right for women to be involved in the economy, but also because it is the right thing to do in terms of our economy and growing our economy going forward.

Hon. Kevin Sorenson (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC): Madam Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, a colleague who, like me, was elected in 2000.

I am very pleased to speak to Bill C-86, the Liberal government's budget implementation act, 2018.

When we stand in the House to speak to bills such as this one, we do a synopsis of the bill and ask how it is going to help future generations and how it is going to help right now. Regrettably, the more we look at it, the more we realize there is nothing in this bill that can secure the future of our country for generations to come.

What we have here is a simple continuation of the Liberals' failed policies, especially their failed fiscal policies. There has been deficit after deficit with no end in sight, despite the Prime Minister's promise in the 2015 election that he would only run small deficits. I sincerely hope that in 2019 Canadians will not forget how promise after promise has been broken by the government.

The Liberals promised a very small deficit of \$10 billion a year, but what we have now, as revealed by the public accounts for 2018, is a deficit of \$19 billion, which as the Auditor General points out is essentially the same amount in percentage as the previous year. Our country's net debt is \$759 billion. The net debt is the amount by which the government's liabilities exceed the value of its financial assets and revenue.

The Auditor General also reported that revenues were \$313.6 billion, an increase of \$20.1 billion over the previous year. What is truly shocking is that the government did not use the increase of revenues to eliminate the deficit, but rather, in true Liberal fashion, continued to increase its program spending.

Why has such grave concern been expressed about the many families across the country who are unable to balance their household budgets and are accumulating debt at an alarming rate, while the Liberal government is unfazed by the national debt that it is mounting?

When we were in government, household debt was one of the biggest concerns to a growing economy. Household debt in Canada increased to 171.3% of gross income in 2018, up from 170.20% in 2017. Household debt continues to increase in our country.

Household debt to income averaged 127.31% from 1990 to 2018, reaching an all-time high of 173.34%. There have to be warnings as to what could happen in the future with household debt increasing in this way, especially as we see our Governor of the Bank of Canada raising interest rates.

We should be very concerned about these statistics, and equally concerned about the national debt, but we also need to be concerned that the government does nothing to address that. The Liberal government must stop borrowing money that other people will have to pay back, including Canadians who are not even born yet.

Government Orders

However, we have a Liberal government that has no plan to get out of debt and no plan to stop overspending. It has no plan to balance the books. It has no plan to start paying down the accumulated national debt. All the Liberal government can manage to do is pay interest on the massive amounts of money it has borrowed.

While it is failing in this regard, and in so many other ways too, this government continues to raise taxes on the middle class. Since 2015, the Liberals have cancelled tax credits and raised CPP and EI premiums. The price of everything continues to rise: transportation, fuel, groceries and rent, and very soon Canadians will be suffering under a carbon tax on everything. That carbon tax will not be used to reduce carbon emissions. Rather, it will be spent by Liberals on their millionaire friends and their pet projects.

• (1315)

The Liberals' so-called new tax bracket to tax the top one per cent of income earners has not worked. After the Liberals hike taxes on the wealthy, we find out the wealthy top one per cent of income earners are actually paying a billion dollars less in taxes per year than they did before the Liberals tried to increase their tax level.

The middle class did not receive any of the revenues from the top one per cent of income earners because there was not enough revenue raised by hiking taxes on the wealthy to pay for the programs and services the Prime Minister implemented. Those programs and services did not lead to real and sustainable job creation within the private sector.

The Liberals bragged about the income and the employment rate, but 11 out of 12 jobs that have been created under the current government are in the public sector; they are government jobs. Let us think on this for a moment. The economy has not given the confidence to the private sector to see massive growth. One new job in 12 is in the private sector, and 11 in 12 are in the public sector.

This is not sustainable. Revenues from the private sector pay for jobs in the public sector. Revenues from public sector jobs do not create more jobs in the private sector, or even in the public sector. Still, the Liberals say there has been a reduction in the unemployment rates this year, and they continue to hire public servants.

The Liberals do not talk about the fact that fewer people are looking for work. Statistics show that two-thirds of the unemployed in Canada are not looking for work anymore but remain unemployed.

On the issue of the public sector, or rather the public service, I would be remiss if I did not talk about the recent observations by the Auditor General of Canada in the 2018 public accounts. The Auditor General, along with the deputy minister for the Department of Finance and officials from the Treasury Board Secretariat, appeared before the public accounts committee, which is a committee I am honoured to chair. As most here today would know, the public accounts committee examines in a non-partisan manner the performance of the public service and the federal departments and agencies in implementing what the government has been ordered to do by the Parliament of Canada.

For the past three years, the Auditor General has been tabling separate documents entitled, for example, "Commentary on the

2017-2018 Financial Audits". This year, the document includes a section entitled, "The Auditor General's observations on the government's 2017-2018 financial statements", which was previously provided in the public accounts.

The first observation is on the transformation of pay administration, better known as the Phoenix pay system. The Auditor General noted that as of March 31, 2018, there were 615 million dollars' worth of pay errors. I think back to my meetings in Wainwright, Drumheller, Stettler and Camrose, where massive numbers of federal public employees were expressing their frustrations toward this Phoenix system.

Furthermore, for the last pay period, the percentage of employees with pay errors was 58%, an increase of 7% from the previous pay period. Despite the minister saying that things are getting better and that by October 2018 things will be solved or we will have a real goal that can be accomplished, she is failing. It was 51% last year and 58% this year.

While the government says it is working to solve this horrific problem for public servants, the situation has become worse. As the Auditor General reports, the government underpaid some employees by \$369 million and overpaid others by \$246 million, and now we are trying to figure out how to claw back that money. This significant number of individual pay errors did not result in a financially significant error in the government's total reported pay expenses, because overpayments and underpayments basically offset each other.

The Auditor General further explained to our committee yesterday that while the government recorded year-end accounting adjustments to improve the accuracy of its pay expenses, it did not correct the underlying problems, nor did it correct the pay errors that continue to affect thousands of employees.

Through budget 2018, the government plans to spend \$16 million over two years, beginning in 2018-19, to work with various experts and public servants toward implementing a new pay system. Furthermore, it has committed \$431 million over six years beginning in 2017-18 to fix Phoenix.

• (1320)

I have grave concerns, as do some people within the public service, that we do not have the necessary IT expertise to manage complex IT problems like these. These are not being addressed in this budget. People are not being paid. It is unacceptable.

Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.): Madam Speaker, there is so much in the member's intervention to deal with in a short period of time.

The member mentioned that the private sector growth was not there, when in fact Statistics Canada's labour force survey in September said that employment rose by 96,000 among private sector employees, the first increase since 2017, but also there was no change in the public sector.

Government Orders

The investments we are making are driving private sector growth. I wonder whether the hon. member could contrast that to the cuts the previous government made to try to get economic growth, when in fact investing in Canadians and investing in the Canadian economy is truly the way towards growth, and the growth that we are now seeing.

Hon. Kevin Sorenson: Madam Speaker, I am not sure where the member is citing his statistics from.

Statistics that I have seen show that 11 out of 12 jobs that have been created over the last year or two years have been in the public sector. As I stated in my speech, that is no way to grow an economy. An economy is not grown that way.

The member also spoke about the extra money that is being invested back into our economy. Certainly, when we go into a recession, it is vital to kick-start growth in some regard and show that the government is willing to do that. We did that.

Now that we have come out of the recession, basically on the back of a strong United States economy and, indeed, global economy, Canada shows less growth than other countries. Again, if we are spending this much money when we are in an economy that is expanding, what happens when interest rates go up, and what happens should we fall into another downturn or recession? Can the government continue to drive up debt then at the same levels it is doing now in times when there is growth?

This becomes a massive problem for countries when they then experience a downturn.

Ms. Sheri Benson (Saskatoon West, NDP): Madam Speaker, speaking of massive, I would like to make a general comment on the size of this omnibus bill and all the things that are included in it. I would assume that my hon. colleague would agree that parliamentarians are not given enough time to actually scrutinize, on behalf of their constituents, what exactly is in the bill.

I was on the pay equity special committee. We made a recommendation that the government implement the recommendations from the 2004 task force. In the short time I was able to actually look at the document, it appears the government has not followed up on that unanimous recommendation from the committee. I wonder if my hon. colleague would like to comment on that.

• (1325)

Hon. Kevin Sorenson: Madam Speaker, I remember when we brought forward budget after budget. I think for our last budget, which was a balanced budget, the budget implementation bill was, if I remember correctly, 400 pages, maybe 500 pages.

Members of the opposition party at that time which is now the government just attacked us as having what was not so much an omnibus bill but 500 pages that they were expected to read through, come and debate. Now we see the Liberal government with an 800-page budget implementation bill.

The member is right. There are a lot of things that the Liberals promised in the last election and since being elected that they were going to bring forward for Canadians. They were going to have minuscule deficits. They were going to have pay equity. They were

going to do all of these things, but the Liberals are failing on one after another.

I honestly believe that next year, in 2019, Canadians are going to hold the government to account, and rightfully so, but not just rightfully so for breaking promise after promise, but rightfully so for not providing strong governance and leadership when it comes to the fiscal management of where we are and how we want to move forward.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, CPC): Madam Speaker, as the federal member of Parliament for the Ottawa Valley riding of Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, I welcome this opportunity to inform Canadians about the deteriorating state of the nation's finances, as demonstrated by the legislation before Parliament today.

I begin my comments by reiterating clearly that Conservatives believe in clean air, low taxes and a healthy economy. A clean environment and well-paying jobs are only possible when taxpayers are treated with respect. Bill C-86 is 850 pages of failure to treat taxpayers with respect. It is time to stop the policy of the Liberal government to spend this country into bankruptcy.

While claiming to affect climate change in Africa with billions of Canadian taxpayer dollars may assuage the Prime Minister's vanity and his project to buy a seat on the UN Security Council, his new carbon tax or pollution tax or whatever new name he dreams up for his massive tax scheme this week, next week or next month does not change the fact that a tax is a tax. Excessive deficit budgets year after year with no credible plan to balance spending with revenue are behind the carbon tax policy.

The Gerald Butts talking points failed with Dalton McGuinty and the thoroughly disgraced Kathleen Wynne, and at the end of the day, will fail the Prime Minister. Kevin Libin, in the *Financial Post*, accurately summed up the carbon tax grab as a "wealth redistribution scheme". He wrote:

It certainly will take money from consumers, businesses and high-income families and reallocate it to others using tax rebates (minus, of course, the cost of administration, which is never zero). But it's so much more irrational than that. More accurately, it's a plan to raise business costs and give imports an advantage at the very moment that our economy is already burdened by a tax regime judged far less attractive than those of our economic competitors, using levies that economists agree are too low to seriously affect emissions but are enough to harm the economy.

Using the concern Canadians have for the environment as cover for the Liberals' wacky left-wing wealth redistribution scheme failed Ontario. Phony concern for the environment will be exposed this time also. Canadians are smart. They know a tax grab when they see one. Contrary to claims being made about the new carbon tax being revenue neutral, Canadians are not fooled by that nose stretcher.

Government Orders

The federal carbon-taxing system sets out two mechanisms for taxing carbon: one, a charge on fossil fuels for fuel producers, distributors and importers, and two, an output-based pricing system for industrial facilities. Fuel charges specific to each type of fuel, including gasoline, aviation fuel, natural gas, coal and combustible waste, among others, are meant to reflect a carbon pollution price of \$20 per tonne of carbon dioxide equivalent in 2019, rising by \$10 per tonne every year to reach a total of \$50 per tonne in 2022. For example, a carbon price of 4.42¢ per litre would apply to gasoline as of April 2019, and would rise to 11.05¢ per litre by April 2022. Taxes on fuel for home heating and for transportation are examples of direct taxes.

While the government has indicated that 80% or 90% of the direct carbon taxes collected may trickle back to the households as a re-election bribe with the other 10% or 20% handed out as exemptions to others hard hit by the new carbon tax, what is not accounted for are the indirect carbon taxes. The HST that would be added to the carbon tax is an example of an indirect tax. These indirect carbon taxes, which represent about 70% of the new carbon tax revenue that would be collected, would increase the cost of other consumables by about \$522 per household. Therefore, while the election bribe may return an amount of what has been paid by families directly, Canadians would get nailed by the hidden taxes, which are more difficult to calculate.

●(1330)

For taxpayers in Ontario, they have seen this story before with electricity prices. First, Ontario ratepayers were told that huge increases in the price of electricity were necessary to pay the owners of industrial wind turbines, who just happen to have close political ties to the Liberal Party. These taxpayers were told it was necessary to stop man-made global warming, or I mean climate change, or is it pollution, or whatever other label the Liberal Party thinks will fool people. Then the carbon tax that was added onto Ontario ratepayers' electricity bills was given a misleading title of "global adjustment" to fool some gullible consumers that somehow this amount was not just another tax. With this, the Liberal Party proceeded to increase the carbon tax on electricity, ending up in a new term being coined in Ontario of "energy poverty".

Ontario is now burdened by some of the highest power rates of any jurisdiction in North America, throwing households into energy poverty and forcing industries to close shop or move to the United States. Ontario taxpayers have been suffering with carbon taxes for years.

This week, in my riding of Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, Sandvik Materials Technology in Arnprior announced it will be closing its doors and moving production south to the United States by the end of 2019. Sandvik, which makes steel pipes and tubes, currently employs 160 people at the Arnprior facility. It opened in 1975 and now, after 43 years in business in Canada, those jobs will be lost, thanks to Liberal policies. With high electricity prices, the tariff on steel, which the government has failed to resolve even after selling out Canadians with the failed NAFTA negotiations, rising interest rates, and the massive hike in taxes that is coming with the new carbon tax, the line-up at the border is only going to get longer.

Bill C-86 should have been a plan to control government spending. The fiscal policy of the government, which has been essentially to keep spending levels and deficits elevated until at least after next year's federal election and beyond, is not sustainable. The Liberal Party has been taking on debt for little gain.

Thanks to the spillover effect of a booming American economy, our economy is running at capacity, but rather than directing the Bank of Canada to raise interest rates to slow our economy, a faster drawdown on deficits would ease pressure for rate hikes. This would help the country's most indebted households, who are disproportionately young urban families with huge mortgages in places like Toronto. An Environics Analytics study has already calculated that rising interest rates will squeeze out of households an extra \$2,516 each year. Add higher mortgage payments to the new Liberal carbon tax that is set to escalate every year and all the other tax increases and the future looks bleak for average middle-class Canadian families.

According to Craig Wright, the chief economist at the Royal Bank of Canada, "At this point of the cycle you want to see surpluses and paying down debt." The recent billions in extra revenue the government collected from Canadians should have been used to pay down debt, not given to other countries as a bribe for a UN Security Council seat.

Canada's deficits are out of control. Canada spent the financial reserve it needed to fight the inevitable next recession.

The Liberals cannot even get the basics right when it comes to the day-to-day operation of government. At 850 pages, Bill C-86 is sparse when it comes to detailing how the federal government intends to correct the poor service Canadians are getting.

This legislation talks about "ensuring that social assistance payments under certain programs do not preclude individuals from receiving the Canada child benefit". This issue should be addressed separately, not buried in 850 pages of an omnibus budget bill. The government broke its promise to never present omnibus legislation to Parliament, just like it broke its promise for modest deficits. Today's deficits are tomorrow's taxes.

Christopher is an average single parent in my riding. He works at a grocery store. Unlike the one-percenter finance minister, the member for Toronto Centre, he does not vacation at a villa he owns in the south of France. Christopher submitted an application to receive the Canada child benefit for his teenage daughter on October 15. On October 30, he was informed that his application was sent for processing and that it would be at least mid-January 2019 or later before it would be looked at. This is something new.

Government Orders

Under the Conservative government of former prime minister Stephen Harper, this process took 21 days. Now it takes three to four months, if one is lucky, with the same workforce. The Liberal government has added a new level of stupidity that is slowing everything down.

●(1335)

Heaven forbid if Christopher had not contacted his member of Parliament to help with the application rather than trying to apply for the benefit on his own. First sit on the phone for hours, leave a message and maybe get contacted a week later. Staff on the phone lines are the newest employees who do not know the programs—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The time is up. I am sure the member will be able to add more content with the questions and comments.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Guelph.

Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member across the way for sharing a different perspective on our economy. It is always good to have differing opinions in this place, but when we look at our economy, we are outpacing the growth of all G7 countries and our debt-to-GDP ratio is lower than all other G7 countries. We are investing in the right way to get growth rather than the previous way of the Conservative government under Stephen Harper, which cut expenditures until we had no growth and then cut them even further. Therefore, investing in growth is smart for our economy and our government is very proud to see the success we are having.

Could the hon. could think about the debt-to-GDP ratio and what that means to her constituents?

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: Madam Speaker, they can recalculate the debt any way they want, but when the country is in the hole, we are in the hole, and new taxes are not going to dig us out of it.

Getting back to Christopher, he calls five times, talks to five different people, gets five different answers to his questions, and my office has a dozen of those child benefit horror stories.

Also, this omnibus budget is the wrong place to remove the responsibility of the Minister of National Defence for determining the compensation of members of the Canadian Forces who participate in operational missions internationally. This is a dishonest way to cut the pay of soldiers doing the most dangerous tasks. The Minister of National Defence should be ashamed that he allowed this to happen. The Minister dropped the ball when the issue of danger pay for soldiers was raised previously. However, once all the facts about his role in the Admiral Norman affair are made public, the member for Vancouver South will not be minister much longer anyway.

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Madam Speaker, the member talked about the Conservatives caring about a clean environment and low taxes. I got an email from Mark Bottomley from Lasqueti Island, where he has spent time cleaning up styrofoam and plastic from our beaches. He said that “I have decided that cleaning up the ocean is one of the most important things I can do in this time when I am overwhelmed by the degradation of the natural world.”

Of course, we owe Mark, and Canadians like Mark who are selfless and cleaning up our beaches, a ton of gratitude. However, we know that the cost is significant to our environment, the shellfish industry and to the salmon ingesting plastics. We know that in this 850-page omnibus bill and its 5,000 clauses, there is no funding to back up the Liberal government's ocean plastic charter, and no resources to help people like Mark.

Could the member speak about the resources we need and how she could fund those resources to help volunteers and good Canadians like Mark and coastal people from coast to coast to coast to help deal with this important problem?

●(1340)

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: Madam Speaker, my colleague raises a very important point.

We should be taking the garbage out of our lakes and rivers and not putting it there in the first place. Take Montreal with the billions of gallons of raw sewage it has put right in there. That is pollution. It is not carbon dioxide.

Real pollution, like my colleague described, is blue algae. We have it in the Ottawa River, and now maybe the Minister of Environment will pay attention because it is also in the Rideau Canal right down her alley. However, we are suffering from this blue-green algae all around. That is pollution. It is right in front of us and it is affecting health as well as the economy.

I want to go back to the Minister of National Defence, the temporary one, because the responsibility for Canadian women and men in the Canadian Forces should not be parcelled out to another department just because the current minister is not up to the job.

Bill C-86 is a disaster and tax-weary Canadians look forward to a change in government.

Mr. Francesco Sorbara (Vaughan—Woodbridge, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is a great pleasure to rise today to speak on Bill C-86, which implements into legislation a number of provisions that were laid out in budget 2018.

Today, I will be splitting my time with my hon. colleague and friend from Saint Boniface—Saint Vital.

When I speak to this bill, I would like to focus my thoughts on the hard-working middle-class families in my riding of Vaughan—Woodbridge, who, like Canadians from coast to coast to coast, know that our government is working for them to build a stronger economy and a healthier environment, not only for today but also for generations to come to ensure that our children, much like my children, will have a prosperous future and confidence knowing that our government made the right decisions for their future.

I also wish to salute the entrepreneurs in the city of Vaughan, who run over 12,000 small and medium enterprises. They know they have a strong advocate in me as their MP and in our government to ensure they have the tools to compete and succeed both domestically and globally.

Government Orders

Our government is committed to building a strong middle class and helping those working hard to join it. We know the results to date and are very proud of our record: a record low unemployment rate; over 500,000 or 600,000 new jobs created in the last three years, the majority of which are full time; and, amazingly, over 500,000 job vacancies in Canada. A majority of the jobs that have been created in this great country have been from the private sector, another thing we should be proud of.

There are many elements in Bill C-86 that I could speak to, everything from the pay equity act to the Canadian gender budgeting act to the wage earner protection program to the enactment of a department for women and gender equality act, which, as a father of two young daughters, I am very proud of. It would establish a department for women and gender equality to assist the minister in ensuring that we as a society and a government advance equality with respect to sex and sexual orientation. There are even amendments to the Bank Act to strengthen provisions that apply to a bank in relation to the protection of customers and the public. Canadians expect and deserve the strongest consumer protection standards when dealing with their financial institutions and we will deliver on that.

However, I wish to focus my time this afternoon primarily on one aspect of Bill C-86, which for me represents our government's commitment to building a more prosperous country and that would ensure that all Canadians benefit from economic growth and a more inclusive and fair society.

Division 21 of part 4 of Bill C-86 enacts the poverty reduction act, which sets out for the first time in our country's history targets for poverty reduction in Canada from coast to coast to coast. The poverty reduction targets our government has put forward are ambitious and realistic, and are lifting and will lift hundreds of thousands of Canadians out of poverty from coast to coast to coast. Our government aspires to achieve a poverty reduction target of 20% below the poverty level in 2015 by 2020, and 50% below by 2030. These targets are not just numbers, because behind them are the stories of hard-working Canadians from all walks of life and all parts of this great country. Canadians are ambitious and steadfast. They expect nothing less from their government. When we look at the measures behind the poverty reduction act we can not only be proud of the work we have done as a government but, more importantly, also of the work we have done as a country.

The pillars of our poverty reduction strategy are based on the following: dignity to lift Canadians out of poverty by ensuring that basic needs are met; opportunity and inclusion to help Canadians join the middle class by promoting full participation in society and equality of opportunity; and resilience and security to support the middle class by protecting Canadians from falling into poverty.

How do we achieve these targets? Let me list the measures that our government has put in place: the transformational Canada child benefit; a 10% increase in the guaranteed income supplement; the Canada workers benefit; and the profound national housing strategy, a \$40 billion plan over 10 years, that will see housing needs reduced or eliminated for over half a million Canadians across this country. In my riding of Vaughan—Woodbridge, we will see more than 150 units of affordable housing built in 2019.

Moreover, investments in public transit under the PTIF 1 and now PTIF 2 will deliver sustained secure funding for public transit across Canada.

• (1345)

There is also the Canada workers benefit, which in budget 2018 provided a tax benefit that will put more money in the pockets of low-income Canadians. In fact, it is estimated that over 70,000 Canadians will be raised out of poverty, and over two million Canadians will receive assistance, from the CWB. Someone making \$15,000 a year will receive \$500 more from the CWB in 2019 than in 2018.

In Bill C-86, our government will enact changes that will ensure that an individual who is eligible to receive the Canada workers benefit can receive the benefit without having to claim it. Enrolment will be automatic. No Canadian will be left behind by our government, and the automatic enrolment mechanism that we have included in Bill C-86 is one further step to ensure this.

In achieving our poverty reduction targets, we also need to consider the transformational social program that we introduced, the Canada child benefit. We are delivering it to families who need it, not millionaires but hard-working, middle-class families across this country. In my riding alone, it equates to about \$5 million a month, helping over 17,000 children and 9,000 families, with an average payment of over \$500. That is real change that is working for Canadians from coast to coast to coast. That is real change that is benefiting middle-class families from coast to coast to coast.

We also indexed the CCB two years ahead of schedule, which will mean hundreds of extra dollars for families to help them pay for their kids' sports activities, to save for their education or buy clothes for the upcoming winter. It is estimated that the CCB will lift nearly 300,000 children out of poverty.

For our most vulnerable seniors, our government has raised the guaranteed income supplement by 10%. Promise made; promise kept. In my riding of Vaughan—Woodbridge, over 2,000 seniors received, on average, over \$800 extra per annum. That is real change, helping real Canadians, our most vulnerable seniors. Furthermore, we came to an agreement on the CPP, the Canada pension plan. We enhanced and strengthened it for future generations.

There are other measures that we have instituted, but I would like to talk briefly in my remaining time about two measures in Bill C-86. One deals with the Canada Labour Code. For many of us who follow labour relations, there was an element in labour relations dealing with contract flipping or contract re-tendering. It was one of these things that was really unfair to the middle class, unfair to hard-working workers. We have addressed that.

Government Orders

It is contained in division 15 of part 4 of this bill. Our government will address continuity of employment issues when a work, undertaking or business becomes federally regulated, or in case of contract re-tendering. This is important, as there are instances where employees obtain a new employer through a contract tendering process, and then face much lower wages for exactly the same job.

Anyone who follows what happened at the airport in Toronto knows that this happens to many workers there, where they will be employed by an employer, making \$20 an hour, and a contract re-tendering will come up and they will have to go to a new employer who imposes a much lower wage rate. It is unfair. We have addressed it. The legislation is in line with that in other jurisdictions, including the U.K. and Australia.

I will not read the pertinent section of the bill, but I encourage my colleagues from all parties to do so. It is groundbreaking, and it will ensure that we help all middle-class Canadians, all hard-working Canadians, including those workers who face a contract re-tendering.

In Bill C-86 and prior budgets, we have also addressed the issue of tax fairness and tax avoidance. Our government has invested approximately \$1 billion in the Canada Revenue Agency. This morning there was an article in one of our national newspapers applauding our government for taking the concrete measures that are in Bill C-86, when looking at the issues of tax fairness and tax avoidance. We have a prosperous economy, Canadians are working at record levels, and we have the highest labour force participation rate for women in our country's history, but we must ensure that all individuals and organizations pay their fair share, including large corporations and wealthier Canadians.

We are preventing banks from creating artificial losses. We are enhancing tax reporting requirements for trust funds. We are strengthening rules for limited partnerships. We are cracking down on tax-free corporate distributions. We are also increasing ownership transparency.

It has been a pleasure to speak on Bill C-86. There are a number of great measures in this budget implementation act. I did not even touch on the pay equity bill, which will be transformational for millions of folks in this country. It will reduce the gap between what men and women are paid, which we must do. It is the right thing to do. It is the fair thing to do. It is the thing to do for my two daughters, who are at school today, for their futures. I am proud of our government that has acted on so many fronts.

• (1350)

Hon. Erin O'Toole (Durham, CPC): Madam Speaker, I share the member's interest in pay equity. However, I would ask him to comment on the very unusual fact that the budget implementation bill contains a whole range of provisions unrelated to the budget in what the Liberals used to relish calling an omnibus bill. In fact, the deputy House leader of the Liberal Party used to call these types of bills an assault on democracy. Now their omnibus bills are larger and more comprehensive and complex than ever before in Canadian history.

Beyond some of the elements of the budget and budget implementation, is he uncomfortable with the fact that Liberals ran for office, saying they would not have such omnibus bills and now seem to relish introducing them?

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Madam Speaker, when I knock on doors in my riding, the issues residents are talking about are having a good future for their children, having good jobs for themselves, being able to spend time with their families and ensuring we are doing the right things for the economy and the environment. Whether it is our record-low unemployment or climate change, which the hon. member and his party are completely ignoring, which is unfortunate, we are doing the right things for Canadians. We are doing the right things for middle-class Canadians and those working very hard to join it.

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Madam Speaker, I know my friend is originally from the north coast of British Columbia, so he will understand this issue.

As he knows, those of us on the west coast are all very concerned about the northern and southern resident killer whales. Right now, through the Species at Risk Act, the government is going through a 180-day process to identify critical habitat. If the government were really serious about helping identify critical habitat for our southern and northern resident killer whales, it would be investing money in restoration for our salmon. The government cites the \$1.5 billion for the oceans protection plan, yet through the coastal restoration fund, the Somass River has seen nothing, Clayoquot has seen nothing. Our hatcheries have not had an increase in 28 years. This is an urgent situation.

While the process is proceeding, if Liberals wanted to build credibility with coastal British Columbians, especially the people in the District of Ucluelet who rely on our fishing industry, they would be investing money right now in that habitat, not just for killer whales but for the communities and the health of our fish. This could be a solution for all of us.

• (1355)

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Madam Speaker, the member is correct. I grew up in the riding of Skeena—Bulkley Valley, which was once held by the Liberal Party of Canada. Hopefully it again will be held by the Liberal Party of Canada.

I worked in a cannery growing up and cleaned all of the different types of salmon, including Chinook, sockeye and so forth. We want a robust fishing industry from coast to coast to coast. The reality is that many of the canneries in the town of Prince Rupert where I grew up are no longer there.

The fishing industry has changed, unfortunately. A lot of those canneries have shut down. I worked there, my mother worked there and my five aunts worked at canneries along the north coast. I am proud of my middle-class background, I am proud of the work my mom did to pay for our schooling and education, spending 12 to 14 hours a day, on her feet, cleaning fish, as did my aunts. They are hard-working Canadians.

I thank the hon. member for pointing out where I grew up. I am very proud of my background, being a working-class person and my parents being working-class union members.

Statements by Members

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Speaker, I appreciate working with my friend on the Canada-Holy See Parliamentary Friendship Group.

He talked about poverty. Fighting poverty in our country is very important. He talked about a bill that legislates aspirations. I will confess that I do not think that legislating aspirations is that big a step forward. Could the government not have done more in moving forward with policy that would combat poverty rather than legislating aspirations?

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Madam Speaker, in light of all of the measures we put in place in the last three years, the Canada child benefit, the Canada workers benefit, a 10% increase in the guaranteed income supplement, a tax cut for nine million Canadians, a national housing strategy, when we wrap them up, those are great measures. In three years we have done more than what the Conservatives did in 10 years when they were governing, and we need to be proud of that.

Putting all of those measures together, in tandem, constitutes a national poverty reduction strategy. We are going to hit our targets. We have set our goals. Like we have done in the past, a promise made, promise kept, and we will do that with our national poverty reduction strategy.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, on October 15, we held an emergency debate in this place on the IPCC report on the climate crisis. The debate is over, but the emergency is not.

[Translation]

We have allowed greenhouse gases to accumulate in the atmosphere to the point where there has been a change in its chemical composition. We can never go back. We are reaching the end of the era that made it possible for human civilization to develop. We are entering the anthropocene era.

[English]

Dawn in this new era: We dominate life on Earth and we threaten life on Earth. It is essential that before the climate negotiations open in one month, the government readjust our target to be consistent with the one the IPCC insists upon.

* * *

AFGHAN STUDENTS

Mr. Nathaniel Erskine-Smith (Beaches—East York, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Shamim Ahmadi grew up in a Taliban-occupied city in Afghanistan, where girls who tried to go to school faced threats and danger. However, when her six-month old brother passed away due to illness, she knew she needed to go to school to become a doctor.

In a recent interview, she said, “If see a family that is struggling, as a doctor I could help them. And that became my dream.” Shamim

came to Canada in 2013 at age 21. When she arrived she had no money, nowhere to stay and struggled with English. Toronto's Covenant House provided her with a room, English classes, access to school and help navigating the immigration system.

Shamim is now a permanent resident and following her dream of becoming a doctor. She will graduate from Centennial College's practical nursing program next month and intends to continue her studies at medical school.

Shamim has also started a charitable organization, the Ahmada Development Organization, to provide scholarships for Afghan students. Recently, she shared her story at TEDx's first Centennial College Toronto event dedicated to stories of resilience. In her words “I have my status, I have my life in Canada, and now I'm going for my higher education and there is nothing to stop me.” She is right.

* * *

• (1400)

[Translation]

CHICOUTIMI—LE FJORD

Mr. Richard Martel (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I learned yesterday that the government was going to award Davie shipyard the largest federal contract in its history. I do not think this is a simple coincidence. Our party and our leader are rising in the polls across Canada and Quebec. Furthermore, the government came off very poorly in sacrificing Vice-Admiral Norman.

In recent weeks, our party has been pointing out the inequality among Canada's three major shipyards, and this announcement was the result of that pressure.

The Conservative party is the only party that can stand up for the interests of all Canadians and Quebecers.

As a side note, our leader will be in my riding tomorrow. If the government wants to one-up our leader, here is a wish list. The civilian airport in Bagotville is in need of massive investments, as the region works on attracting tourists from Europe, and Mont-Édouard in the Lower Saguenay is in need as well. The Saguenay port is gaining momentum and is also in need of investments so that it can continue to generate more opportunities in the north.

We will welcome investments with open arms.

* * *

[English]

SIKH SOCIETY OF MANITOBA

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Manitoba Sikh society, for 50 years, now has been meeting the spiritual needs of the people of Sikh faith from Winnipeg North and beyond. Personally, I have been visiting the Sikh society gurdwara since 1988. The warmth, generosity, kindness and friendship I have witnessed first-hand is one of the reasons I am still in politics today.

Statements by Members

The Sikh Society of Manitoba has done much more than just meet the spiritual needs of its congregation. It plays a critical role in advocating diversity, promoting cultural awareness and harmony. The gurdwara is responsible in many ways for not only supporting the growth of the community, but also ensuring a better understanding of Sikhism in the general population.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the past and current leaders of the Sikh Society of Manitoba. The society continues to build a better environment that goes far beyond north end Winnipeg.

* * *

CARIBOU

Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, while Canadians have waited patiently for the government to act, growing numbers of woodland caribou herds have declined from threatened to endangered status. The last remaining herds of mountain and woodland caribou in B.C. and Alberta are on the brink of extinction, a situation so dire a judge called the federal minister's lack of action egregious.

Federal law mandates the federal minister of environment to intervene where the provinces fail to take action to stop the degradation of critical habitat needed for survival of these iconic animals. Alberta has some of the most highly disturbed caribou ranges in Canada, with populations declining by 50% every five years. A growing number of caribou herds are now endangered.

We are simply running out of time. Promised spending on future conservation just will not cut it. Canadians are calling on the current environment minister to immediately issue a safety net order and save the endangered northwestern Alberta herds. A strategy is in the works to protect the critical habitat and maintain a viable economy in the region, but for the sake of the caribou we need federal action now.

* * *

[*Translation*]

CIEU-FM RADIO STATION

Mr. Rémi Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to inform the House that today marks the 35th anniversary of CIEU-FM radio.

A fixture in the Chaleur Bay area, CIEU-FM has been airing high-quality local radio programming that speaks to residents and their interests for three and half decades.

I salute all the dedicated radio professionals who have kept the station going all these years. It cannot be said often enough that local media are the backbone of our communities and contribute enormously to community development. CIEU-FM is a great example, as it plays a key role in the region's diverse media landscape and also in residents' everyday lives.

To all the employees, administrators, announcers and listeners of CIEU-FM, happy 35th anniversary.

[*English*]

BRANDON UNIVERSITY

Mr. Larry Maguire (Brandon—Souris, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in October, Brandon University, home of the Bobcats, celebrated its 50th anniversary. This milestone gave alumni and the entire community a wonderful opportunity to look back and reflect upon the importance of BU in Westman.

Without a doubt, Brandon University has had a lasting and meaningful impact on the entire region. Countless students have received their education from BU and have gone on to become world-class researchers, teachers, musicians, doctors, entrepreneurs, athletes, lawyers, politicians and much more. Henry Champ, Andy Murray, Walter Dinsdale and even Manitoba's current premier Brian Pallister all started at BU.

I am incredibly proud that BU is at the heart of our region, and the numbers speak for themselves. Not only has student enrolment grown by nearly 25% in the past six years, but hundreds of millions of dollars in economic impact are directly attributed to Brandon University every year.

Brandon University will continue to prosper in years to come and I will support it every step of the way as it writes down the next chapter—

● (1405)

The Speaker: The hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier.

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OTTAWA—VANIER

Mrs. Mona Fortier (Ottawa—Vanier, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is my honour to rise today to talk about one of the wonderful community partnerships we have in my riding of Ottawa-Vanier.

Last night, the Vanier Community Association, along with the help of the Vanier Community Service Centre, Crime Stoppers, Loblaws and Partage Vanier organized a fun-filled and safe Halloween fun zone for Vanier families.

[*Translation*]

The goal was to promote safe celebrations in Vanier. Organizers set up tents at two locations in the neighbourhood. They also hosted games and handed out candy.

[*English*]

They also organized a *pédibus* to encourage families to trick-or-treat together in their own neighbourhood.

Volunteers of all ages worked together to run the different activities and booths.

[*Translation*]

We all have the right to feel completely safe in our neighbourhoods.

I commend the organizers of this fun initiative, which is held in Vanier every Halloween.

*Statements by Members***MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS**

Mr. Francis Drouin (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank and congratulate all the candidates who were elected in the municipal elections on October 22, 2018. I look forward to working with them.

I want to thank everyone who had the courage to run, as well as all the volunteers who worked so hard during the election campaign.

[English]

This past municipal election, some chose to retire. I would like to take this opportunity to highlight the career of my former principal, the mayor of Champlain, Mr. Gary Barton. For 46 years, he served his community as councillor and later as mayor. Mr. Barton achieved something that we can only dream of in this place, being acclaimed in our next election. Since becoming mayor, Mr. Barton was acclaimed time after time after time. This is a true testament to the confidence his community gave him as mayor of Champlain.

I want to thank his wife Jean and his children for lending their husband and father to our community.

I hope that Gary enjoys a well-deserved retirement.

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HURON—BRUCE

Mr. Ben Lobb (Huron—Bruce, CPC): Mr. Speaker, forget about the Red Sox dynasty, the Yankees dynasty, the Astros dynasty. The true baseball dynasty in this country is right in Huron—Bruce. This year we had four provincial championship teams, the first time ever:

The Exeter Express rookie ball team coached by Jeff Kerslake, John Brand, Derek Leenders and Brad Brown.

The Clinton Mustangs peewee championship team, coached by my old teammate Kevin Meade, Steve Langendoen, Matt Langendoen and Jeff Ryan.

The Kincardine Cardinals won two championships this year, mosquito and bantam teams, coached by Mike Klein, Dwight Howald, Travis Van Gaver, Steve Travale, Jeremy McQuillin, Art Houghton, Warren Beisel and Jay Bell.

I would like to thank the parents and grandparents for raising tremendous young men. We are so proud of them. They are doing a great job. I thank the municipalities and I thank Dan Colquhoun, John Leppington and Doc Miller, who kept the lights on our ball diamonds in those lean years.

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LONDON NORTH CENTRE

Mr. Peter Fragiskatos (London North Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as members of Parliament, we all agree that to carry out our roles we must lean on our personal staff for their support and expertise. I know every MP has a highly capable team working tirelessly to help those we represent. In our London community office, I want to thank Ryan Gauss, Heather Marshall, Josh Chadwick and Allison Birs for everything they have done and continue to do.

Though I am unable to mention everyone, I also want to highlight those here on the Hill who help us do our jobs as well. To our committee coordinator Mélanie and her staff, House votes coordinator Nathalie, our lobby general Patrick and member statement coordinator Evelyne, I say thanks. To the staff who help us liaise with ministries, in my case the Ontario desks, I say thanks. To Jamie Kippen in the Prime Minister's Office, I say thanks. To our committee analysts, clerks, support staff and pages, I say thanks.

Without the efforts of many, we would be unable to do our jobs effectively.

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YWCA CANADA

Hon. Kent Hehr (Calgary Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with 32 chapters across the country, the YWCA is working to empower women and girls. I am especially excited to have the YWCA from Banff and Calgary here with us today. After 44 years in downtown Calgary, the YW is building a new home in Inglewood, with our government's help. It will include a supportive, transitional shelter with 100 spaces for women and their children

There is also the Banff YW courtyard project, which was funded by our government as well. It will provide affordable rental housing for 78 at-risk women.

With a combined investment of \$7.3 million from the national housing strategy into these affordable housing projects, our federal Liberal government is proud to support the YW, and we commend its leadership in helping vulnerable women and families find a safe place to live.

* * *

● (1410)

43RD GENERAL ELECTION

Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, for three years, Canadians have seen sunny ways turn into stormy days, pipelines into pipe dreams and families burdened with tax after tax after tax, but there is still hope. With the election less than a year away, Canadians are seeing the potential of a country that is unapologetic about who they are, a country united in purpose.

One year from now, Canadians will have a chance to elect a new prime minister who will bring forward a positive vision of freedom, unity and prosperity. These ideals have inspired millions of people to come to this country. Our leader will not give ground to those who want to threaten our freedom of speech or our freedom of conscience, but will stand for the ideas that cause millions of people to seek a new life in Canada. I, and millions of Canadians, look forward to 2019, when we can build a Canada where taxes are low, government is limited, opportunity is unlimited, freedom is celebrated and people are put first.

May God keep our land glorious and free.

CHURCHILL, MANITOBA

Mr. Dan Vandal (Saint Boniface—Saint Vital, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, last night, for the first time in nearly a year and a half, the sound of a train whistle blew into the town of Churchill.

[*Translation*]

The Prime Minister joined members of the community this morning to celebrate the return of rail service to Churchill, the gateway to the north. The railway is a lifeline for thousands of Manitobans.

[*English*]

This morning, the Prime Minister announced \$3.8 million to help revitalize Churchill and to create long-term economic growth for the people of northern Manitoba. I want to recognize and thank Churchill Mayor Mike Spence for his continued advocacy and partnership throughout this very difficult time. I also want to commend the Herculean effort of the Arctic Gateway Group, which has worked non-stop since September to make this day a reality.

Today is a momentous day for the people of Churchill, the surrounding communities and indeed all of Manitoba and all of Canada.

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PENSIONS

Mr. Scott Duvall (Hamilton Mountain, NDP): Mr. Speaker, this week we welcome a delegation of 23 steelworkers to Ottawa to lobby members of Parliament about changing Canada's inadequate bankruptcy and insolvency laws. This is their second visit this year, and I know they are anxious for the government to take action as soon as possible, and certainly before the next election.

We all know there is a problem with workers losing pension and health care benefits as a result of bankruptcy. What is happening to the Sears workers has created a national discussion. The fact there are four parliamentary bills addressing the issue underscores the importance of the issue for Canadian workers.

I know steelworkers from my community of Hamilton are hoping their Liberal members of Parliament will finally act after three years of doing nothing, especially since the Prime Minister came to Hamilton during the election and promised to use all the tools in the tool box to fix the problem.

I ask our Liberal Hamilton MPs to act and keep their promises. Hopefully they will be able to explain their inaction to the steelworkers they claim to represent.

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FIREARMS

Mr. Larry Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, CPC): Mr. Speaker, firearms owners across the country are gearing up to head out to the bush for deer season. Unfortunately, while these responsible firearms owners have their sights set on the perfect buck, the current Liberal government has its sights set on them.

Bill C-71 fails in every respect. It would do nothing to address illegal firearms ownership or guns and gangs crime, but would make those who already own firearms jump through even more hoops. The

Oral Questions

word, “gang” is not even mentioned in the bill. Law-abiding firearms owners are concerned that measures in Bill C-71 would create the necessary conditions to start up a new long-gun registry.

Instead of drawing a target on the backs of those who follow the law, the government needs to start going after the thugs and criminals who obtain firearms illegally. Criminals do not apply to own a firearm. If the Liberals got off their high horses, climbed down out of their ivory towers, and climbed into a deer-stand like I am going to do, maybe they would understand what I am talking about.

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● (1415)

YWCA CANADA

Ms. Pam Damoff (Oakville North—Burlington, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the YWCA Canada is our country's oldest and largest women's multi-service organization working to advance gender equality. Today, YWCA leaders from across Canada are in Ottawa for the second annual YWCA Canada day on the Hill. I had the pleasure to meet with the delegation earlier today to discuss how we can work together to improve the lives of women and girls across the country by addressing gender-based violence, gender equality and homelessness.

YWCA Canada creates safe, affordable housing and emergency shelters, and supportive programs for women and girls, as well as providing child care, skills training and so much more.

Locally, the YWCA Hamilton knows that investments in women's economic security are good for everyone. I also applaud its leadership in bringing attention to the connection between firearms and domestic violence because, to quote the YWCA Toronto, “gun control saves women's lives”.

I thank the YWCA Canada for the essential work it does to support women and girls in this country.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[*Translation*]

PRIVACY

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians are outraged, and rightly so. Statistics Canada wants to poke around the personal bank accounts of honest Canadians. We in the Conservative Party find that completely unacceptable. It is an utterly inappropriate invasion of Canadians' privacy. Unfortunately, the Liberal government is washing its hands of the issue. It does not see a problem and will not stop Statistics Canada from proceeding.

Fortunately, the Privacy Commissioner is on the ball and has launched an investigation.

Why does the Liberal government continue to defend the indefensible?

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Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Louis-Saint-Laurent for his question.

Of course our government takes Canadians' privacy very seriously. Working with confidential data is obviously nothing new for Statistics Canada. The agency has been using personal information for a century to provide the reliable, crucial data required to meet the needs of Canadians, businesses and communities. In the spirit of openness and transparency, Statistics Canada has asked the Privacy Commissioner to work more closely with the agency on this project. It is our understanding that he has accepted the invitation.

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is much more than an invitation; it is an investigation. It is not a second look, as the Prime Minister so delicately put it yesterday.

Why is the commissioner carrying out an actual investigation? It is because this is not right. It is an invasion of privacy, and honest Canadians do not need it.

To paraphrase a former justice minister, I would say that if there is no place for the state in the bedrooms of the nation, then there is no place for the state in the bank accounts of honest Canadians.

Why does the government continue to tolerate this situation?

It needs to say enough is enough and tell Statistics Canada to cease and desist.

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what Canadians find intolerable is the Conservative Party's fearmongering. That is what Canadians have found intolerable for years.

Statistics Canada has been handling Canadians' personal information for a century. The data collected will be processed to make it anonymous. Canadians can rest assured that their banking information is private and protected. When data is collected, it is stripped of all personal information.

Canadians are familiar with Statistics Canada's role. The Conservatives would do well to stop their fearmongering.

[English]

Mr. Mark Strahl (Chilliwack—Hope, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the data Statistics Canada is demanding is not anonymous. It is personal, and it is private. It has no consent from Canadians to take it. It includes account balances, debit and credit transactions, mortgage payments, e-transfers, all taken from Canadians without their consent.

We on this side of the House are not going to trust the government to protect Canadians, when it violated it so many times before. Why do the Liberals not do the right thing and tell Statistics Canada to back off the private personal information of Canadians?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House, we do trust Statistics Canada and we do trust Canadians to make the right judgment.

Statistics Canada has been handling Canadians' personal information for over a hundred years now. The data it receives will be

stripped of all personal information when it receives it, so Canadians can be assured that their banking information is protected and private.

Following best practices, Statistics Canada has gone above the requirements of the law and has asked the financial institutions to inform their clients about how this data will be used. The Conservatives would do well to listen to Statistics Canada.

• (1420)

Mr. Mark Strahl (Chilliwack—Hope, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there have been over 800 pages with hundreds of thousands of examples of where the government has violated the privacy of Canadians in the last 19 months alone, so he will forgive us if we do not trust him with the personal financial data of Canadians. The government has no consent to obtain it. This is private, personal data.

Why do the Liberals not tell Statistics Canada to get out of the bank accounts of Canadians?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have no lessons to receive from the Conservatives, and Canadians know that.

High-quality, reliable data is key in making decisions that truly reflect the needs of Canadians. Unlike the Conservatives, we think that facts are a pretty good place to start to make public policy.

Canadians know who they can trust in this country. They can trust Statistics Canada. They can trust us to do the right thing, and the Conservatives had better get on board.

Mr. Mark Strahl (Chilliwack—Hope, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the government seems to have a problem with understanding the concept of consent. It does not have it in this case. It does not have the right to the personal data of Canadians. It has violated the privacy of Canadians hundreds of thousands of times in the last 19 months alone.

Why does it not listen to Canadians who are outraged by this personal violation? Stop Statistics Canada from accessing their financial data, and do it today.

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what we are going to start doing is to trust Statistics Canada. They should be doing that, because Canadians know that Statistics Canada is on their side.

We know that data is a good place to start to make policy decisions in this country, and I think Canadians told that to the Conservatives in the last election. They know that they can trust Statistics Canada. They know that they can trust us. We will treat the information in accordance with the law. They had better get on board with that.

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, when it comes to fighting climate change, the Liberal government is all talk and little action, so little action, in fact, that a group of Quebec's legal experts is considering bringing the government to court to force it to respect its own commitments. This recourse is seen as plausible, because it has been used elsewhere, namely in the Netherlands. In a court ruling, the Dutch government is now under obligation to implement a GHG reduction plan.

Will the Liberals stop producing so much hot air about climate change, or will they wait for legal experts to force them to do it?

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Intergovernmental and Northern Affairs and Internal Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think some colleagues will agree that it is not in this part of the House of Commons that there is hot air being produced with respect to climate change.

What our government is doing is putting forward a real plan that will make a real difference in the global fight against climate change. We said in the 2015 election that we would have a plan, something the Conservatives do not have. We said we would put a price on pollution and make the Canadian economy more competitive and create jobs for middle-class Canadians. That is exactly what our government is doing.

[Translation]

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, if the Liberals are so serious about this, why are they still using the inadequate targets established by Stephen Harper's Conservatives, targets they have no chance of meeting?

These failures have consequences. Over the past 25 years, the Earth's oceans have absorbed 60% more heat than scientists previously thought. That means global warming is happening faster than we thought. One consequence is that the Pine Island glacier in Antarctica lost a 300-square-kilometre chunk of ice this week, which is an area five times the size of Manhattan.

My question again is this: Why are the Liberals refusing to change their game plan, which is clearly not good enough?

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Intergovernmental and Northern Affairs and Internal Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am sure you will not be surprised to hear that I do not share our hon. colleague's pessimism.

As we have always said, our government takes climate change very seriously. Apparently the Conservatives have no interest in tackling this issue.

We have a plan to make polluters pay while keeping Canada's economy competitive and creating good jobs for Canadians, and we are following that plan.

• (1425)

[English]

Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Canadians grow increasingly fearful from daily reports that the impacts of climate change are worsening beyond what scientists have predicted, that our oceans have absorbed 60 % more heat than

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predicted, that the Arctic is melting at a frighteningly rapid rate, that we can expect worsening floods and drought. Pressure is building for measures to hold our governments accountable. Today I tabled a motion to legally enact binding greenhouse gas targets and impose a duty to act, and measures to ensure improved accountability and transparency for federal action to mitigate climate change.

Will the government support my Motion No. 204?

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Intergovernmental and Northern Affairs and Internal Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I do share our hon. colleague's sense of urgency in terms of the fight against climate change. She correctly identified a series of global phenomena that all Canadians are concerned about and have asked their governments to take seriously. They asked their governments to act in a serious way to ensure that we have a plan to fight climate change.

We think an essential element of that plan is not to make pollution free, something the Conservatives think would be a key part of a plan. We will make the Canadian economy more competitive and fight climate change at the same time.

[Translation]

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it emerged today that cleaning up the oil sands will cost \$260 billion. That is what we mean when we say pollution is costly.

In the Netherlands, a court in The Hague is forcing the Dutch government to step up its efforts to fight climate change. Quebec legal experts want to do the same thing here and sue the Canadian government.

We know things are bad when the Liberals have to be dragged into court in order to produce real measures to fight climate change.

Do they need to be sued before they will act?

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Intergovernmental and Northern Affairs and Internal Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on the contrary, as we have demonstrated for several years now, long before the legal threats arose, we are going to take climate change seriously, and we have a plan that Canadians understand and that will make a real difference in the fight against climate change.

I would remind my hon. colleague that his home province of Quebec has been a leader in the fight against climate change for a very long time. It also has one of the most competitive economies in Canada.

Oral Questions

[English]

PRIVACY

Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals are refusing to listen to Canadians who are outraged that the government is engaged in unauthorized surveillance of their every financial transaction. Even if the Liberals could guarantee that this data could not fall into the hands of hackers, which they cannot, it would still be an abuse of power to collect it.

This is about the principle that the state does not get to monitor everything people do. Why are the Liberals so out of touch? When will they put a halt to this unauthorized surveillance? It is important to Canadians. When?

Mr. David Lametti (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let us be very clear on this matter. The information Statistics Canada wishes to study is entirely within section 13 of the Statistics Act.

How many times did Statistics Canada use this section when these very same Conservatives were in power? Not once, not twice, not even a dozen times, but 84 times. In fact, in 2008, a major credit card agency signed an agreement with Stats Can to provide this type of financial data for statistical purposes.

We trust Statistics Canada. We trust its ability to—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola.

Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are talking about millions of transactions that could potentially affect millions of Canadians. We do not know; it could me, it could you, Mr. Speaker.

George Orwell wrote *1984* as a warning, not as a road map. Canadians deserve to be free to live their lives without the state monitoring every single purchase they make. The Canadian people are quite concerned that every time they spend money, it will be documented and tracked by the state.

Will the government end this unauthorized surveillance of Canadians? When?

Mr. David Lametti (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, enough of this fearmongering from the Conservatives.

Statistics Canada is a respected agency. It is respected in Canada and around the world. The data it receives will be scrubbed. All the personal information from it will be removed before it is made in any way available, compiled, etcetera, for the use of governments, Canadians, businesses and small business across Canada.

Following best practices, Statistics Canada has gone above and beyond the requirements. It has consulted the Privacy Commissioner and is going to work with him to make sure that the interests of Canadians are not breached.

● (1430)

[Translation]

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher (Beauport—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île d'Orléans—Charlevoix, CPC): Mr. Speaker, when it comes to confidentiality, every Canadian expects the government to make it a top priority to protect their personal information. The data requested by Statistics Canada are not anonymous. That is private and personal information. However, Statistics Canada is requesting that information without consent.

Why does the party opposite want to collect information about Canadians' financial transactions without their consent?

Mr. David Lametti (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I just said, the information that Statistics Canada wishes to study is entirely within section 13 of the Statistics Act.

The personal information that will be collected and studied by Statistics Canada will be scrubbed and anonymous. There is no way the government will have access to personal information. Statistics Canada is a respected agency in Canada and around the world. We trust its judgment.

[English]

Mrs. Kelly Block (Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau once quipped that there was no place for the state in the bedrooms of the nation. This Prime Minister seems to think that the personal financial details of the nation, on the other hand, are fair game.

Why is the Prime Minister so out of touch with Canadians, who do not want this unauthorized surveillance to continue?

Mr. David Lametti (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, unlike the previous Conservative government, in the development of policy and public policy, we think facts are a good place to start and not ideology, which is how the Conservatives based its decisions.

Unlike the Conservative Party, we are a fan of the facts. Therefore, Statistics Canada will be empowered to collect this kind of information, anonymize it in order to protect the private information of Canadians and then Canadians across Canada, small businesses, large businesses as well governments, will be able to use this information to develop good policy and practices.

Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, one of the ideals of the Conservative Party is that we would ask people before we take their information.

Canadians are outraged by the Liberals' unauthorized surveillance of their private banking information. My constituents have been calling me worried about the Liberals snooping into their bank accounts.

The government has already acquired 15 years of credit information from millions of Canadians without their consent. Now the Privacy Commissioner of Canada is investigating abuse. When will the Liberals stop snooping into the lives of Canadians?

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Mr. David Lametti (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, from the get-go, the chief statistician of Canada has been open to working with the Privacy Commissioner to make sure that the private information of Canadians was not placed at risk.

I find it a little rich that the Conservatives make themselves the defendants of Canadians' privacy. We should remind them of their history. That is the same Conservative Party that was forced to back down when the Conservative government, not Statistics Canada, went after Canadians' personal information online. That is the same Conservative Party that leaked the medical information of a Canadian veteran. Enough of this fake outrage.

Mr. Ron Liepert (Calgary Signal Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, when I heard on the news on the weekend about this Statistics Canada scam, I thought it just cannot be true because we live in Canada, not the Soviet Union. After listening to the minister responsible for the gulag over there, I am not so sure we are not in the Soviet Union. The minister said today that Canadians had better get on board.

Yesterday, I surveyed my constituents. In one day there have been over 1,000 responses and 98% of them said, "Get out of my life," not "Get on board." I would like to ask the minister—

The Speaker: The hon. parliamentary secretary.

Mr. David Lametti (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is interesting to hear the members opposite try to defend the private lives of Canadians and quote former prime minister Pierre Trudeau when he said that the state has no business in the bedrooms of the nation. It is unfortunate that many people in that party still disagree with that today.

* * *

● (1435)

[Translation]

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Ms. Karine Trudel (Jonquière, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the CPTPP comes into force in 59 days, and dairy producers still do not know what kind of compensation they will be entitled to. Unbelievable.

When the Liberals signed the CPTPP, they opened a 3.25% breach in our supply management system, on top of the breaches from the Europe agreement and the USMCA. Our producers are understandably angry. They are tired of being used as bargaining chips.

Will the government finally compensate our producers for the losses incurred?

[English]

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we understand there will be an impact on farmers and we are committed to fully and fairly supporting them and to make sure that they succeed. We are forming working groups with the dairy producers and processors, poultry and egg producers and processors. Together we will help our supply-managed farmers and processors innovate, grow and remain competitive for generations to come. We will continue to support the agricultural sector and the supply management sector.

Ms. Ruth Ellen Brosseau (Berthier—Maskinongé, NDP): Mr. Speaker, three times the Liberals had a chance to protect supply management and guess what? Three times they failed. The Liberals have signed deals that opened up more than 10% of our dairy market. The effects of these policies are hard and they hurt families. Hard-working families are feeling betrayed by the Liberals. The Liberals have used our supply-managed farmers as a bargaining chip in trade negotiations and we must know more about this.

Could the vice-chair of the agriculture committee tell the House whether the TPP and the lack of compensation for farmers will be on the agenda in the coming days?

The Speaker: Order. A question can certainly be asked of the chair of a committee if the chair is here. If the chair is not here, then the vice-chair can be asked.

If the chair of the committee is present, he can answer. If not, then we will go to the hon. member for Cowichan—Malahat—Langford.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to inform the House that the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food is currently engaged in a study on the mental health challenges that farmers, ranchers and producers face. During the course of that study, we heard repeated testimony from supply-managed farmers about the mental health challenges they are facing because of trade deals.

The TPP comes into force 59 days from now, yet the Liberals have not introduced a compensation plan for losses in the supply-managed sector. Our farmers, ranchers and producers—

The Speaker: Order. The hon. member knows that the comments from a vice-chair should be on the agenda of the committee. That is what can be talked about by a chair or vice-chair in the House.

The hon. member for Carleton.

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CARBON PRICING

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Prime Minister admitted that large industrial corporations will not have a carbon tax. They will have targets, but if they exceed those targets, they will have to pay. I checked what they would have to pay. It turns out, from the government's own documents, they will not have to pay the same taxes as Canadians. In fact, they can just submit something called eligible offset credits.

If large industrial corporations do not have to pay the carbon tax, why should suburban soccer moms and small businesses have to pay it?

● (1440)

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Intergovernmental and Northern Affairs and Internal Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we know the Conservatives are getting desperate when they turn to the Fords for an endorsement. We saw it in the dying days of the 2015 campaign when Stephen Harper became a convert to the Ford nation. Now the Leader of the Opposition wants to be in the same shadow as well.

Oral Questions

Canadians deserve an honest plan to deal with climate change. We have a plan that will protect our environment and create good jobs for middle-class Canadians. We wish the Conservatives had one as well.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the question was about the carbon tax. The government has released documents which show that industrial facilities that emit more than 50,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases will be exempt from the carbon tax. If the carbon tax really was about saving the world, we would presume the largest industrial emitters of carbon would have to pay it.

The question again is: Why should small businesses and suburban soccer moms pay it if large emitters do not have to?

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Intergovernmental and Northern Affairs and Internal Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we saw yesterday another example of what Conservative leaders do when they are in dire straits. They beg for an endorsement from the Fords.

We remember Stephen Harper in the dying days of the 2015 election with a fake cash register at an event with the Fords. Now the current leader appears to also be taking orders from Premier Ford to ensure that there is no plan to deal with climate change and no plan to make the Canadian economy more competitive. That is not something this government will do.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, no, what the Liberal government will do is charge a new exorbitant tax on small businesses, suburban commuters and soccer moms while giving an exemption to large industrial facilities that emit more than 50,000 tonnes of greenhouse gases. The Liberals say the only way to save the world from climate change is a tax, yet they are exempting the largest industrial emitters of greenhouse gases.

Again, if the Liberals are going to exempt the big corporations, why do they not exempt families and small businesses too?

Mr. Sean Fraser (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we were elected on a commitment to grow the economy and protect the environment at the same time. Our plan includes putting a price on pollution that will leave middle-class families better off.

It is interesting that the Conservatives have finally found the courage to stand up for the middle class, which they have been lacking for several years.

When it came to small business owners, we reduced the small business tax to 9%, which the Conservatives opposed. We implemented the Canada child benefit, which leaves nine of 10 families better off. We are taking steps to make life more affordable for seniors.

I would encourage the Conservatives to continue to advocate for what we have been advocating for for several years, which is to support the middle class. If they develop a plan to support the environment at the same time, I will be happy—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Carleton.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have asked the same question three times in a row, and three times the Liberals have scattered off running to every other subject conceivable. They cannot explain why the largest industrial emitters

that emit more than 50,000 tonnes of greenhouse gases do not have to pay the carbon tax at all when the tax is supposed to be about reducing emissions. Only suburban soccer moms, small businesses and seniors have to pay it. Why?

Mr. Sean Fraser (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with respect, the hon. member is distorting the facts.

Our plan to protect the environment includes putting a price on pollution, including a price for heavy emitters. We also know, not only from our government but from folks like Stephen Harper's former director of policy, that middle-class families will be better off as a result of this plan. In fact, Doug Ford's chief budget adviser confirmed two years ago before the Senate that in fact the single most important thing we can do to transition to a low-carbon economy is to put a price on pollution.

I suggest that the Conservatives actually take his advice. Their only plan when they were in government was to plunge us into a recession and they liked it so much they tried it twice.

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PHYSICIAN-ASSISTED DYING

Mr. Murray Rankin (Victoria, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Audrey Parker of Halifax is dying today. She has stage 4 cancer and lives in terrible pain. She has chosen to end her life much sooner than she would like. Audrey was forced to make this agonizing choice because our existing medical assistance in dying law does not allow for advance requests. She worried that if she waited, she would not be able to give the consent required.

Soon the government will be receiving an expert report on this law. Will it introduce legislation before the next election so people like Audrey never again have to make this agonizing choice?

● (1445)

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to stand in this House and extend my sincere condolences to the family of Ms. Parker. If I could have given her authorization for advance request, I would have absolutely done so. However, as parliamentarians, we know that the laws we make are for all Canadians. That is why we have put in place a group of experts to look at three sensitive areas, as we want to protect our vulnerable Canadians. We want them to look at the issue involving advance consent, also the issue of mature minors, and also for serious mental health issues.

Once again, we will continue to work on this matter, and I look forward to receiving the experts' report.

Oral Questions

[Translation]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Ms. Hélène Laverdière (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Amnesty International, Oxfam and several other organizations join the NDP in calling on the government to immediately stop sending arms to Saudi Arabia.

For years, the Liberals have been repeating that they are very worried and that they are closely monitoring the situation. Canadians, however, are sick of waiting. You cannot put a price on human rights.

Will the government step up and stop arms sales to Saudi Arabia?

Hon. Andrew Leslie (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians do not want exports to be used to violate human rights. That is why our government is committed to a stronger and more rigorous arms export system. We are reviewing export permits to Saudi Arabia, we have frozen permits in the past and we will not hesitate to do so again if necessary.

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[English]

THE ECONOMY

Mr. Francesco Sorbara (Vaughan—Woodbridge, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this summer when I was knocking on doors in my riding of Vaughan—Woodbridge, I talked with residents about the issues they were concerned about. For most of them, they were concerned about the economy, the cost of raising their kids and about saving for their retirement.

[Translation]

During the 2015 election, we made it clear that we wanted to focus on investing in Canada's middle class in order to boost our economy.

Can the Minister of Finance tell the House about the measures we have taken to help Canadian families and grow our economy?

[English]

Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first, I would like to thank the member for Vaughan—Woodbridge for the work that he is doing to listen to Canadians and on the finance committee to help us drive the right kind of investments for Canada.

[Translation]

I can say that our investments have already made a real difference for Canadian families across the country.

[English]

It is true that what we are seeing are unemployment rates among the 40-year lows. We are seeing a level of growth that is helping families across the country. Importantly for the constituents in Vaughan—Woodbridge and across the country, they are going to see \$2,000 more in their pockets in 2019 versus what they had in 2015. That is a really important difference for middle-class Canadians.

[Translation]

BORDER SECURITY

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister likes making big announcements, but he never concerns himself with the details.

For his new immigration plan, he forgot to consult Canada border services officers and warn them that their workload would increase as a result of the deportations. He also forgot to provide them with more resources.

Before arbitrarily setting a higher immigration target, should he not deal with this problem first?

Mr. Peter Schiefke (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister (Youth) and to the Minister of Border Security and Organized Crime Reduction, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, unlike the previous government, which cut \$400 million, we have invested \$173 million. Some of that money will be used to ensure that we are better equipped to manage the situation. It will also ensure that unsuccessful asylum seekers are sent back to their own countries. That is what Canadians expect, and that is exactly what we are doing.

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that amount just went up by \$100 million, because before, the Liberals were claiming it was \$300 million in cuts. None of it is true.

The problem right now is that border services officers learned from the media that they have to deport 10,000 people who were refused access to Canada. When they found out, they said that they did not have the necessary resources to deport those individuals.

It is not a matter of money. It is a matter of resources. This whole situation has been mismanaged.

My question is this: are you ready to deport those 10,000 people, yes or no?

The Speaker: I remind the member that he must address his comments and questions to the Chair.

The hon. parliamentary secretary.

Mr. Peter Schiefke (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister (Youth) and to the Minister of Border Security and Organized Crime Reduction, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yes, we are ready to do that. We are ready because we made investments after the \$400 million in cuts made by the previous Stephen Harper government. Yes, we are able to do that, because we have made investments. The people working hard at the border to protect us and deal with asylum claims and irregular migrants are better equipped to do their work because of the investments that we have made.

Oral Questions

●(1450)

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

Hon. Michelle Rempel (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): On the topic of spending, Mr. Speaker, after spending hundreds of millions of Canadian tax dollars on processing and prioritizing things like work permits for people who illegally entered Canada after reaching the safety of upstate New York, today the Prime Minister announced that he was starting a taxpayer-funded propaganda campaign to moralize, with his false sanctimony, to Canadians who oppose his failed immigration policies.

How many taxpayer dollars will the Prime Minister be spending on his advertising campaign to preach the value of illegal border crossers to Canadians?

Mr. Matt DeCoursey (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we were proud to put in place yesterday our second three-year immigration plan that would see immigrants to this country rise over the next number of years. That will contribute to the economic success of our country. That will contribute to jobs for middle-class Canadians.

We believe that newcomers to Canada contribute to the economic success of our country. It is a principle that the Conservatives do not believe in. They believe in spreading fear and division and dog whistling at Canadians. We will grow the economy. We will bring newcomers into Canada and they will contribute to the economic vitality of our great country.

Hon. Michelle Rempel (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, a fast way to build support for immigration in Canada is to fix the system that the Prime Minister has broken. To build support for immigration, the Prime Minister should close the loophole in the safe third country agreement instead of spending \$50 million to foot the hotel bills of illegal border crossers.

Why is the Prime Minister adding insult to injury by spending taxpayer dollars to tell Canadians that illegal border crossing is okay instead of preventing the abuse of Canada's asylum system?

Mr. Matt DeCoursey (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we believe it is important to share the successes that newcomers are contributing to communities right across the country, and we are proud to do so. Canadians understand that when newcomers come into their communities, they set up businesses, they provide jobs for middle-class Canadians, they help our economy grow. We will continue to focus on the economic success of our country through immigration.

It is rich for the party opposite to talk about immigration in positive terms after it failed on the immigration front for close to 10 years. We believe in economic success in our country, growth for the middle class, and that happens through increased immigration.

* * *

CANADA REVENUE AGENCY

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, instead of going after fat cat CEOs and the tax havens wealthy corporations

use to avoid paying their fair share, refugees are having their child benefits clawed back. The government failed to provide timely access for language training for many of the new arrivals, yet refugee families that do not respond quickly to the CRA are penalized immediately. Not only are those payments stopped, but, in two cases, refugee families were billed \$27,000.

Is that why the government is giving the CRA \$1 billion to crack down on the middle class and those who are working hard to join it?

Mrs. Deborah Schulte (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government has enhanced the Canada child benefit to give money to nine out of 10 families. It has lifted thousands of children out of poverty.

We are aware that sometimes individuals may find it difficult to provide the information requested for the review of their file. If obtaining documentation poses a problem, different alternatives adapted to the particular situation of the individual can be proposed. The agency is open to discuss and propose options. We have said many times that our priority is for Canadians to get the benefits to which they are entitled.

* * *

*[Translation]***CANADIAN HERITAGE**

Mr. Pierre Nantel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, UQAM researchers have discovered that just five movies and five TV shows in Netflix's catalogue of 5,500 titles were produced in Quebec. That is 0.1% of Netflix's content. Quebec is not in the picture.

As Quebec film and TV producers noted recently, the Netflix agreement has done nothing for our culture. What we need is content produced here. If the next generation of Quebecers does not have access to made-in-Quebec programming, it will turn to English-language American content.

Will the Minister of Canadian Heritage apply our laws to online platforms, or does he want us to become totally assimilated?

[English]

Mr. Andy Fillmore (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage and Multiculturalism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House, we will always be there for our artists and creators. That is exactly what we demonstrated with our cultural policy last year. We have made historic investments of \$3.2 billion in the cultural sector, including in the CBC, the Canada Council for the Arts, Telefilm, the NFB and the Canada Media Fund.

Due to the previous Conservative government's inaction, the lost decade, our laws on culture predate the Internet, which is why we are reviewing them so we can continue to support high quality Canadian content production. The principle of this review is clear: To participate in the system, one must contribute to the system. There will be no free ride.

* * *

● (1455)

ETHICS

Hon. Peter Kent (Thornhill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the chair of the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics. It is a crime to destroy government documents under the Access to Information Act. That crime is much more egregious if those documents have been requested in a legal proceeding.

Could the chair of the committee advise the House and all Canadians if the future agenda of the committee will include the destruction of government-held documents.

Mr. Bob Zimmer (Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as the member may know, the motion brought forward by the opposition members of our ethics committee today, which would have ensured documents and information related to Project Resolve not to be destroyed, was voted down by Liberal members. It was defeated six to three.

Hon. Erin O'Toole (Durham, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Vice-Admiral Mark Norman's legal team is worried about his constitutional rights to a fair trial. Multiple Liberal ministers have conflict of interest. They hired away the one journalist writing stories about it. The Prime Minister's Office is refusing to reveal cabinet documents needed for this trial. Today, Liberal MPs blocked, at ethics committee, the ability for the Clerk of the Privy Council to appear just to confirm whether documents were not destroyed.

My question is simple. Why the cover-up? What is the government hiding?

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, indeed there is no cover-up. The fact of the matter is that there are outstanding legal proceedings before the courts, including proceedings that will occur this very week on this very topic. The appropriate place for those issues to be resolved are in the courts of law.

The hon. members opposite do not have a mandate from either the prosecution or the defence to act in this matter. They should leave it to the legal counsel to follow the rules of court, follow the laws of evidence and allow the case to be decided in court appropriately.

Hon. Erin O'Toole (Durham, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member was first elected when I was one year old, and it is sad that I have to remind him the our mandate is from the Canadian people.

Vice-Admiral Mark Norman is facing criminal charges for breach of trust, a trust that the Privy Council has said that 73 people knew the contents of that meeting. I believe that at least two people of those 73 are Liberal MPs. They could be anyone. It could be you, Mr. Speaker.

Oral Questions

Leaving aside the Norman lawsuit, will the government clear the air and release the 72 other names?

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have just seen a demonstration of why these issues should be dealt with in courts of law, so we can avoid the innuendos and the drive-by smears. The fact of the matter is that the rules of court are there. The independent judiciary is there to manage these matters. Our distinguished law officers at the table have said very clearly, when matters of *sub judice*, they should not be the subject of either questions or answers in the House of Commons.

* * *

HEALTH

Mr. Doug Eyolfson (Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia—Headingley, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, methamphetamine abuse is impacting communities across Manitoba. Manitoba's chief medical examiner stated that the drug had been involved in 35 overdose deaths in 2017.

In September, the Winnipeg city council adopted a resolution asking for assistance from the federal government.

The issue is not only affecting urban centres like Winnipeg, but rural and indigenous communities across Canada. People are dying and we have a responsibility to act.

Could the Minister of Health please explain what our government is doing to help communities impacted by methamphetamine?

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to thank my colleague from Manitoba for his hard work.

To address the issue of problematic substance use, including methamphetamine, we have devoted \$150 million to an emergency treatment fund. Furthermore, I am pleased to advise the House that we will be providing the City of Winnipeg with assistance for prevention and treatment and we will be sending a senior official to work on its methamphetamine task force.

We will keep working to remove barriers to treatment and ensure that all Canadians struggling with problematic substance use get the help they need.

* * *

● (1500)

JUSTICE

Hon. Tony Clement (Parry Sound—Muskoka, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals are failing again. They are watering down sentences for crimes such as administering date rape drugs, abducting children, impaired driving causing bodily harm and selling young women and men into sexual slavery.

The Conservatives called for over 100 amendments to clean up the government's deeply flawed omnibus Bill C-75, but the Liberals were not listening.

Oral Questions

Does the minister really believe Canadians want sex traffickers and kidnappers to have lesser sentences?

Hon. Jody Wilson-Raybould (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I completely reject the characterization by members opposite on Bill C-75, which is a comprehensive bill that seeks to address delays in the criminal justice system.

There is nothing in this legislation that would reduce sentences. There is nothing that would change the principles around sentencing, which take into account the gravity of the offence and the proportion responsibility of an offender.

We are not lowering sentences. We are providing prosecutors with the necessary discretion they need to move forward in the appropriate way given the circumstances of the particular case.

* * *

CANADA POST CORPORATION

Ms. Irene Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Mr. Speaker, forced overtime at Canada Post means increased hours and longer delivery routes that take a toll on worker health and safety, and families suffer.

Because of the corporation's inflexibility, CUPW is pushing back against unsafe and unhealthy working conditions. Effective today, the union has declared a national ban on overtime. Workers understand that self-care benefits them, their families, the corporation and its customers.

Why does Canada Post not get it? When will the government secure a fair contract that values workers?

Mr. Rodger Cuzner (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government believes in the collective bargaining process. Our mediators have been on the ground. The minister has been in contact with both sides. We continue to hope that the two groups come together with a final outcome.

I would hope my colleague from the NDP would understand that it is not the place of the Government of Canada to put its thumb on the scale when it comes to contract negotiations.

* * *

STATUS OF WOMEN

Ms. Anita Vandenbeld (Ottawa West—Nepean, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today is the YWCA day on the Hill. The YWCA is the country's oldest and largest women's multi-service organization, with 32 associations operating in more than 400 communities across Canada.

[Translation]

The YWCA offers vitally important programs and services for women to help them reach their full potential.

What is the government doing to support organizations working to eliminate obstacles that women face?

[English]

Hon. Maryam Monsef (Minister of Status of Women, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague from

Ottawa West—Nepean for her tireless efforts to advance equality in Canada and abroad.

Last year, YWCAs came to Parliament Hill for the first time ever for their lobbying efforts. They asked for a carve-out of the national housing strategy. Our government listened. This year, we welcomed them with the announcement of an investment of over \$1.25 million for 10 YWCAs in Canada to support women working hard to join the middle class.

On behalf of the Prime Minister and parliamentarians, I send my deepest gratitude to leaders from the YWCA and I wish them another successful day on the Hill.

* * *

NATURAL RESOURCES

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, under the Conservatives, four major new pipelines with access to new markets were approved and built with no tax dollars. These Liberals have already killed two export pipelines. Their failures have not added a single new centimetre, and their Bill C-69 will ensure there will be none in the future.

Thirty-five indigenous communities now join provinces and industry to oppose the Liberals' "no more pipelines" Bill C-69. They say "it will have an enormous and devastating impact on the ability of First Nations to cultivate or develop economic development opportunities in their traditional territories".

Will the Liberals scrap Bill C-69?

Mr. Paul Lefebvre (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, after 10 years of inaction under the Harper Conservatives, 99% of our oil exports were still sold to the United States. They do not even want to negotiate with our first nations. They have no respect for the environment. We will take no lessons from them on how to move our major projects forward.

Bill C-69 provides a path forward and the certainty that business owners need. The mining sector is on board. The forestry sector is on board. We must move forward responsibly.

* * *

● (1505)

[Translation]

IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

Mr. Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ): Mr. Speaker, a month ago today, Quebecers chose a new government that promised to lower immigration levels to allow for better integration.

Premier Legault said, and I quote, "We will welcome thousands of immigrants every year, but we are going to do so in a way that promotes integration. We will take fewer, but we will take care of them."

What is the Minister of Immigration trying to do by unilaterally increasing the number of immigrants to Quebec to 70,000 within three years? Is he trying to stir up trouble?

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Intergovernmental and Northern Affairs and Internal Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his question.

Our government looks forward to working with the new government in Quebec on important topics like immigration, and we look forward to helping Quebec maintain its economic prosperity.

I spoke briefly with the new minister, Simon Jolin-Barrette. My cabinet colleagues and I look forward to meeting with him, hopefully in the coming days.

We are going to work with the Government of Quebec.

Mr. Simon Marcil (Mirabel, BQ): Mr. Speaker, what a meaningless answer.

It is clear that the Minister of Immigration knows nothing about the reality in Quebec. In Quebec, we want to not only accommodate immigrants, but to integrate them. We do not want to just tolerate them, we want to welcome them. In order for us to do that, we need to teach them our language and our way of life.

The Minister of Immigration throws figures around without taking real life into account.

Is he going to take the will of Quebec into account before setting thresholds for Quebec?

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Intergovernmental and Northern Affairs and Internal Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is regrettable that my hon. colleague thinks it is meaningless to want to collaborate with the Quebec government.

I am surprised to hear such remarks from that corner of the House of Commons.

* * *

[English]

HOUSING

Hon. Hunter Tootoo (Nunavut, Ind.): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development.

Canadians would be horrified and embarrassed to see the third world conditions that many people in Nunavut are living in. Our housing shortage has reached a crisis point. Overcrowding is contributing to high rates of youth suicide and tuberculosis. The housing allocation in the last budget does not even begin to address the current crisis or meet the annual labour force growth.

Will the minister immediately increase funding to alleviate this crisis and work with the Government of Nunavut on an appropriate allocation for the 2019 budget?

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for Nunavut for his heartfelt question.

The national housing strategy understands the unique and important needs of Canadians living in the north. That is why the

Points of Order

national housing strategy is investing \$240 million in Nunavut alone to provide 3,000 families in Nunavut with a safe and affordable place to call home. That is why our first budget invested \$80 million in Nunavut alone, an additional \$80 million for the families there. That is why we are going to work with other governments to make sure that every family in Nunavut is included and has a safe and affordable place to call home.

* * *

PRESENCE IN GALLERY

The Speaker: I would like to draw to the attention of hon. members the presence in the gallery of Ms. Isabel Plá, Minister of Women and Gender Equality of the Republic of Chile.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: I would also like to draw to the attention of the hon. members the presence in the gallery of the Hon. Heath MacDonald, Minister of Finance for the Province of Prince Edward Island.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

[Translation]

The Speaker: The hon. member for Berthier—Maskinongé on a point of order.

* * *

● (1510)

[English]

POINTS OF ORDER

ORAL QUESTIONS

Ms. Ruth Ellen Brosseau (Berthier—Maskinongé, NDP): Mr. Speaker, as you know, during question period you cut off an answer by the NDP vice-chair of the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food.

I am really hoping that you can clarify that decision, since you and every Speaker before you have ruled that the Speaker has no ability to judge the quality or the content of answers given during question period.

In fact, Bosc and Gagnon tells us, at page 516 that:

The Speaker ensures that replies adhere to the standards of order, decorum and parliamentary language, but is not responsible for the quality or content of replies to questions.

The member for Cowichan—Malahat—Langford was responding and telling us about some of the very important work being done at the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food.

This is just a question of ours. Is it a double-standard that we see, or is the House now to understand that today's precedent will be applied to answers by the government side of the House from now on? We are hoping that it is the latter.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to add to the point of order by my colleague.

Privilege

I have now been the vice-chair of the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food since the beginning of this year. Before I was cut off, I can quite confidently say that the answer I was giving could be backed up by witness testimony recorded in the evidence of the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food.

I would be more than happy to table that evidence for you, Mr. Speaker, to review. However, I can assure the House and you that the answer I was about to give before I was cut off was perfectly in line with the question by the member for Berthier—Maskinongé.

The very fact that you, Mr. Speaker, recognized her question allowed me to stand in this place, because the absence of the chair and the second vice-chair showed that I had legitimacy and the proper recognition to speak.

I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, that my answer was perfectly in line with the question.

Mr. John Nater (Perth—Wellington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am rising on the same point. I would draw your attention to note 93 on page 513 of Bosc and Gagnon, in which it is stated, referring to Speaker Milliken:

...it is not the role of the Speaker to judge the quality or content of the reply.

That applies specifically to questions asked of committee chairs or, in this case, vice-chairs of committees.

I would also draw your attention to a precedent in the House. On September 26, 2017, the member for South Shore—St. Margarets asked a question of the vice-chair of the Standing Committee on the Status of Women, and you, sir, allowed her to make an ad hominem attack on the member for Lethbridge.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order. Members should be careful about challenging the Chair.

The hon. member for Durham wishes to add something on this point of order?

Hon. Erin O'Toole (Durham, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I was going to reference that exchange with the vice-chair of the status of women committee.

The Speaker: I thank the hon. members for their interventions.

Let me just read, first of all, what it says at page 512 to 513 of *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, third edition:

Questions seeking information about the schedule and agenda of committees may be directed to Chairs of committees. Questions to the Ministry or to a committee Chair concerning the proceedings or work of a committee, including its order of reference, may not be raised. Thus, for example, a question would be disallowed if it dealt with a vote in committee, with the attendance or testimony of Members at a committee meeting, or with the content of a committee report.

I thank the members for their interventions and the arguments they have made, which I will consider. My impression at the time was that, although there was a fair bit of noise, the hon. member for Cowichan—Malahat—Langford had strayed from what is allowed by the rules that apply. My impression at the time was that he had left the question of the scheduled agenda of the committee to go on to other matters. However, I will review *Hansard* and the record in the event that I may have been mistaken about that.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: Mr. Speaker, the question was regarding the mental health challenges study the agriculture committee is currently engaged in. It is ongoing, and the question was regarding future meetings. From my understanding of the schedule of that standing committee, of which I am the second vice-chair, we have at least two more meetings regarding this particular study.

I was referencing what had happened in the past, yes. However, do I expect more answers to fall in line with what we have heard in witness testimony? Absolutely. My answer was completely in recognition of those facts and what I expect to hear from witnesses in the future.

The Speaker: I thank the hon. member for Cowichan—Malahat—Langford for his clarification, and I will come back to the House on this matter.

The hon. member for Perth—Wellington is rising to ask the usual Thursday question.

* * *

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. John Nater (Perth—Wellington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it being Thursday, I would like to ask the leader of the government in the House of Commons what business she intends to call for the remainder of this week and what business she plans to call for next week.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this afternoon, tomorrow and next Tuesday, we will continue debate at second reading of Bill C-86, the second budget implementation act, 2018.

Next Monday shall be an opposition day.

[*English*]

On Wednesday, during routine proceedings, under ministerial statements, the Prime Minister will deliver a formal apology to the Jewish refugees of the MS *St. Louis* and its passengers.

* * *

●(1515)

PRIVILEGE

USE OF ALCOHOL IN THE PARLIAMENTARY PRECINCT

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of privilege with regard to alcohol and the use of substances at this place on Parliament Hill. I wrote to you on January 29th, 2018. Specifically, I asked for your intervention at the Board of Internal Economy to address the use of alcohol on Parliament Hill.

There were four major components. I will not get into the full details, but they were to provide a more holistic approach and a more consistent approach to the use of alcohol on the Hill, similar to the Province of Ontario.

Government Orders

In a response to me, you referred me to my House leader and it being raised at the Board of Internal Economy. I would like to thank all the House leaders for doing that. It has been discussed, and there has been some work in that regard. However, there are members who do not have a House leader with the ability to do so.

Since that time, there have been several incidents on the Hill that show that there is some question with regard to activity and consistency with Ontario law and the use of alcohol on Parliament Hill.

I would ask that you consider this a point of privilege in your intervention at the Board of Internal Economy. I believe that recent events show that perhaps an investigation of security, which is your responsibility, Mr. Speaker, would be appropriate at this particular juncture. I believe that this should be a safe workplace. I believe that the past practices of this place have required change, and it has not been easy to do so.

Therefore, I ask, as a point of privilege, for safety, my ability to carry out my duties, and the security of this place, that you review the role of the Speaker with regard to the use of alcohol and the issues I identified in my previous letter to you and that you report back to this chamber. Again, there are members who do not have a House leader.

I appreciate your attempts to deal with this issue. There is no doubt that the public and people who use this space do not need to be impeded, let alone members of Parliament, with regard to some of the things that take place that are inconsistent with provincial laws and certainly inconsistent with being a good place to work.

The Speaker: I thank the hon. member for his submission. I will consider the matter and return to the House in due course.

* * *

[Translation]

HOUSE OF COMMONS

The Speaker: I have the honour to lay upon the table the "House of Commons Report to Canadians 2018".

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

BUDGET IMPLEMENTATION ACT, 2018, NO. 2

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-86, A second Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on February 27, 2018 and other measures, be read the second time and referred to a committee, and of the amendment.

Mr. Dan Vandal (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indigenous Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to participate in today's debate. I want to begin by acknowledging that we are gathered on traditional Algonquin territory.

[Translation]

Our government is committed to renewing the relationship with indigenous peoples based on the principles of the recognition of rights, respect, co-operation and partnership.

We are also committed to growing the middle class by creating opportunities for people that will help them join it. Everyone knows that indigenous peoples have long been faced with some of the most severe economic disadvantages in this country.

[English]

This problem has deep roots in the history of colonialism, including in strict measures written into legislation like the Indian Act. Let me give an example. Ed Metatawabin is a residential school survivor from Fort Albany First Nation who attended St. Anne's residential school and became a chief in his community. After he became chief, he started a small sawmill business so that people in his community would have work and the sense of purpose that accompanies work. However, because it was illegal under the Indian Act for him to own the land, he could not get insurance on his business, so he had to keep his business small to minimize any potential liabilities. Any investment he made was a personal risk to him and his family. A lot of Canadians do not understand this. They do not understand the daily barriers first nations people face on reserve.

Today we have an opportunity to rectify some of these measures and to unlock economic growth for indigenous peoples. We have a chance to create an environment that supports self-determination. This will not only be good for indigenous peoples, it will be good for Canada.

The National Indigenous Economic Development Board has estimated that engaging indigenous people in the economy at the same rate as non-indigenous people would boost Canada's GDP by 1.5% and create almost \$28 billion in economic growth. Several others have suggested that the number is actually much higher.

● (1520)

[Translation]

Today we are seeing a wellspring of indigenous-led innovation and sound business practices. There are now over 40,000 indigenous-led small and medium-size businesses in Canada. That is why I say we need to build on these successes. Let us remove barriers to further success and self-determination. That is the objective of the new legislative measures set out in the proposed budget implementation act.

I want to clarify that these amendments are not top-down solutions. We developed them in consultation with our first nations partners and by asking for their contribution and their participation from the outset.

[English]

The Government of Canada is proposing amendments to the First Nations Fiscal Management Act that would provide greater clarity around language, streamline organizational operational issues, and expand access to the program to complement new budget 2018 funding of \$50 million over five years and \$11 million per year ongoing. The act is opt-in and enables first nations to implement taxation and financial management systems.

Government Orders

First nations are supported by three fiscal institutions operating under the act: the First Nations Tax Commission, the First Nations Finance Authority, and the First Nations Financial Management Board. These institutions build capacity among first nations and bring them together to access long-term financing, and it has been a very effective approach.

For example, the First Nations Finance Authority fifth debenture of \$138 million, issued in September 2018, brought its total bond issuances to \$514 million. This bond is being used by first nations across the country to invest in community infrastructure and economic development, such as the new school for Siksika Nation, a power project in Chehalis, and housing for Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation.

The new budget 2018 investments would enable the fiscal institutions to work with nearly twice as many first nations to develop their capacity and have greater access to capital. To date, 239 first nations are scheduled in the act.

[*Translation*]

Access to funding is one thing, but we can all agree that access to the land is critical for economic empowerment. The Government of Canada is proposing \$143 million in budget 2018 to strengthen the First Nation Land Management regime and support 50 additional first nations in becoming signatories to the Framework Agreement on First Nations Land Management over the next five years.

As well, the proposed amendments to the First Nations Land Management Act before us today would ratify changes to the framework agreement, changes that were co-developed with first nations. These fixes address voting thresholds and other administrative improvements that will better support first nations that are signatory members to develop their own land codes, or laws, to exit section 33 land-management-related provisions of the Indian Act. That's one-third of the Indian Act.

The fixes will also eliminate federal oversight and enable first nations to “move at the speed of business” on investment and development opportunities.

For example, Stz'uminus First Nation, which has been operating under its own land code since 2014, has been able to create Oyster Bay Development—a 65 acre, multi-million dollar site that includes a hotel and a commercial area along the TransCanada Highway—without any need for Indian Act approvals.

● (1525)

[*English*]

Another mechanism to improve the relationship between Canada and first nations and move toward enduring reconciliation is the return of land that is owed to first nations under historical treaties and specific claim settlement agreements. With additions to reserves, ATRs, first nations can also add land to an existing reserve land base or create new reserves for the use and benefit of their members for community and economic development.

The Government of Canada is proposing this legislation to streamline the ATR process, building on the benefits of legislation that is currently only available to some first nations in the prairie provinces. These changes are long overdue. They are part of a

number of actions the government committed to take when it adopted a new ATR policy directive in 2016, after several years of engagement and joint work with first nation communities and organizations. The biggest proposed change is that ATRs would now be able to be approved by ministerial order rather than by Governor in Council, which would result in significantly more timely decisions.

The proposed legislation would also speed things up by letting first nations pre-designate land being added to a reserve, similar to zoning in a municipality, and begin to put in place arrangements, such as leases or permits, prior to the land being added, a vital requirement for investment opportunities. This would help create reserve lands that are ready for economic development.

ATRs support economic development opportunities, self-reliance and growth in first nation communities. For example, in September 2018, the Sioux Valley Dakota Nation added 79 acres of land to its reserve. The land is currently home to a gas bar and a convenience store, with future plans for a restaurant, a hotel, commercial space and an outdoor stage.

Collectively, these amendments regarding finances and land support reconciliation with indigenous peoples would result in greater long-term benefits for Canada. I encourage all members to support them.

Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, one of the things I noticed in the budget implementation act is infrastructure spending. One of the things I also noticed was that the infrastructure spending has not gone out yet. Coming from northern Alberta, when the government made the big announcement about infrastructure spending, we were definitely looking forward to having a bunch of roads re-paved or paved and roads to some of our communities built.

Could the hon. member comment on why it has taken so long to get that infrastructure money out?

Mr. Dan Vandal: Mr. Speaker, having been a city councillor for several years and a candidate in 2015, I can say that one of the policies that was most attractive to the city I come from, Winnipeg, and I imagine many rural areas, was the enhanced infrastructure spending our government was embarking on. Across the country, we are rebuilding cities, we are rebuilding rural areas, we are investing in rural municipalities. I cannot speak precisely to the situation where the hon. member resides, which I believe is northern Alberta, but I can say without a doubt that in Manitoba, in Winnipeg, the money has definitely flowed. Roads are being rebuilt. Water systems are being rebuilt. I think that some of the happiest constituents in Canada today are mayors, city councillors and rural aldermen.

Government Orders

•(1530)

Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC): Mr. Speaker, of course we are still going through this bill as it has many different divisions. Therefore, if the member cannot answer I would certainly understand.

Under division 17 of part 4, basically in order to better communicate Canada's international development efforts, it will be repeal the definition of official development assistance in the Official Development Assistance Accountability Act and confer this power to be done through regulation. The Liberals are taking out the definition of one of the most important terms in that piece of legislation and simply allowing ministerial officials, through regulations, to then further define it. Does the member believe that puts this place, this House, in the driver's seat, or are he and his government simply deferring on such important matters as official development assistance to bureaucrats who will obfuscate and evade the proper scrutiny of this House?

Mr. Dan Vandal: Mr. Speaker, my speech was about indigenous issues, northern issues and first nations issues. Therefore, I will take the information under advisement and get back to the hon. member.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today is a very special day in Manitoba and in all of Canada. The Prime Minister is in Churchill as last night we had a train roll into the town of Churchill after a great deal of effort and concentration from individuals like the mayor, Michael Spence, MLAs, including Judy Klassen, and many different stakeholders, companies like Arctic Gateway, first nations and Fairfax, all working together in order to ensure that there is going to be a bright future for Churchill as a northern port. Could my colleague take the opportunity to give his insight on how important this is, not only for Canada but particularly for Manitoba.

Mr. Dan Vandal: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Winnipeg North is absolutely right. Today, is a wonderful day, not only for Churchill but for the entire province of Manitoba. After being abandoned by the previous railroad owner, the port and the railroad track have been fixed by a private consortium in partnership with the federal government and the Town of Churchill and the railway is back in working order. The community is extremely happy. The port has been rehabilitated and goods and services are going to flow to Churchill once again and jobs will be created. In fact, our Prime Minister was there this morning to announce, in addition to the literally tens of millions of dollars that we have invested to fix the railway, that we are investing close to \$40 million on a series of projects in the Churchill area to create jobs and hope and vitality in the town of Churchill once again.

Hon. Ed Fast (Abbotsford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Peace River—Westlock.

I have been looking forward to this debate, because it gives me an opportunity to again highlight for Canadians the duplicity of the Liberal government in how it conducts the affairs of this nation and how it manages the finances of this country.

I will paint a bit of a background here before I get into the gist of my comments.

When the Prime Minister was running for election, members will remember that he promised he was going to run deficits of no more than \$10 billion a year, and Canadians took him at his word. They thought he had never been the prime minister and they were going to trust him. He also said that he was going to balance the budget by 2019, and that we could take his word to the bank that he would balance the budget by 2019. What happened? Well, year after year with the current government, it is huge deficit after huge deficit, triple the size that the Prime Minister had promised.

This is in line with a field of broken promises that the Prime Minister has left behind. I am not going to regale members with all the broken promises, but I can say that history will show that the Prime Minister and his government have broken more promises than any government before it. It has been an unmitigated disaster when it comes to keeping their word to the Canadian people.

We had deficits that were supposed to be \$10 billion. Today, they are \$20 billion. The government has added \$60 billion to our national debt. The worst part of it is that the Liberals said they were going to balance the budget by next year, but now we know that it will not be until 2045. Now, this is 25 years that we are going to be running deficits.

Just so that Canadians are very clear about this point, when we run a deficit what we are doing is spending more money than is coming in. Tax revenues come into the government, the government takes those revenues and spends them, but when it spends more than those tax revenues, it is going to have find that money somewhere. How does it do that? It borrows. Therefore, for the next 25 years, every single year, the government is planning to have Canadians borrow, whether it is \$10 billion, \$20 billion or \$30 billion a year, adding it to the debt, which somebody has to pay.

Who pays back that debt, members might ask? It is my children and theirs. It is the next generation coming up, who we are trying to teach to manage their finances wisely. We are trying to teach them to balance their chequebooks, to live within their means and not incur mortgage debt or loan debt that is beyond their capacity to pay, because if, at the end of the month, they do not have enough money to pay for their expenditures, they have to go to the bank and borrow. It is either going to be on a mortgage or loan or some other way, such as a loan shark perhaps, which is the worst case. However, the bottom line is that we are teaching our kids not to do that, but to be respectful of their spending and to balance their books. Yet, we have a Prime Minister who grew up in the lap of luxury, a trust fund baby, who has no understanding of what it means to balance budgets. He has no understanding of the importance of balancing budgets. He has no understanding of what it means to pay down the national debt and act responsibly.

That is the context in which the budget implementation act is playing out. It is a sad story. What does the bill contain?

Government Orders

It really concerns me. I am the shadow minister for environment and climate change. What the Prime Minister is authorizing is the imposition of a massive carbon tax on Canadians. We know on this side of the House that Canadians do not support a carbon tax. They are suspicious of more taxes. Today, Canadians already pay \$800 more in taxes than they did when the Liberal government was first elected. Whether it is payroll taxes or other taxes, their tax bill has gone up.

● (1535)

Here is a bigger problem. That amount does not even take into account the carbon tax they will now be paying. That carbon tax is on everything. It is on groceries, home heating bills and gasoline to tank up the car. Let me talk about that briefly. I am from British Columbia, and I know that today British Columbia has the highest gas prices in the country at \$1.61 per litre. Why is that? The carbon tax is adding more to that, another 11 cents per litre that every single Canadian is going to pay to tank up the car. That is just for gasoline. It does not include any of the other goods that people are going to buy on which the carbon tax will be applied.

What is happening is carbon leakage, something that most Canadians do not know a lot about. I will explain it in layman's terms. We impose a tax in Canada, and the tax is so onerous that businesses and individuals, consumers will leave the country and find a place they can buy that product cheaper.

Do members know what is happening in British Columbia? It is something that has not happened for a number of decades. British Columbians are now again crossing the border into the United States, into Sumas, Lynden and Blaine, Washington, and they are tanking up there.

We are now depriving Canadian vendors of those gasoline sales and the jobs that come with them. On top of that, when those Canadians go south of the border, what do they do? They stock up on cheese, milk and other things. They may end up going to Costco. However, they are buying products in the United States, when they could have been buying in Canada.

By the way, the pollution is the same in the United States. In fact, I would venture to say that Canada's performance, in terms of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, is superior to that of the United States.

I will go on to ask this. What is the actual tax that the Prime Minister is imposing on Canadians? By 2022, it is \$50 per tonne of greenhouse gas emissions. The Prime Minister says that he is doing this to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in Canada, to do our part for the environment. However, we know, by the Prime Minister's own admissions this week in this House, that he does not even believe that his carbon tax is actually going to reduce emissions. He admitted that in the House this week.

If we are not reducing emissions, then it comes down to a simple tax grab. The Prime Minister knew it was going to be a tax grab. He came up with something that he is calling a "climate action incentive". What he is doing is he is taking a dollar out of one pocket of the taxpayer and saying, "By the way, as an election gimmick, just to make sure you are going to elect me, I am going to put that dollar back in the other pocket by way of a rebate." That is what he called

it, "a rebate". Canadians would get it right after their income tax forms were filed.

The Prime Minister went further and he promised the taxpayers were going to get back more money than he took from them in the first place. Anybody who does the math will know that if a dollar is being taken out and more is being put in the other pocket, which by the way is a pipe dream, that difference has to come from somewhere. Someone has to pay for it.

It will not be the big emitters, because they have gotten all kinds of exemptions. There are big factories, refineries and cement plants that have all kinds of special deals they made with the Prime Minister. However, the average Canadian families, the ones who have small businesses, are the ones who are going to pay the difference. There are about a million small business across Canada, employing millions more Canadians. The money is being taxed on the backs of those small businesses. Let us just imagine. It will be the businesses that are least able to bear that tax.

● (1540)

This is a carbon tax scam. It is not about going after polluters. It is not about helping the commuters, the soccer moms and dads, and the seniors. It is not about helping those who need the help. It is about giving special deals to the polluters and doing absolutely nothing for the environment by the Prime Minister's own admission.

Everyone can tell that I am extremely disappointed by this bill and the budget it is supposed to implement, because it is an unmitigated disaster. It is a deception on the Canadian people.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as usual, when the Conservatives speak in the House, we only get half of the story. The reality of the situation is that although the members opposite would like to paint a picture of Canadians paying higher taxes, what they always forget to mention when they talk about that is the increase in money that people are receiving through the Canada child benefit. As a matter of fact, when we calculate that into it, unlike the Fraser Institute that they quote all the time which did not bother to use that important part, Canadians end up ahead of where they were before. That is the reality of the situation.

Another fact where we are only getting half the story is the new price on pollution. What the member did not bother to say is that in jurisdictions like Ontario and the one he represents, but that will depend on the outcome of the next election, all of the money collected through the price on pollution is going to be given right back to the citizens. In Ontario, 90% of it will go back to each and every person and the other 10% will go to small businesses.

It is one thing to be critical of the plan, which Conservatives have been for some time, and that is fine, but they should propose something else. They have absolutely nothing. He talked about future generations and making sure they know how to manage their finances wisely. What about talking about the environment that they are going to be impacted by? What is their plan on the environment? They do not have one.

Government Orders

•(1545)

Hon. Ed Fast: Mr. Speaker, I can assure the member that we will be releasing our environmental plan before the next election, but it will be our timing, not the government's. I can assure everyone of that.

Here is the thing. The member's own words were, "Canadians come out ahead". Have we heard that before? It is a classic Liberal shell game, and let me say why.

In British Columbia, Gordon Campbell, a good friend of mine, brought in the carbon tax. It is the highest carbon tax in Canada. Today, it is \$35 per tonne of emissions. When that tax was introduced, politicians swore up and down that it would be revenue neutral, that every dollar taken out of the taxpayer's pocket would be put back into the taxpayer's other pocket.

What happened? Two things happened. One, emissions kept going up and they are still going up today. Therefore, it did not fundamentally address the challenges of the environment. Two, the NDP was elected. It eliminated revenue neutrality and today it is a massive tax grab for an NDP government that is spending and spending, just like the Liberals are spending federally.

Canadians are not buying this shell game.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Karine Trudel (Jonquière, NDP): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, my colleague from New Westminster—Burnaby raised a point of order about Bill C-86, which is more than 850 pages long and includes several bills. We were simply asking for this omnibus bill to be split.

I would like to know what my colleague thinks of the government's tactics. Canadians are losing faith in the government.

We are unable to properly debate in the House the various bills contained in Bill C-86.

I would like to hear what he has to say about that.

[*English*]

Hon. Ed Fast: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that question from my NDP colleague, because we share her concern about the size of this bill. It is called an omnibus bill. Members may remember that the Conservative government once brought forward what the Liberals called an omnibus bill of about 500 pages. The Liberals swore up and down it was the worst thing that a government could do and they would never ever do that.

At the beginning of my speech, I talked about the duplicity of the Liberal government. The Liberals say one thing when they are in opposition, but do quite another when they are in government. They have compromised the democratic process by lumping all of these things into one massive bill. They are hoping Canadians will not notice all of the details, the finer points, that are going to hurt them in the long run. It is a shame.

Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to stand today and outline some of the failures of the Liberal government.

One of the things the Liberal government talks about all the time is that the economy and the environment must go hand in hand.

However, I think we have to put the economy ahead of the environment if we want a clean environment. I would ask every member in this place to get out their phones and tablets and have a look at the island that contains both the countries of Haiti and the Dominican Republic. The Dominican Republic has a much better economy than Haiti has. We can see a clear line on the Google map and the Dominican Republic is literally greener than Haiti. That is because the economy works in the Dominican Republic, and the economy is struggling in Haiti.

That is the thing we see here in Canada as well. We need to ensure that Canada's economy continues to work into the future if we want to rely on having one of the nicest countries in the entire world. Right here in Canada we have some of the cleanest water in the world, most of the populace of wildlife, some of the most pristine glaciers and some of the greatest landscapes that people come from around the world to see. There are other things that are not necessarily attached to the landscape, but people from around the world come to Canada to see, such as the northern lights. Our economy is based a lot upon our landscape, but it is also required that we have a great economy in order to maintain the levels where we can protect our environment.

The signature piece of the government's ruling up until now has been the carbon tax. It has taken the Liberals three years to get it off the ground. It does the opposite of what the Liberals want it to do. It does nothing for the environment, and it takes money out of the pockets of everyday Canadians. When money is taken out of the pockets of everyday Canadians, the economy starts to falter.

The other thing the Liberals are doing is spending our children's future. They have this massive deficit every year, and that can only hurt the economy in the long term. When we hurt the economy in the long term, we will see that the environment gets more of a strain placed on it. When companies are unable to invest, a lot of times the first thing we see is their inability to do the cleanup, to hire the cleanup crews. That sort of thing does not happen. We are seeing that right now in Alberta.

Alberta, under the visionary leadership of Peter Lougheed, put in place the orphan well program. The liability for cleaning up abandoned wells in Alberta was placed on all oil companies in general and was funded by a unique system. Now, with the lack of investment coming into northern Alberta, we are seeing the multiplication of these abandoned wells, and because the economy is not functioning well, we are unable to go in and clean up some of these orphan wells across northern Alberta.

It is imperative that we have a good economy that keeps the cash flowing and allows us to do the things we need to clean up the environment. Our record is amazing on this kind of thing.

Government Orders

My uncle lives right on Lake Erie, and he said over the last 10 years the cleanup efforts that have happened in the Great Lakes have been visible for all to see. In the Slave Lake area up in my riding, the amount of investment the federal government put into the area to ensure the lake stayed full of water, with the weir on the end of the lake and that sort of thing, was very much appreciated. We have seen the cycle of nature come around. The lake still is backed up with water just from the fact that we have had a lot of rain over the last three years.

That said, the carbon tax is only going to take money out of the economy. In addition, the Liberals' deficit spending will also take money out of the economy in the future. However, today we would expect that if we are expending all this extra money, we should see in this debt-fuelled economy a spike in GDP growth relative to the amount of deficit spending, but we have not seen that either.

● (1550)

Budget 2016 said that the deficit would raise the level of GDP by half a per cent and we have only seen GDP growth of only point one per cent. We are not even getting good value for the money when we are taking out a loan for our country's future. That is definitely one of the things I want to see.

The last thing I want to talk about is the whole idea of infrastructure spending. In northern Alberta there are several highways that run north-south. Highway 88 was freshly paved over the summer. It goes from Slave Lake up to Fort Vermillion. The highway is about 300 or 400 kilometres long. The people from Fort Vermillion, La Crete and High Level are immensely proud of their new highway. Five years ago, most of it was gravel road and members can imagine that 300 to 400 kilometres of gravel road was not an exciting drive. People are very excited about Highway 88 and the new pavement. We have seen Highway 60, Highways 43 and 44, which run north-south. The highway going up to Fort McMurray has been in the news often.

What is lacking in northern Alberta is an east-west connector. Currently, if one wants to go from Peace River over to Fort McMurray, which are about 300 kilometres apart, it is a 700 kilometre driving tour because people have to go down nearly to Edmonton and then drive back up toward Fort McMurray. It is a long drive. Going through my hometown of Barrhead would be the shortest way.

There is an idea called the N-55, north of the 55, connector. Most of the roadway is in place. It is either a gravel road or a logging road. There are still about seven kilometres needed to connect it through the middle. Sixty-six kilometres are already upgraded and ready to be paved. I have heard from hundreds of constituents that it would be a great economic corridor and it would eliminate several hours of driving if there were a connector from Peace River, B.C. to Fort McMurray. I have been calling it the N-55 connector. I look forward to getting some funding for that. However, I must say that the infrastructure funding from the Liberal government has been sparse in northern Alberta.

When I was first elected, everyone said the infrastructure plan of the Liberals was amazing and they were looking forward to having the funds to build these projects that would enhance the economic viability of many places in northern Alberta. They were looking

forward to having that funding. Now I read in the budget that the Liberals are still struggling to get the infrastructure money out. I have a recommendation for them.

My constituency overlaps about 100 communities with about 1,000 elected representatives. Many of the town and county councils say that one thing that works amazingly well is the gas tax refund. If the government is struggling to get money out for infrastructure, it should put more in the gas tax refund. Funds from the gas tax refund are allocated out for several years in advance. They know where the money is coming from and where it is going. If the government were to double or triple the gas tax refund, communities would be able to get those projects out of their five-year plan and put them in their three-year plan or two-year plan. It would also be good for the economy in northern Alberta particularly right now. Labour rates have come down significantly over the last few years and it would be a great time to build some amazing infrastructure in northern Alberta.

I hope that the government is listening. I hope we can see a renewed effort to get the infrastructure money out to northern Alberta to build some of these projects like the N-55 connector.

● (1555)

Mrs. Celina Caesar-Chavannes (Whitby, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the question I am about to ask does not have to do with the BIA, and I apologize for that, but it does have to do with the speech by my hon. colleague, in which he referenced Haiti and the difference between it and the Dominican Republic. I would like to invite my hon. colleague to possibly sit down with me and have a fulsome discussion about the history of Haiti, which was destroyed by a revolution. Payment of reparations for 150 years caused a lot of destruction there, as well as three decades of American occupation, which atrophied its institutions, and large repayments to France. If he knows not what he talks about, he probably should not bring it up in the House.

Mr. Arnold Viersen: Mr. Speaker, I am obviously not as familiar as my hon. colleague is with the ins and outs of the history of Haiti. I encourage her to open her iPad and go to Google Maps, where it is undeniable that the economies of the Dominican Republic and Haiti are different and one is more prosperous than the other. One can see the difference on the environment just by opening Google Maps.

The histories of the two places are dramatically different. I have an elementary understanding of it. The basic point is that one needs a strong economy that works in order to take care of one's environment. I say this because if we are to take care of the environment, we all need to co-operate. That is what it takes to make sure that the welfare of the animals living on the landscape continues to be taken care of, that there is a habitat for them, and that the natural resources are not just being plundered.

● (1600)

Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I particularly appreciate my Conservative colleague raising the issue of the rising liabilities from abandoned wells. We had 43 years of Conservative rule that essentially cared only for building an economy for the benefit of the oil industry, including small producers, many of whom then declared bankruptcy and landed this multi-billion liability on Albertans.

Government Orders

Could the member comment on whether he shares my concern that in this budget bill there was an opportunity to resolve this matter and change the priorities so that environmental reclamation would be given a higher priority in bankruptcy proceedings, rather than simply giving the money back to creditors, including banks?

Mr. Arnold Viersen: Mr. Speaker, I am going to admit right off the top that I do not think the member and I would agree on a whole bunch of things, but this is one that we actually do agree on. The fact is that Conservatives have gone around the country and cleaned up a lot of major messes left through history. The issue of abandoned oil wells was something we were addressing already in 2015. We said that we had the expertise of those who had been laid off in Alberta and were now on EI, but who would like to be out there doing something. Perhaps there was a reclamation of some of the oil wells. However, most of the EI has dried up and these people have gone on to find other jobs around the world.

I was just talking with a friend of mine the other day and asked how business was. He works in the oil patch. He said they are doing business in every continent in the world, just not in northern Alberta. We have the expertise in Alberta to cap these wells and clean them up. I totally agree that it is something that needs a tangible environmental policy, which I could definitely get behind.

Mr. Adam Vaughan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development (Housing and Urban Affairs), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I too listened to the member's speech and to the peculiar explanation of the physical conditions of Haiti compared with those in the Dominican Republic, and then heard the member opposite talk about that being a result of the Dominican Republic's economy and Haiti's inability to have positive environmental policies.

Is the member not aware of the earthquakes and hurricanes there, and of the deforestation caused by extreme poverty? Is he not aware of the historic realities Haiti has endured that have destroyed its capacity for independent economic development and left it a prisoner to international reparations for its act of freeing slaves through a rebellion 150 years ago? Is that not the reason Haiti's economy has found itself in the state it is in? It has nothing to do with the dictatorships that have developed the economy of the Dominican Republic.

The Deputy Speaker: I think we are getting into a different subject matter. I appreciate that the hon. member for Peace River—Westlock did raise this comparison early on in his remarks. Therefore, we will certainly allow it. This is sometimes what happens when we get debate straying into another category. However, we will let the hon. member for Peace River—Westlock respond.

Mr. Arnold Viersen: Mr. Speaker, my point still stands. The point is that the economy of Haiti is not as good as the economy of the Dominican Republic. How each of those countries got there is not the question. The question is this: What does the environment in each country look like? We can see it plain as day in Google Maps. That is what this is all about. This is not a judgment of how they got there or their history. It is the raw fact that it takes a good economy to take care of the environment.

● (1605)

Mrs. Celina Caesar-Chavannes (Whitby, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank you for the privilege to speak in the House today about the legislative reforms to intellectual property that accompany this particular piece of legislation.

I would note that I will be splitting my time with the member for Sackville—Preston—Chezzetcook this afternoon.

Our government unveiled Canada's first national IP strategy earlier this year, on April 26, World IP Day, after two years' worth of consultations. I know this is not exactly the most riveting topic to consider this afternoon, but it is really important for businesses, and particularly businesses in Whitby. As a member of the INDU committee, the industry committee, I think it is really important to highlight some of these initiatives in the second BIA.

The objective of Canada's IP strategy is to help Canadian entrepreneurs better understand and protect intellectual property in order to strategically access and grow to scale. Business leaders from my riding of Whitby understand the importance of a strategy.

Jason Atkins, the CEO of 360insights, a great company in Whitby, has said that "IP is a critical component for businesses to scale, especially to a global level. If we want to create well-paid jobs in our country, we need to look at businesses with a global lens and leverage IP to compete globally."

Also, Isaac Wanzama, founder and strategic senior strategist at geekspak Commerce in Whitby, has said that "Intellectual property is the lifeblood of any innovation ecosystem, that is certainly true in Canada. As entrepreneurs, if we aren't protecting the investments that we are make in our tech research, whether AI or genetics, then we're not only doing a disservice to our businesses but to the Canadian economy as a whole. But, it's not always that we don't want to, often it's because the process is difficult to understand and even if you can understand it, very expensive. Canada's new IP Strategy, which aims to educate, simplify and reduce associated costs for startups and innovative businesses is a welcomed announcement."

Innovative businesses in my riding are clearly excited about our government's plan. The IP strategy sets out to help businesses get the information and confidence they need to grow their businesses and take risks. It will help spur Canadian innovation and boost Canadian presence in the global marketplace through three key areas. It will increase IP literacy through IP awareness and educational programs, offer strategic IP tools for growth, and implement legislative amendments to strengthen Canada's IP system.

Today, I want to focus my remarks on the specific initiatives that will help improve IP awareness and education among Canadian businesses and innovators.

Government Orders

Along with a strong and effective IP framework in place, Canadian businesses must also, first and foremost, recognize and understand the importance of IP use in order to succeed in a global marketplace. They need to be able to understand how to protect their IP and use it effectively.

The statistics on Canadian businesses' IP awareness and use, particularly small and medium-sized businesses, are of concern. We know that small and medium-sized companies with IP in Canada are 64% more likely to be high growth companies and four times more likely to export, yet only 10% even hold some form of formal IP. Further, 83% of Canadian small and medium-sized businesses have indicated that IP was not relevant to their business when citing the reasons for not seeking IP rights. This is why, along with the other legislative changes we are bringing forward, we are also expanding our efforts in IP literacy.

The IP strategy is built on the Canadian Intellectual Property Office's IP awareness and education efforts that are already in place across the innovation ecosystem to ensure that innovators, entrepreneurs, businesses and creators recognize the value of IP.

The Canadian Intellectual Property Office, CIPO, will continue to build on current learning tools and resources, and also develop new educational resources to better equip innovators and businesses with the knowledge they need to succeed.

• (1610)

The CIPO has a team of IP advisers located across Canada who work directly with companies and innovators to deliver seminars and participate in innovation and business-related events, such as StartupCanada's Canadian export challenge.

Over the last year, the CIPO has delivered 150 seminars across the country, reaching over 1,900 participants through its IP awareness and education program.

The CIPO will be increasing the number of its initiatives over the next year, which will include hosting up to 60 seminars on advanced topics, such as IP commercialization and strategy and enforcement, and is increasing accessibility to these sessions by offering webcasts and developing e-learning modules.

Our government will also conduct a survey to better understand how Canadians understand and use IP, including groups that have been traditionally less likely to use IP, such as indigenous entrepreneurs and women. The results of the survey will help us meet the needs of under-represented groups and help ensure that our efforts to support innovation are inclusive of all parts of our society.

In addition to CIPO's outreach efforts to businesses, our government will create a new team of IP experts to ensure that IP is considered across federal government programs. Program officers will have access to expert knowledge and capacity to address IP issues and help guide recipients to improve their IP knowledge and savvy.

The IP strategy also sets out funding for IP legal clinics to help businesses understand their IP needs, facilitating access to IP professionals for advice, while also enabling students to learn more about intellectual property.

A strong and robust IP strategy is a key driver for getting companies to grow in scale, create better jobs and spur innovation. We must ensure that all the proper elements are in place for Canadian companies and innovators to grow and that they have an environment where they can innovate and develop.

This consists of an effective education and awareness program and strategic tools, which are necessary components to legislative amendments tabled in the budget implementation act. This will help Canada to become a more strategic user of intellectual property to fuel innovation and economic growth.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Karine Trudel (Jonquière, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the pay equity bill was introduced this week. We have been calling for that bill for several months now. There are even women's groups that have been calling for federal pay equity legislation for 42 years. I would remind hon. members that the Government of Quebec passed pay equity provisions 22 years ago.

However, this omnibus bill, Bill C-86, contains more than 850 pages. It is a very large bill and we have very little time to do a clause-by-clause review or a detailed study.

What does my colleague think of the fact that Canadian women who work in the federal government have to wait another four years before they can benefit from pay equity?

What does she think of the fact that there are no concrete provisions to ensure that the bill goes forward and that businesses have the necessary means to implement the provisions?

[*English*]

Mrs. Celina Caesar-Chavannes: Mr. Speaker, I am proud of this government taking substantial action on pay equity. We have heard the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour speak about this issue. She has been having consultations across the country to ensure that we get this correct.

One dollar does not equal 88¢, and for equity-seeking groups, the disparity between men and women with respect to pay is much larger.

For over four decades, women have been waiting for this. We want to make sure that we get this right and have equal pay for equal work.

There are many pages in this BIA related to pay equity. I would invite my hon. colleague to look at them.

This is not about putting pay equity in place for the sake of doing it. It is about putting it in place to ensure that we get it right.

Government Orders

Women have waited a very long time. Equity-seeking groups have waited a long time to ensure that we have this. This government is moving on it and we are going to get it absolutely correct.

• (1615)

Ms. Kim Rudd (Northumberland—Peterborough South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I very much enjoyed listening to my colleague's wonderful comments. As an entrepreneur and someone who knows about risk when going into business, it is heartwarming to hear the efforts that are being put into ensuring that as businesses start up and grow, they will have these tools. One of the ways to mitigate risk is to make sure businesses understand that those opportunities and supports are available to them.

The strategy around IP is extremely important in the world we now operate in. I wonder if the member could expand a bit on what kind of game-changer this is for small and medium-sized businesses.

Mrs. Celina Caesar-Chavannes: Mr. Speaker, we know that as businesses grow and start to scale up, it becomes very risky and very scary for them. Before getting into politics, I was an entrepreneur, so I share the concerns of my colleague on this.

The IP strategy we announced on World IP Day includes comprehensive education and awareness, so that as businesses look for ways to expand and export to new markets, they are aware of what is available to protect their intellectual property.

I quoted some businesses in my riding of Whitby. They understand that a strong IP strategy and a strong focus on IP can help companies not only grow but become great players in a global market. That is what this strategy would enable businesses across Canada, in Whitby and I am sure in Northumberland—Peterborough South to do.

Mr. Darrell Samson (Sackville—Preston—Chezzetcook, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to stand in the House today to speak to Bill C-86, the budget implementation act, 2018, no. 2.

As members know, the riding of Sackville—Preston—Chezzetcook is on the outskirts of Halifax-Dartmouth. It is a community where we have young families, fishermen, the largest black cultural centre and many Acadians. It is a diverse community that I am very proud to represent.

When we talk about budget 2018 and previous budgets by our government, it is clear that the path we are on is to build a strong economy for all Canadians. In my speech today, I want to touch on three major areas in this budget implementation bill: what it means for families, what it means for our veterans, and women's potential economic benefit when they are much more involved in entrepreneurship and building strong companies.

I cannot go into the text before talking about how our economy is doing now.

After three years, we have seen the Canadian economy grow and continue to prosper. Over 600,000 new jobs have been created. It is a strong sign of our government moving in the right direction when people want to invest and when we are creating good jobs for the middle class.

As well, we should note that the unemployment rate in Canada has dropped from 7.2% to 5.7%. Yes, members heard me correctly. At

5.7%, it is the lowest unemployment rate in Canada in the last 40 years. It is very impressive.

I also want to talk about the Canada child benefit. This is an investment in Canadians and in Canadian families. It is an investment in young families, which is extremely important. The riding of Sackville—Preston—Chezzetcook is one riding out of 338 in Canada, and in my riding alone the families are receiving \$5.2 million per month. That is \$60 million per year in the riding of Sackville—Preston—Chezzetcook.

I am not the only lucky one, because all 338 members of Parliament have this Canada child benefit going to their constituents, which means anywhere between \$40 million and \$80 million invested in families in their ridings.

Speaking about families in this budget implementation bill, I want to talk about the EI parental benefit. That is a very important benefit that recognizes some of the challenges in life. It is creating more flexibility for Canadian families. If they split or share those benefits, we are adding five extra weeks of benefits.

As well, when talking about families, we have to talk about pharmacare. Our government is moving forward. We have established an advisory committee that will report shortly. We also had the permanent committee present its report on pharmacare. I believe we will see some positive news on pharmacare very soon.

We are also introducing, of course, the new Canada workers benefit. This new benefit will add 300,000 Canadians to the middle class. That means over two million Canadians will now have access to this benefit, which is very important. With BIA 2, we will ensure that these individuals do not have to apply; it will happen automatically, once again making life easier for Canadian families.

• (1620)

I also want to talk about some changes in the labour code that will provide five days of paid leave to victims of family violence employed by the public service, as well as five days of personal leave, three of which would be paid. Those are major changes that will make life better for Canadians.

Touching on veterans, this is a very important topic for me. My riding has the largest number of veterans and military per capita, with 23% being veterans. We have introduced the option of a pension for life. Veterans already have a lump-sum pension, which we had introduced, but now they will have the option of a pension for life.

Government Orders

Depending on their pain and suffering, veterans could have up to \$1,150 a month. If they have additional pain and suffering, they could receive another \$1,500 a month, or a salary replacement of up to 90%. That is what our government is doing to support our veterans and their families. I hear when I am travelling around my riding how important it is for veterans to have access to that.

I have to talk about the ID card for veterans and a story, believe it or not, that I still have trouble with. When veterans tell me this story, it is painful to hear: The former Harper government cut the ID card for veterans. If anyone can help me understand that, please do so, because that is amazing.

Our government has just introduced a new ID card. The new ID card will have a veteran's photo and rank on it, as well as his or her service record and service number. It will not only recognize veterans' service, their hard work and what they have done for Canadians, but it will also help them access programs and services, which is extremely important.

Talking now about women, we have invested in a new entrepreneurial strategy for supporting women in industry. We have invested \$1.65 billion over three years for new financing opportunities for women in industry, and we have also invested \$150 million through regional tailoring of the needs in rural communities across Canada.

Also, pay equity is included in this budget implementation bill. That is extremely important. When the opposition talks about the 400 pages, it is because 200 pages alone talk about pay equity and all the consultation we have done. Our government will bring legislation forward in the very near future in this area.

In closing, I want to say that the riding of Sackville—Preston—Chezzetcook and the province of Nova Scotia will greatly benefit by many of these investments.

However, talking about rural broadband, an Internet connection for rural communities is essential if we are going to allow those communities to prosper and grow.

We have seen also the investment in home care and mental health. Those are big investments that will help all Canadians, including Nova Scotians and of course the people in the riding of Sackville—Preston—Chezzetcook.

We also support families with challenges such as dementia and autism. We have seen some investment in those areas as well.

This is moving forward. This is a strong budget that we are implementing here. It is consistent with the other budgets that we brought forward and I am very pleased to be a member on this side of the House supporting Canadians, supporting the middle class, supporting veterans, supporting families, supporting youth and so on.

• (1625)

Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there is a reason the member for Sackville—Preston—Chezzetcook is very excited about this government. I will remind this House and Canadians who are watching that it was his family who received a lucrative surf clam quota from the former fisheries minister. It was shameful, and it had to be reversed.

I will offer that it was not this government that introduced the veterans ID card. It was our hon. colleague, the former minister of veterans affairs, the member for Durham, who is sitting here and actually going to give a great speech. It is coming up, and I know he will have something to say about that.

Mr. Speaker, through you, I would like to ask our hon. colleague how he has any ability to stand in this House and trumpet the talking points of that, when he was shamefully part of one of the biggest clam scams in Canadian history.

Mr. Darrell Samson: Mr. Speaker, I am not sure if my colleague really knows what a clam looks like, but it gives him something to talk about. It is too bad that his constituents do not have the opportunity to hear about other important issues for middle-class Canadians. He could be talking about the Canada child benefit and how much money families in his riding are receiving. Families in my riding of Sackville—Preston—Chezzetcook are benefiting by \$5.2 million a month, \$60 million a year.

The ID card was eliminated by the Harper government. It is sad. I do not understand it. Nor do Canadians and veterans understand it.

[Translation]

Ms. Brigitte Sansoucy (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my colleague is aware of my concerns regarding the important role we must play to reduce poverty in Canada.

Despite the Canada child benefit, we still have 1.2 million poor children in Canada, and 38% of indigenous children are living in poverty. These statistics have not changed in 10 years.

Campaign 2000, which represents 100 national, provincial, and territorial organizations, finds that the government's objectives are not ambitious enough. The government wants to fix the situation by 2030, but these children are living in poverty right now. In 2030, they will no longer be children.

Unfortunately, we do not see any tangible measures in the budget implementation bill that would allow us to do more. The groups are saying that the bill falls short on ambition when it comes to meaningful action to reduce child poverty.

I would like to hear what my colleague has to say about that.

• (1630)

Mr. Darrell Samson: Mr. Speaker, that is an extremely important question, and I am glad my colleague asked.

Our government has taken a number of steps to reduce poverty. We have not eliminated poverty yet, so we are open to suggestions. However, the Canada child benefit is one important way we are investing in young families.

Government Orders

We are also investing in building housing for low-income and struggling families. Another important investment in this budget is the Canada workers benefit, which will help 300,000 Canadians join the middle class. This measure will very likely help reduce child poverty too.

Mr. Joël Lightbound (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, one important measure was inspired by Quebec's parental leave system. The second parent will get to take five or eight additional weeks of leave. This approach promotes a better distribution of family responsibilities and greater participation of women, since women too often take on the bulk of family responsibilities. We are looking for a better balance.

I would like to know what my hon. colleague thinks of this very important measure, which has worked in Quebec and Europe, and which our government is very proud to be implementing across Canada.

Mr. Darrell Samson: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question and for his work on the budget, which includes some extremely important programs that will make a very direct contribution to the economy.

The program he just mentioned would give families greater flexibility over parental leave. It will enable parents to share their parental leave so they can both spend more time with their family.

This is one way our government is working harder to find ways to help children and families, including struggling families. We want to give them more flexibility to help them thrive.

[English]

The Deputy Speaker: 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 Saskatoon West, Asbestos; the hon. member for Drummond, The Environment.

Hon. Deepak Obhrai (Calgary Forest Lawn, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise to speak on the budget implementation act.

This morning my friend John reminded me that there were dark clouds in the Liberals' sunshine environment, as Liberals said during election time. However, there is one issue that really bothers me, and that was what happened yesterday when the Prime Minister talked to students. He told them that the opposition parties liked to shout at respectful Liberals.

I am profiled in the grade nine high school book in Alberta, talking about democracy. I go to schools and talk about our great democracy and how our country is run. I never run down anyone. We are all here equally in this chamber to talk about issues for all Canadians. This is the chamber where we have democracy, yet the Prime Minister went to a school and partisanly told students that the Liberals were respectful and the opposition was not respectful.

May I remind the Prime Minister, if I recall correctly, that he was a member of the opposition when he first entered the House. Now suddenly he thinks that side is respectful. Should he impart this knowledge to young students? Shame.

I am splitting my time with my great Irish friend from Durham, Mr. Speaker.

We are talking about the dark clouds since the Liberals became government. The last member who spoke talked about the veteran cuts. Cuts to veterans was brought forward by the Liberal government. My colleague was a former trade minister and he did all the legwork for the trade agreements that the Liberal government signed. The Liberals want to take credit for that.

It is interesting that the word "Harper" has become so common in the chamber. I hear more about Mr. Harper than when he was the prime minister. Every minute, the Liberals keep talking about Harper. They forget that they have been governing for three and a half years. It was interesting to hear the NDP member say that the Liberals were worse than Harper. Harper is a great word in the House.

However, talking about the Liberals' record, it is terrible. As I said during my leadership race, the deficit is in the blood of the Trudeaus. Whenever they come into power, we end up having strong deficits and a deficit balance. Our taxes and our debt keep rising. As I already pointed out, the Liberals increased the debt by \$60 billion.

Where do things stand today under these dark clouds? Since the Liberals have come to power, the last member who spoke said the business environment was great. It is not great. The business environment today is what is causing serious concern for Canadians, a concern about jobs, the welfare of their children and health care. It is a serious concern. The disastrous handling of the Trans Mountain pipeline and the bill that would stop the pipelines being built under a regulatory regime will take investors away from our country.

• (1635)

We must remember that we share a very long border with the south. We share an integrated economy. If south of the border creates a business environment that is far more appealing to investors, then money flows there. It is not just money, but jobs flow south as well. That is where the danger is.

When we were in government, and my friend sitting next to me was the minister of state for finance, I checked with him, we introduced a regulatory process. We looked at how a regulatory process in our country would stifle competitiveness. To do that, we set out to find out how many regulator processes there were in our country.

Let me go back and give my own example with my son. He wanted to go into an agricultural business, and he is still going into it with my grandson. We tied in with farmers in my colleague's riding to export a product. We are still mired in regulatory reforms. It is not ease of business to do that. It has taken one and a half years and we are still in the process of trying to meet all the regulatory conditions that are laid out across the country.

The important point here is this. If we ask the government how many regulations there are, which it is supposed to know, it will not be able to answer the question. If it does not know that, how will it reduce the regulations? Even there, it cannot do this thing, yet the Liberals are saying that they have policies that are helping the business environment grow.

Government Orders

I come from Alberta and it is concerned about what the government is doing to the economy of Alberta. Irrespective of the fact that the Minister of Natural Resources is from Alberta, we do not see any kind of action coming from the government. It is a big concern.

Now the Liberals say that they are going to put in a carbon tax. Our carbon footprint is 1.6% of global pollution in the environment, yet we are the country putting a carbon tax burden on Canadians. Like everyone has pointed out to the government, it is a tax grab.

I read this morning that because the Liberals have announced they want to give money back to the people, people are saying that it will not impact them. Therefore, how are their habits going to change if they are going to get their money back? The carbon tax is a tax grab, as everyone says. We need to have an environment of the economy moving forward, which the government is failing to do. It seems to have priorities that do not address the main concerns of Canadians, which are jobs, health care and a future for our children.

These are good statements made by the government. However, as everyone has pointed out, when the government says “trust it” that is like the Nigerian prince saying, “Your cheque is in the mail”. More and more Canadians are saying that they do not trust the government.

We are concerned. There are dark clouds in the sunshine environment of the Liberal government.

● (1640)

Mr. Joël Lightbound (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member talked about the Harper record. I would like to address that topic of his speech. Is he aware that for a decade Stephen Harper had the lowest levels of growth in 69 years? He had the worst job creation since 1946. His government grew exports by a meagre 0.3%, which is the worst in post-war history. Meanwhile, he was the best for the top 1%. He managed to foster inequalities like nobody's business.

Compare and contrast that to our government over the last three years. Last year we had the strongest growth in the G7. The OECD came out with a report this summer saying that Canadian families by this time next year would be \$2,000 better off than they were under the Conservative government. A half a million full-time jobs have been created in the last three years.

How can he not see that for a decade Stephen Harper was the emperor with no clothes? Our government has taken real action that has helped the middle class and helped our economy grow and prosper for everyone.

Hon. Deepak Obhrai: Mr. Speaker, this is a new member who came to the House three years ago, and he is trying to talk about our record 10 years ago. I do not know where he was in 2008 when the whole world went into a recession. We do not live on a separate island. It was because of our economic management that we did not have to bail banks out and survived that recession. It was through the good management of the Conservative government.

As I have said, the former Conservative trade minister is the one who led the groundwork for CETA and TPP, something the current government is now signing and trying to take credit for. The Conservative government did it, and the current government is

reaping is based on what Conservatives did before it went into power. We are well known for managing our economy very well.

● (1645)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member across the way should not try to rewrite history. We have to remember Stephen Harper inherited a surplus of billions of dollars. Even before the recession came into being, that surplus was wiped out and turned into a massive billion-dollar-plus deficit. The Conservatives have been in power for about 38% of the last 150 years, yet have accumulated 75% of Canada's debt.

Why should the Government of Canada Liberal Party listen to Conservatives, who have been absolute total failures when it comes to managing Canada's economy?

Hon. Deepak Obhrai: Mr. Speaker, what is he talking about? The Conservative government brought down \$40 billion of deficit and had a balanced budget when it left office, not \$60 billion of deficit he is talking about. It was the Conservative government.

I remember the member sitting over there spouting all these things, and none of the ideas came through. Let me remind him of one thing. He used to say that there were too many pages in the budget implementation act. I remind him that right now the Liberals' budget implementation act is 800 pages long. What is he talking about? He should look in the mirror.

Mr. Robert Sopuck (Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa, CPC): Mr. Speaker, to my friend from Winnipeg North, I had the honour of working in the oil sands prior to my time in Parliament, and it was just a hive of economic activity. I have heard now that the camps in the region I was working in are all closed and employment is way down.

I was on the environment committee when Bill C-69 was debated, and I thank my hon. colleague for bringing up the regulatory process. In fact, that bill is shutting down the Canadian economy right now. The resource industry is 20% of the Canadian economy and a big part of most pension funds. That is what the people across the way forget. Senior citizens, pensioners, investment funds all rely on the oil sands and the energy industry.

In the testimony in Bill C-69, Chris Bloomer from the Canadian Energy Pipeline Association said that Canada has a “toxic regulatory environment”, and that is why investment in this country is declining.

Can my friend from Calgary Forest Lawn talk about the effects of the regulatory environment on the Alberta energy industry and the ripple effect across the country?

Government Orders

Hon. Deepak Obhrai: Mr. Speaker, my colleague raises a good point. We were there only a week ago. The oil industry and even the NDP Government of Alberta have said that Bill C-69 is a disaster for the country. We are talking about the NDP government, so does that not tell the current government that its Bill C-69 is an absolute disaster for this country? Those regulations would stifle the energy sector in this country.

Hon. Erin O'Toole (Durham, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is always a pleasure to follow the dean of our caucus, the longest-serving member for Calgary Forest Lawn, who has been outraged on a few occasions by Liberal mismanagement of the economy. That is what I am going to spend a few minutes on in my remarks today on Bill C-86, the budget implementation act. There are a few aspects I am going to go through that should concern all Canadians, the biggest of which is the uncompetitiveness of our economy and how we are not ready for a global downturn. Many of the decisions of the government are putting us on a very precarious footing ahead of what could be uncertain times.

I have concerns related to the record debt levels under the current government and record deficits in a time of positive economic growth. I have called the Liberal track record on debt and deficits the Liberal double-double. Most Canadians are seeing the cost of their double-double going up, when they think of Tim Hortons. The Liberal double-double is deficits and debt. What is crazy about it is that it is being fuelled even with a roaring economy and despite the fact that Liberals are raising taxes countless times, making us uncompetitive. They are taking more money from Canadians and yet still cannot balance the budget.

Because this is a budget implementation bill and because my friend from Winnipeg North, the deputy House leader of the Liberal Party, is here, I want to remind him of the fact that when he says things in the House, they will come back to haunt him. I have mentioned many occasions in the previous government when, as a Liberal opposition member, he would almost howl at the moon. It is the day after Halloween. He would howl about the use of time allocation or omnibus legislation. He called them assaults on democracy several times. He has given me so much material.

I want to keep the member for Winnipeg North on his toes, so I am choosing a quote from this Parliament with respect to his comments. As a government member, he said this, on June 5, 2017, "Member after member has talked about this particular bill being an omnibus bill. Again, when I was standing up and the member made reference to some of my quotes, they were not 300-page documents, they were more like 600-page or 900-page documents, which affected laws that had nothing to do with the budget." I thank him. This budget implementation bill is 850 pages, so it fits right in the sweet spot that he said was outrageous with the previous government. In fact, it is at the upper range of the outrageous levels he even talked about earlier in this Parliament. It is amazing. This bill is chock full of things that have nothing to do with the budget.

The Liberal member for Sackville—Preston—Chezzetcook quoted the veteran ID card that I announced as minister, the extension of the NDI 75 card and making sure that all veterans got it, not just those serving after 10 years. I was proud to make that announcement in Fredericton alongside my good friend from the Canadian Armed Forces and Royal Military College, Brian

MacDonald. He was an MLA in New Brunswick and I thank him for his service in uniform and in the assembly in New Brunswick. We announced that. I was there. I can send the minister the picture of the cards we were holding up. That is in the budget implementation bill.

When the member for Winnipeg North rises to ask me a question or make a comment, which he is likely to do, statistics show he likely will, I would like him to apologize to the chamber for feigned outrage in this place over the very type of omnibus legislation he is now being tasked by Mr. Butts in the Prime Minister's Office to defend. Even at 850-plus pages, it is at the outer range of what he said was clearly unacceptable.

Beyond that, let me go back to the double-double of the Liberal Party: the debt and deficits. There is \$60 billion of debt accumulated by the government in good economic times in three years. In a positive economy, where there is economic growth, that is a Canadian record. Liberals should not be proud of that record, because that debt and the deficits they are running on an annual basis are future taxes for my children.

● (1650)

They are spending recklessly at a time when they should be putting some away for the clouds looming on the horizon. They are not, and virtually none of it was the infrastructure money they promised.

Members will recall, in the last election, when the member for Papineau changed his fundamental economic views halfway through an election to outfox the NDP. He started the election saying that they are the party of Paul Martin and balanced budgets. Midway through, he said they were going to run deficits, but Canadians were not to worry because it would be no more than \$10 billion and they would be in balance by 2019. All of that was out the window within three months. The Liberals have run deficits in the \$20 billion or \$20 billion-plus range every single year.

What is more egregious is they received \$20 billion last year in extra revenues because the economy is strong because the Conservative Party put the economy on a footing such that when the American economy recovered, which it has, we would be booming again. Therefore, when the Liberals quote how Canada's growth was tepid during the global recession, they should go and see how our G7 allies were doing. We were the only one with a balanced budget, the only one that balanced our budget without raising taxes. We lowered taxes. Even the tax reduction of the small business rate that we had planned to 9%, the Liberals cancelled at first. Now they praise it, as they are returning it to a level we had pledged it to go to back in 2014.

Government Orders

It is almost comical to hear members of the Liberal Party talk about the budget, competitiveness and deficits. Their policy and the underlying philosophy change by the moment, all based on opportunity for a photograph and the hope that they can grow the economy from the heart outward. Do members remember that one? The Liberals said that the budget will balance itself and that they will grow the economy from the heart outward. They can tell that to the Alberta oil patch workers or the engineers or geologists who are out of work, or property companies that now see high vacancy rates in Alberta because the Liberals have botched the resource economy.

In fact, the Canadians they failed the most in the resource economy are our indigenous peoples. The northern gateway pipeline was a one-third owned pipeline. Our country has a commitment to make sure first nations and Inuit play a role in our economy and benefit directly, and they would have benefited with northern gateway. The Liberals cancelled that on a whim and brought in Bill C-69, which led to the cancellation of energy east, and then they were forced to buy Trans Mountain when the company was leaving Canada because we are not competitive.

In fact, Jack Mintz, the leading tax authority in Canada, warned of a “competitive tsunami” because in three years, while racking up \$60 billion in debt for our children and grandchildren, the Liberals have raised taxes on everyone. They have raised personal income taxes, corporate income taxes and payroll taxes and they have introduced a carbon tax, all in the middle of good economic times. In the last year, the United States has been going in the opposite direction. This is why there is a competitive risk. It is all due to the Liberals' mismanagement of the economy.

People are not to just believe me or Jack Mintz. Douglas Porter, the chief economist of BMO, the Bank of Montreal, said, “I think Canada has a very weak competitive position. I think we're going to get crushed in the next recession”. Crushed, because they have squandered the opportunity of good times. The Liberals have put us on an uncompetitive footing so that our small businesses are going to be paying a carbon tax that the Liberals are omitting large emitters from. They are making suburban commuters in Whitby, Ajax, Pickering, Uxbridge and Peterborough pay for their schemes that the parliamentary secretary acknowledged will make businesses uncompetitive, and will not lower emissions.

The very fact that our future competitiveness is hanging in the balance should concern Canadians. It should also concern them that this budget bill does not address the underpinnings of that competitive disadvantage and of our problems getting projects like pipelines done. I would like the Liberals to stand in this House and put forward a plan to get our resources to market.

●(1655)

Mr. Arif Virani (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, while it is always entertaining to hear my friend opposite own up to his experience in the chamber, I just want to put out a couple of factoids for him.

He lamented our economic record compared to the Americans. We have the fastest-growing GDP in the entire G7, which includes the Americans. He lamented the ability of our policies to generate economic growth in this country. We just saw the largest single

foreign investment in Canadian history, \$40 billion, in the LNG facility on the west coast.

He put out a proposition to Canadians to understand the double-double. What I would say to him is actually five-forty. Five is the 500,000 jobs we have created, and 40 is the lowest jobless rate in 40 years in this country.

Perhaps he could respond to those facts for the benefit of the House.

Hon. Erin O'Toole: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the parliamentary secretary for providing me with an opportunity to talk about how proper budgeting and planning for the future happened.

What was remarkable about the Conservative government was that despite the fact there was a global recession, the worst since the 1930s, Stephen Harper did not want to raise taxes. We wanted to draw investment and jobs away from the United States, which was sputtering at the time. We did that. We did not raise taxes on households, either. We lowered taxes. In fact, we made small and medium-sized businesses the core of our economy, which is why almost two-thirds of Canadians work for those people, those people who are now being taxed with the carbon tax of the Liberal government.

What is remarkable is that we balanced the budget, despite stimulus spending and the global recession of 2008-09. Stephen Harper and the Conservatives had a plan to get to balance by 2014-15, which we did.

The Liberals have changed the accounting rules to suggest that we did not balance the budget. Balancing the budget put us on a competitive footing so that when the American economy recovered, which it has in the last few years, we would benefit.

That member owes Stephen Harper a big thanks.

●(1700)

Mr. Murray Rankin (Victoria, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in my friends impassioned speech, he referenced the fact that the House on Monday received a document 850 pages long, with literally thousands of clauses and subclauses dealing with budget matters, the guts of how we regulate our economy and other matters. Of course, it is not just about that. It is an omnibus bill covering much more.

It is said that a budget is the truest reflection of a government's priorities. I do not have a clue what they are.

Does the member share my concern that as parliamentarians, we cannot do our job when we are given a bill 850 pages in length on Monday and on Thursday are asked to dissect it? How can we possibly do our job as parliamentarians?

Government Orders

Hon. Erin O'Toole: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my friend, the MP for Victoria. We are the class of 2012 and were elected in the month of November back then. He has become a very good friend since.

He spoke about priorities, and it reminded me of what a former Liberal leader said in a famous leadership debate: "Do you think it's easy to make priorities?" Mr. Dion said that.

He is right. In this omnibus bill, we see the government meandering, to use a term the public safety minister has used to evade some of our questions on the Norman affair. It is meandering around the real issues. The real issue here is that we need to make sure that our small and medium-sized businesses are competitive. The carbon tax is not going to do that.

We need to make sure that seniors on fixed incomes and suburban commuters have the ability to work and have life be affordable. I do not see that in this document.

The member also pointed out the 850 pages of the omnibus bill, which the Liberals decried while in opposition but now seem to relish in government.

The good thing is that a year from now, there will be an opportunity to change. The government will see the Conservatives back on that side.

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CANADA ISRAEL FREE TRADE AGREEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACT

BILL C-85—NOTICE OF TIME ALLOCATION MOTION

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am really hoping that this will just be a notice and we will find a way forward.

An agreement could not be reached under the provisions of Standing Order 78(1) or 78(2) with respect to the second reading stage of Bill C-85, an act to amend the Canada-Israel Free Trade Agreement Implementation Act and to make related amendments to other acts.

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

* * *

BUDGET IMPLEMENTATION ACT, 2018, NO. 2

BILL C-86—NOTICE OF TIME ALLOCATION MOTION

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, an agreement could not be reached under the provisions of Standing Order 78(1) or 78(2) with respect to the second reading stage of Bill C-86, a second act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on February 27, and other measures.

Under the provisions of Standing Order 78(3), I give notice that a minister of the Crown will propose at the next sitting a motion to

allot a specific number of days or hours for the consideration and disposal of proceedings at the said stage.

The Deputy Speaker: I am sure the House appreciates the notice from the hon. government House leader.

The time has expired for questions and comments. There were only about 30 seconds left. We will have to go on to resuming debate.

The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice.

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BUDGET IMPLEMENTATION ACT, 2018, NO. 2

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-86, A second Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on February 27, and other measures, be read the second time and referred to a committee, and of the amendment.

Mr. Arif Virani (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Richmond Hill.

I am proud to rise today as the member of Parliament for Parkdale—High Park to speak on behalf of my constituents in support of Bill C-86, legislation that would entrench, among other things, pay equity throughout federally regulated workplaces in this country.

My constituents in Parkdale—High Park are dedicated advocates of women's rights. They include many who work hard in the federal civil service, in Crown corporations, in the transport sector, in banking, in telecommunications companies and in the Canadian Armed Forces. These are women whose request is very simple: equal pay for work of equal value. This is not a complicated ask. This is not a controversial ask. It is an ask simply for fairness. It is an ask to be treated equally.

This is what Bill C-86 would deliver: equal pay for work of equal value. It would deliver, at long last, a system that compensates women in federally regulated industries at the same level as men. My constituents in Parkdale—High Park deserve no less. The women in this country who have been fighting for equality for so long deserve no less.

Importantly, this is not a zero-sum game. When women receive the salaries they have deserved for so long, that does not come at the expense of men. To the contrary, men and women both gain when salaries are paid equally. Canada benefits when fairness applies throughout our federally regulated industries. Indeed, pay equity will spur economic growth in which all of us will share.

Let us start with where we are now. In Canada, women earn 31% less than men. Extensive research has shown that women with the same experience and the same socio-economic and demographic background earn approximately \$7,200 less than their male counterparts on an annual basis. Years of inaction in the field of gender equality have only compounded the problem. Policies implemented a decade ago are now outdated and limit our potential to effectively include women in our nation's growth. Our government is committed to changing this, and that is why we are moving forward with proactive pay equity legislation through Bill C-86.

Government Orders

It is pretty straightforward to get a basic grasp of how flawed the current system of pay equity in Canada actually is. For example, the model we currently use is based on responding to complaints. This has proven to be ineffective for current times, because it puts the onus on workers to challenge pay discrimination. Bill C-86 would remove the complaint-based reactive system and replace it with a new regime that was proactive and that placed responsibility on employers to ensure that their compensation practices were balanced.

Second, as an additional obligation, the proposed legislation would require federally regulated public and private sector employers to establish and maintain a pay equity plan. This is because we understand the necessity of redressing the systemic gender-based discrimination experienced by employees who occupy positions in predominantly female job classes.

Bill C-86 lays out two sets of requirements, one for employers with between 10 and 99 employees and one for workplaces with 100 or more employees. According to this bill, federally regulated public and private entities would be obliged to set out specific timelines for implementation and do a compulsory review of their pay equity strategies. The bill would also permit the government to apply accountability measures to ensure that the compensation practices were consistent with the new requirements.

Further, the proposed legislation would require federally regulated employers across the banking, transport and telecommunication sectors, for example, to review their pay equity plans every five years to ensure that pay gaps had not surfaced since the plan first came into effect. If a pay gap was created, the employer would be expected to retroactively pay those female employees who were making less than they deserved.

I want to turn now to a third important component of Bill C-86. The bill would create the position of pay equity commissioner, who would have a professional team to assist in enforcing the new approaches to pay equity entrenched in the proposed legislation. This pay equity commissioner would facilitate the resolution of disputes, conduct compliance audits and investigate objections and complaints. The pay equity commissioner would have the means to impose fines should an employer be found to not be paying employees equally, and he or she would then report annually to Parliament on the administration and enforcement of this proposed legislation.

• (1705)

Fourth, Bill C-86 would establish pay equity standards, from the Prime Minister's office to all parliamentary workplaces throughout Canada. This is part of our whole-of-government approach to addressing gender inequality. Through this bill, for example, we would formalize our commitment to promoting gender equality and increasing the participation of women in the labour force by establishing concrete reporting requirements for analyzing budgets through a gender lens.

As the parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Justice, I am also proud of the whole-of-government work we have done under the Minister of Justice and the Department of Justice to ensure that a gender lens is applied to efforts to increase access to justice and legal reform.

Bill C-78 is a case in point. That bill, as part of our whole-of-government approach towards gender, takes specific aim at the plight of middle-class women struggling to access spousal and child support they are owed after a marital breakdown. Via Bill C-78, we would be taking steps to facilitate access to information about a former spouse's assets via the Canada Revenue Agency and their records. That would prevent spouses from hiding assets and ensure that more women were paid the spousal and child support they rightly deserve. I say "women" in this context, because we know that in this country, over \$1 billion is owed in enforcement arrears to those owed spousal and child support. We also know that among the entire group in an enforcement arrears situation, 96% of the people owed money are women who are owed money by men.

I outline this example of Bill C-78 as a further example of the whole-of-government approach we have taken on this side of the chamber in terms of our approach to addressing gender inequity.

Bill C-86 is clearly an example of such legislation. It would make Status of Women a full department, called the department of women and gender equality, or WAGE.

It is well established that gender equality creates economic growth, thus entrenching the department of women and gender equality would strengthen our capacity to advance gender equality and grow the middle class through policy, programming and the support of equality-seeking organizations and community partners. The mandate of this new formalized department would further promote gender equality by breaking down barriers in respect of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression.

Status of Women has been working on the issue of pay inequity for decades, but Bill C-86 would secure the department's place as a centre of gender expertise. It would recognize its work as a driver of economic growth and make it less vulnerable to alterations without widespread public debate and discourse. In addition, we are determined to formalize this new department to ensure that no future government ever again questions the importance of equal pay for work of equal value in Canadian society.

As I mentioned at the very outset, pay equity is not a zero-sum game. Giving to one gender is not about taking from another. To the contrary, pay inequity that has persisted for so long is actually limiting our growth. It is damaging to the development of our nation. I know this, my constituents in Parkdale—High Park know this, and our government knows this.

The "Global Gender Gap Report 2017", from the World Economic Forum, substantiated that it will take approximately 217 years to close the economic gender gap worldwide if present trends are allowed to continue. They will not be allowed to continue, not under our government's watch.

It is essential for us to implement policies that will remove barriers that prevent women in the labour force from being fairly compensated for their work. It is critical that the Government of Canada uphold the basic principles of equality and fairness and continue to build a country and an economy that works for all genders.

Government Orders

From appointing the first gender-balanced federal cabinet and the first federal minister fully dedicated to gender issues, to tabling Canada's first-ever budget analyzed through a gender-based lens, to launching Canada's first-ever strategy to prevent and address gender-based violence, to an unparalleled focus on women and girls in our international development assistance, our government has demonstrated that it is committed to advancing gender equality within Canada and around the world.

Pay equity for women is long overdue. I am proud to support this bill, and I encourage every one of my colleagues in this chamber to do the very same.

• (1710)

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, given my colleague's speech, I just wonder if he advocated for a gender-based analysis on the closure of the immigration office in Vegreville, which was done without consultation and without an economic impact assessment and which will, in fact, cost millions more to be relocated to Edmonton.

The reason I ask, of course, is that nearly 80% of the employees are women. In some cases, they are now having to drive to Edmonton. Others are not able to make that work. The impact on the community is wide-ranging, throughout the school system, for kids, for charitable organizations, and for multiple small businesses and farms that are owned by the women who work in those offices.

I would just like to ask if the hon. member insisted on that when he defended that decision. If he did not, how could the member be so hypocritical giving this speech today?

• (1715)

Mr. Arif Virani: Mr. Speaker, the member will know that since we have taken office, all the government's decisions across every department have been subjected to a gender-based analysis and a gender equity lens. That includes decisions which relate to the Vegreville processing centre that was located in her riding.

I also emphasize for the member opposite that on a macro approach, as I mentioned, a whole-of-government approach, all our decisions, including the decisions taken at immigration, have a positive impact on women. Let me list some of them: speeding up spousal sponsorships so spouses are reunited within one year, reunifying families so parents are reunified with their children, and bringing in Yazidi refugees, including Yazidi women, who have been victimized by Daesh. We have brought in 1,200 and the previous government brought in three.

Mr. Scott Duvall (Hamilton Mountain, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in this bill, there are new measures that were not mentioned in the budget published last February, such as amending the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act and the Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act so that commercial licence holders and corporations would basically be protected. I do not know where that came from and why it is in this bill. There has never been discussion on it, and I did not even know there was a problem.

However, what was mentioned in the budget was protecting Canadian pensions and that amendments would have to be made to the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act, but it has been omitted in the bill. Why is the government amending the Bankruptcy and

Insolvency Act for companies but it is not protecting pensions mentioned in the budget?

Mr. Arif Virani: Mr. Speaker, our government treats the issues of pensions, retirement security and seniors in this country as significant priorities. We have recently appointed a Minister of Seniors. We have worked very hard over the last two years on pension reform, specifically addressing the gaps in the CPP and ensuring it will be sustainable for the future.

In terms of what we are doing for seniors, we have reduced the age of retirement from 67 years down to 65 years. Sixty-seven was the target for the previous government. We have also increased the GIS to take low-income seniors out of poverty.

These measures tangibly demonstrate our commitment to retirement security and pension security for the seniors in this country.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Brigitte Sansoucy (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, NDP): Mr. Speaker, clearly, pay equity is an important issue. The parliamentary secretary even decided to talk about it in his speech. Every step towards pay equity is important.

My question is this: if it is so important, why wait three years, and why bury this important issue in an 850-page omnibus bill? Why not draft a separate bill for this?

Earlier, the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons indicated that they would be moving time allocation yet again, even on this important issue. Why not take the time to really discuss this by addressing the issue of pay equity separately? Why not draft a separate bill, so that this does not get buried in our deliberations and we can take the time to really dig into this important issue?

Mr. Arif Virani: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague across the aisle for her question.

I can highlight two points. First of all, yes, this did take some time. We made a promise during the election campaign, and the minister made a promise here in the House. We did a study and consulted individuals and stakeholders across the country. We introduced the bill following those consultations.

Second, she asked why this is being included in a budget implementation act, why it was not given its own bill.

I would say it is because the budget represents our government's top priorities. If pay equity is included in a budget implementation act, that means we regard it as a very important priority. It also shows that we have confidence in our government and in our economy.

[*English*]

Mr. Majid Jowhari (Richmond Hill, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today I rise to address this chamber on the provisions of Bill C-86 that amend the Canada Business Corporation Act, the CBCA, and to state my support for Bill C-86.

Government Orders

Corporations are a pillar of the economy. Despite drastic changes to the marketplace, they remain engines of economic growth, innovation and jobs. In almost all cases, corporations serve the legitimate commercial purpose of their owners, the vast majority of whom are hard-working Canadians. In particular, corporations are a conduit through which individuals can make strategic investments and take calculated risks without jeopardizing their personal financial security and that of their families. In return, this helps to ensure the free flow of commerce, innovation, employment and prosperity.

Even though the word “corporation” tends to make us think of multinational companies headquartered in giant office towers, the reality is that most corporations are small businesses with relatively simple ownership and governance structures. I owned one of those prior to becoming a member of Parliament in Richmond Hill, and 85% of the small businesses in my riding could fit into that model very well.

Unfortunately, as with many things, it is also possible for a few ill-intentioned individuals to use corporations for improper or illegal ends. For example, an individual could attempt to hide illicit activities, such as money laundering, tax evasion or even terrorist financing by concealing these activities within the operation of a legally separate and distinct corporate entity with a byzantine ownership structure. Needless to say, any abuse of this sort in Canada harms Canada's reputation as a safe, fair and competitive place for doing business and casts the exceedingly far greater number of legitimate Canadian businesses in an unjust light.

I am sure that members are all aware of the recent reports about snow washing, the practice of using Canada as a base for corporate criminal activities, hiding behind our country's solid international standing. Our government is committed to curbing and deterring this type of abuse.

Canada is a member of the Financial Action Task Force, the FATF, an intergovernmental body that has set standards on transparency for corporate control and beneficial owners, that is, those who truly and ultimately own or control businesses, no matter what intermediaries they may have in place. The FATF standards require that appropriate authorities have timely access to accurate and current information about who ultimately owns and controls corporations in order to combat those criminal activities that can be perpetrated through the misuse of corporations and their ownership structures.

While we have made important efforts to curb these bad practices through our financial and taxation regimes, neither our federal corporate statute, the CBCA, nor its provincial and territorial counterparts require corporations to assemble information about their beneficial ownership. It is important that we reinforce our efforts in other areas with these changes to corporate statutes.

I mentioned the provincial and territorial laws just now. Incorporation is an area of responsibility divided between the two levels of government and it so happens that the vast majority of Canadian corporations, some 90% approximately, are incorporated at the provincial and territorial levels, leaving only some 10% of businesses incorporated federally under the CBCA. The provincial and territorial corporate laws under which the 90% of corporations

fall are very similar in substance to the CBCA, but Parliament cannot alter them.

● (1720)

This means that any effort to correct a gap in corporate law has to be a team effort. The government must collaborate with the 13 provincial and territorial jurisdictions to make similar improvements in each respective statute; otherwise, we run the risk of asymmetrical regulation that can be exploited by wrongdoers.

Our 2017 budget recognized this, calling for collaboration between the levels of government to devise a strategy to shore up and strengthen our corporate landscape, and collaborate they did. A working group representing all 14 Canadian jurisdictions gave us an exemplary model of intergovernmental co-operation over many months, overcoming the idiosyncrasies of different legislation and operations to put together a viable plan to take an important first step in bringing more transparency to Canadian corporate structures.

Following on from the recommendations of the working group, in December 2017, all of the Canadian finance ministers agreed in principle to pursue legislative amendments to their corporate laws, with a view to putting them in place by the summer of 2019. These changes will require corporations to hold accurate, up-to-date information on their beneficial owners. Our 2018 budget formalized this commitment at the federal level.

That brings us to the proposed amendments before us today. These would only affect the CBCA, of course, but given the finance ministers' agreement, we expect the provinces and territories to follow suit in amending their constituent corporate statutes.

What the bill proposes is for privately held corporations to compile a list of those individuals who exercise significant control over them, whether through direct ownership, beneficial ownership, or other means. The law will set out criteria for who falls into this class of significant control, principally by way of thresholds as to how many and what kind of shares an individual controls.

Corporations will need to find some basic information about those individuals, some demographic data, and the how and when with respect to their exercise of control. They will take this information and put it in a register that they store in their corporate books, similar to what they do for their other shareholder information.

Government Orders

I would like to emphasize again that these new measures would only apply to privately held corporations. Publicly traded corporations already make numerous filings that promote transparency under provincial securities rules or stock exchange listing requirements, including about beneficial owners. These safeguards, combined with the difficulty in controlling a company with a diffuse ownership structure, mean they are not the main area of concern here.

Once this information is on hand, corporations will be required to update it at least once a year. This means doing their due diligence, taking reasonable steps to make sure the information is still accurate. As I mentioned, most Canadian corporations are small businesses with a simple ownership structure, and this should not be too difficult a task for them to handle.

We must take it one step at a time, however, and weigh our options at each stage to be sure that what we do makes the most sense for Canada and its provinces and territories. To that end, the important changes proposed by these amendments, and eventually those at the provincial and territorial level as well, set us on our path to making our marketplace safer and more transparent in corporate governance and toward maintaining our international commitments. These changes will help to enhance Canada's reputation as a place to do business and thereby further support the overwhelming majority of hard-working Canadians who own and control corporations for legitimate purposes.

• (1725)

Mr. Murray Rankin (Victoria, NDP): Madam Speaker, I listened with interest to the member who spoke just now about transparency. I would like to ask him if he considers the following to be a transparent debate. We had a 850-page bill dropped on Parliament on Monday. Today is Thursday. There have been 4.5 hours of debate, only one speech allocated to the NDP, and the government has just announced time allocation on this bill of over 1,000 sections.

How is that transparent? How can we do our jobs as parliamentarians in scrutinizing such a mammoth omnibus bill?

• (1730)

Mr. Majid Jowhari: Madam Speaker, the focus of my speech was on ensuring corporate accountability through transparency of control. That is the transparency I was talking about. Our government is committed to combatting tax evasion and avoidance to keep our tax system fair, making sure that money stays within small businesses, and focusing on growth and creating jobs.

Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Madam Speaker, I understand that my colleague from Laurier—Sainte-Marie was very disappointed today that the government has decided not to allocate additional funding for the ambassador for women, peace and security. I know the government is seeking a seat on the Security Council. Clearly, this is the big topic of the day.

I wonder what the member thinks about the fact this is missing from this massive bill before us. Given that we have a Prime Minister who declares himself a feminist, we would have thought a matter like that would be given high priority in this bill. Would the member like to speak to that?

Mr. Majid Jowhari: Madam Speaker, once again, the scope of my speech was on ensuring corporate accountability through transparency of control. By the way, I am quite proud of the Prime Minister and the focus his continued focus on various issues. As part of this commitment, we are taking action to ensure that corporate structures cannot be misused to launder money, evade taxes or participate in other serious criminal activities.

Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it seems that New Democrats think we have too many pages in our budget and that we are doing too much for Canadians. I hear the Conservatives saying that we should not be investing in our economy and should focus on limiting our vision for Canada. This bill reflects the complexity of the challenge of making Canada fairer and the economy work for all Canadians. During the INDU committee's studies, the committee looked at Bill C-25 and the composition of boards. It also looked at beneficial ownership to try to make sure that women can participate on boards and in management. Other parts of the budget bill are supporting women in business.

Could the hon. member comment on the importance of proper governance so that women have a fair chance in our economy?

Mr. Majid Jowhari: Madam Speaker, I have the honour and privilege of serving with my colleague from Guelph on the INDU committee, as well as in regard to our joint initiative on mental health.

The hon. member is quite correct. When we were studying Bill C-25, the topic of ownership, specifically by women, came up in the study. We realized that whenever there is fair representation of females, corporations on average perform in the neighbourhood of 30% better. We welcome Bill C-25 and also the measures in this act that support female participation in corporate structures, as well as making sure we have proper representation.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Karine Trudel (Jonquière, NDP): Madam Speaker, I will be sharing my time with my wonderful colleague from Hamilton Mountain.

The first thing I want to address is the length of this bill, which is 850 pages long and has many clauses. We asked all kinds of questions about how many clauses and subclauses are in the bill, but we still do not have an answer. This is unacceptable and shows a lack of respect for opposition parliamentarians and the general public.

The Liberals are clearly hoping the opposition will drown trying to wade through this massive bill. This tactic is nothing new, as we saw the same thing with the former Conservative government. However, at the time, the Liberals were vocal critics of such bills. Now, they are doing the same thing. As I have said many times in the House, the more things change, the more they stay the same, unfortunately.

Government Orders

Omnibus bills subvert and evade the normal principles of parliamentary review of legislation. The longer a bill is, the harder it is for opposition members to do their due diligence, since they do not have enough time to study the bill carefully.

As an aside, I want to thank my colleague from New Westminster—Burnaby for yesterday's point of order on this topic.

At any rate, this undemocratic strategy does nothing to improve the low regard Canadians have for politicians. I do not know how the Liberals intend to regain Canadians' confidence when they use this type of abusive tactic after promising a more transparent democracy. The way they are rushing through the study of Bill C-86 is anything but transparent.

When we examine Bill C-86 more closely, we quickly see that it fails to take bold action to address the injustices faced by thousands of Canadians. One of those injustices is pension theft. We have talked about that a lot over the past few days, and I know that my colleague from Hamilton just talked about it, but as the labour critic, this is an issue that I care about, so I wanted to take some time to talk about it in my speech.

We need to protect pensions. When a company declares bankruptcy, banks and investors make off with employees' retirement pensions through a clever financial shell game. We need to fix this major problem. This happened to Sears employees recently, and nothing was done.

There are people in my riding of Jonquière who worked for Sears. Unfortunately, they suffered a tremendous amount of stress because they did not know what would happen to their pensions and benefits. The store shut down overnight. There was nothing left. I have spoken with these former Sears employees, and they still have serious concerns.

Tolerating these dishonest tricks is a real moral failure on the government's part. The Liberals have the opportunity to make a real difference, but they refuse to do anything about this.

Another glaring example of the Liberals' lack of will is the missed opportunity to make drugs more affordable for Canadians and save billions of dollars by bringing in national pharmacare. Canada is the only country in the G7 to have a medicare system that does not cover prescription drugs.

For years, successive commissions of inquiry led by experts have urged Canada to include drug costs in our health care program. Despite these appeals, successive Liberal and Conservative governments have made little progress on drug insurance because they lacked the will to effect change. Unfortunately, that is still the case with Bill C-86.

Public drug insurance plans in Canada have evolved and now offer relatively full coverage, but only for part of the population. The problem is not insignificant: an estimated 10% to 20% of our population does not have any health insurance.

●(1735)

Even if people are lucky enough to have a private drug plan, they still have to pay the deductible.

The NDP is outraged that many Canadians are forced to cut up their pills or interrupt their treatments because of the cost of drugs. That is absolutely shameful.

Canadians deserve to get the drugs they need without putting their savings, wages or health at risk. That is their right and the Liberals have denied them that right by failing to include this key issue in Bill C-86.

Another example is compensation for dairy producers who were sacrificed in free trade agreements and for the steel and aluminum industry that has been hit for months by the tariffs imposed by the United States.

As I mentioned several times, dairy producers in my riding of Jonquière are waiting for compensation. In the last agreement, for example, dairy producers had to innovate and pay out of pocket to access a program, but that is another story. There has been a 10% breach in supply management, which will result in considerable losses. Generations of farm families will be affected. I hope that the government will do something for them. The Liberals had the opportunity to do something for these families in Bill C-86, but they did nothing.

Now I would like to talk about the steel and aluminum industries because a number of small businesses in my riding are being hit by the tariffs the Americans have not withdrawn. Companies are losing lots of business and laying people off because of those tariffs.

I had the opportunity to hear from witnesses in committee this week. They came to tell us about the impact of U.S. tariffs on Canadian steel and aluminum, and they all said the same thing.

The government is trying to do the right thing, but the reality is that the Liberals are taking too long to compensate companies for the unjust and unjustified American tariffs. Wait times are long, and it takes a lot of time and resources to fill out the necessary forms. As everyone knows, these businesses are crucial to economic growth, to the survival of good Canadian jobs and to the prosperity of our communities.

Now back to agriculture and supply management.

One after another, the government opened three breaches in supply management, but Bill C-86 is absolutely silent on the subject.

I had a chance to talk to people from the Canadian Federation of Agriculture who told me they are in dire need of cash. Farmers are not interested in programs. That bears repeating often to make sure the government here in the House of Commons gets the message and does something to safeguard our family farms and our food sovereignty.

Government Orders

The government is also putting our rural communities on the back burner when it comes to integration and development. The Liberals are showing once again that they do not have the courage to address the inequalities between rural regions and urban centres. Some very simple examples of that include mobile phones and high-speed Internet access. Here in Ottawa, it is very easy. When we turn on our phones, we have everything we need. We can access information and download things very quickly. However, things are very different in rural areas. The municipalities of Lamarche and Labrecque are being penalized and that is hindering their expansion and making it harder to keep people from leaving.

Time is running out, but I still have a lot to say about this very large bill.

A number of aspects of the bill, including pay equity and pensions, should have been dealt with separately. These are very critical, very important issues. My colleague from New Westminster—Burnaby asked that the bill be split, and that is what should have been done.

• (1740)

I look forward to my colleagues' questions.

[*English*]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, if we look at the act, because of this government, there is an opportunity, through the Speaker's chair, to see the splitting potentially of the legislation when it comes time for voting. That was not there previously.

Over 100 pages of the legislation deal with the issue of pay equity, which is long overdue. It is a part of the budget process and it is one of the reasons why we have 800 pages, over 100 dealing specifically with pay equity.

Would the member agree that the time for studying, in good part, is over and we need to see some action? That is what we see in the budget. Would she not support that?

• (1745)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Karine Trudel: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his wonderful question.

As he just mentioned, the bill has 850-odd pages. We have been talking about pay equity for more than 42 years. If pay equity is so important, why did they not split Bill C-86? Why not introduce a single bill on pay equity? That would allow all Canadians to follow the debates, read the bill and really understand it.

This is an omnibus bill. The government promised us transparency, but that is not what we are seeing. In committee, members will have 13 hours to ask questions. We have done the math. Given the number of pages, clauses and paragraphs—a number we cannot exactly pin down—we will have an average of nine seconds to read and understand each clause. We have also just learned that time allocation will be invoked. That is unacceptable.

Therefore, if the pay equity bill was that important to our feminist Prime Minister, the Liberals would have introduced it as a stand-

alone bill and we could have debated it here in the House all in one go.

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, CPC): Madam Speaker, I know the environment is very important to my colleague and to her party.

I am wondering whether she has any advice to give regarding the carbon tax and whether she thinks the carbon tax is really the best way for the government to save the environment, especially in the budget, or does she think there is another way the government could save the environment?

Ms. Karine Trudel: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for her question and for asking it in French.

I would have liked to see some environmentally sustainable measures as well as innovative, keystone projects in Bill C-86. The government is rather tight-fisted in that respect, and yet it had no problem buying a 65-year-old pipeline and investing so much of Canadian taxpayers' money in that.

Why are there no innovative, keystone projects moving towards green energy, projects that would bring people together and give them hope?

A couple weeks ago, I attended a conference organized by the Association forestière Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean around the theme of the boreal forest and climate change. All the researchers who presented unanimously agreed that we have less than 12 years. We are at T minus 11 years. Urgent action is needed.

In an omnibus bill that is over 850 pages long, I would have expected to find concrete measures as well as innovative, keystone projects to fight climate change and also to give future generations some hope.

[*English*]

Mr. Scott Duvall (Hamilton Mountain, NDP): Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak to Bill C-86, the government's budget implementation act. This massive 800-page omnibus bill contains thousands of clauses, and there are seven separate stand-alone pieces of legislation inside it. I am hoping Canadians can understand why this type of bill presents a real danger to our democracy.

Canadians elect us to come to Ottawa and debate issues and create laws that will help them and their families. Real debate requires that all participants have all the information they need. The facts should be accessible. Access to the information should be transparent.

I think most Canadians will understand that governments present these kinds of mammoth documents to make it more difficult to analyze what the government is up to. This of course makes it more difficult to have a full and informed debate. Who suffers? It is Canadians who suffer. It is the people who elect us to represent them who suffer. I hope Canadians and all our constituents can see through what the government is up to in dropping such a thick and complicated bill on the table.

Government Orders

This is a bill that is supposed to implement some of the measures introduced in the government's budget from eight months ago. On the face of it, that is not unusual. What is unusual and what is concerning is that the bill introduces new and additional measures not mentioned in the original budget documents published last February. This is very concerning. These are new measures that should at least be put into separate bills, introduced in the House, and then fully debated and considered by all of us right here. However, that is not what is happening here.

It is most sensible that Canadians would wonder what is at play when a government behaves like this. Are the Liberals afraid of having their measures and ideas debated? Are they afraid of criticism? Are they trying to hide something? The answer to all those questions is probably, yes, and I am willing to count on Canadians, our constituents, to decide for themselves.

Yesterday my colleague from New Westminster—Burnaby pointed out just a few of the measures that we could not find anywhere in the original budget documents. These include clauses 461 to 462, which refer to some rather important legislation relating to protection for workers and workers' rights; and clauses 535 to 625, which deal with the Canada Labour Code and workers' health and safety. I am sure we will find more examples as we continue to examine this massive bill.

I want to point out that we are not necessarily against these measures. The point is that the size of the bill prevents us from being able to take time to study these new measures in-depth. That is unfair to all of us as members in the House and unfair to the constituents we represent.

Another example of measures introduced in this bill and not mentioned in any of the budget document is the proposed changes to the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act and the Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act. These measures have been described to me as housekeeping changes, which I suspect they probably are. They would clarify some issues with Canada's bankruptcy laws to protect commercial licence-holders and corporations. I do not necessarily oppose these changes being made. However, I have two concerns.

First, these changes were not mentioned in any of the budget documentation I have seen, so why are they in legislation meant to enact that budget? It is very much like they were just slipped in, perhaps, with the hope that no one would notice, and that is wrong. All members of Parliament need and deserve proper notice of any change to Canadian laws being suggested through the House. Proper notice would allow us not only the chance to analyze and understand the changes, but also an opportunity to offer any amendment that would make those changes better or more effective. Sliding amendments into a massive bill robs us of all of our opportunity.

My second concern is why the Liberals decided to propose amendments to Canada's bankruptcy laws, which was never mentioned in February, while failing to take on the items they did mention.

In a section of February's budget titled, "Protecting Canadians' Pensions", the government promised to take action using a whole-of-government, evidence-based approach toward addressing retirement security for all Canadians. It also promised there would be

consultations so the government could decide on what its approach would be. I think we all expected those consultations would be done by now. However, as far as we know, they have not even started and there is no plan for when they will start. Why would the government not have completed those consultations and included provisions in this current bill? That is what we expected. That is what Canadian retirees expected too.

● (1750)

It sure seems that the government is happy to make changes to help big corporations and wealthy executives, but when it comes down to protecting people's pensions, the Liberals are not able to act. They say "sorry, it's too complicated".

We all know that Canadian companies use our inadequate bankruptcy laws to effectively gain concessions from their employees and escape responsibility for huge pension deficits they themselves have created. Workers are then left with the threat of reduced pensions and health care benefits.

We all know that over the last 10 years there has been an increased focus on the problems with Canada's inadequate bankruptcy and insolvency laws. The cases of Nortel, Wabush Mines, Stelco and, most recently, Sears have brought into national focus the fact that workers at large companies that go bankrupt are offered very little protection, while investors, banks, and sometimes international hedge fund operators make out like bandits.

We all know that one of the most offensive things that happens during bankruptcy proceedings is that executives give themselves huge bonuses. The very people who ran the company into the ground get big rewards, and it is done because the law allows it to happen. Nortel executives got over \$200 million in bonuses, Sears executives \$9.2 million and Stelco executives \$1.2 million while at the same time pensioners were asked to take cuts to their medical benefits.

When I go across Canada for town halls, I have tell the people this. They always come back and ask if I am kidding them, and I have to tell them that I am not, that this really happens, because the law allows it to happen. We know these abuses are not right and that our laws allow for the theft of workers' and retirees' pensions and benefits. Canadian workers and retirees know it is not right, and they are demanding that the laws be changed. Therefore, Canadians need to ask themselves why the government refuses to act to protect them.

It is not too late. The government can take action now. The NDP will be pushing the government to do the right thing, to amend the bill and put an end to pension theft. Canadian workers and their families deserve no less.

Private Members' Business

•(1755)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, we hear a lot about pensions, and justifiably so, from my friends on the New Democratic side. However, I want to emphasize that this government has taken a number of steps dealing with seniors.

The first thing that comes across my mind is that the government has increased the guaranteed income supplement significantly for the poorest of our seniors. Some seniors receive over \$900 additionally every year. Here I also think of the agreement on the CPP, a retirement pension, that the Minister of Finance was able to reach in co-operation with our provinces and territories. It will help many of the individuals my friend is talking about today when it comes time to retire. One of the first actions the government took was to bring down the age of retirement for OAS from 67 to 65. My colleague across the way will recall what Mr. Harper did back then, and we were able to reverse that.

Would the member provide his thoughts on those particular policy initiatives?

Mr. Scott Duvall: Madam Speaker, I thank my friend for asking those important questions. We on this side give you kudos for making those changes, reversing what the previous Conservative government did.

There are good things, such as reducing the age of eligibility back to 65. The GIS is a good thing. The CPP, well, maybe in 50 years the changes will be good, though you and I will not be around then. We are thankful for that, but what we are talking about here is pension theft.

We know that hundreds of thousands of Canadians have had their pensions reduced because of the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act. If the Liberals want to be praised for helping seniors, why are they not protecting them from this pension theft that they know is wrong? We all know it is wrong. Why are they not taking action?

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Unfortunately, the time is up now, but the member will have three minutes for questions and comments the next time this issue is before the House. I would also remind the member that he should have been addressing all of his questions and comments to the chair, and not to the individual member.

It being 5:58 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' Business as listed on today's Order Paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[*English*]

SIKH HERITAGE MONTH ACT

The House resumed from October 30 consideration of the motion that Bill C-376, An Act to designate the month of April as Sikh Heritage Month, be read the third time and passed.

Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Madam Speaker,

[*Member spoke in Punjabi*][*English*]

I proudly rise today to speak to the bill from our hon. colleague for Surrey—Newton, Bill C-376, in recognition of Sikh heritage month. I thought I had missed this today. I was pleasantly surprised when I was asked if I would take the opportunity to speak to this.

In my riding of Cariboo—Prince George, we have six Sikh temples or gurdwaras. I spend as much as time as I can at those temples, sadly not enough because most Sundays I am travelling back to Ottawa. I wanted to rise and speak to the importance of this bill, as well as recognize the contributions of our Sikh community within our country.

Every spring, from the time my kids were very young, we have participated in an event, which is called the Vaisakhi, ringing in the Sikh new year. It really is a celebration of the spring harvest festival. I have marched in it. It is a great event that brings our community together.

Since being elected, I have had the opportunity to speak at these events. I am so proud of our community when we come together as one and we recognize and celebrate each other. I say that we come together as one, because the fundamental beliefs of Sikhism, in the sacred scripture of the Guru Granth Sahib, is the belief in one creator, divine unity and equality of all mankind. Sikhs believe in selfless service, justice, benefit and prosperity of all. Sikhism is based on the spiritual teachings of Guru Nanak, the first guru, and the nine gurus that succeeded him.

Members may be interested to know that God in Sikhism has no gender. They do not discriminate between genders.

The first Sikh who was recorded to have landed in Canada was Major Kesur Singh. He and a group of Sikh officers from the British army arrived on the shores of Vancouver, around about 1897, to celebrate Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. It was shortly after that that we started to see more Sikh immigration to Canada, largely within British Columbia. They worked in our mills. They worked laying the tracks of our railroads.

In 2002, I was proud to introduce a new air service into my community of Prince George, and it was direct air service into Abbotsford. At that time, when I was in Abbotsford, I had the opportunity to visit one of the very first Sikh temples in Canada. The very first one was in the Kitsilano area in downtown Vancouver. The Gur Sikh Temple in Abbotsford has been designated a historic site. It is one of only three, I believe, historic sites in the world for Sikh temples, the other ones being in Pakistan and in the Punjab. Our hon. colleague from Surrey—Newton will correct me, if I am wrong.

Private Members' Business

• (1800)

I grew up in Williams Lake. The first time I attended a Sikh temple was with one of my very best friends. We were celebrating a wedding. Sikh weddings go on for what seems like weeks. It is a week of festivities, and it truly is a celebration with all families. As I was preparing for this speech I was trying to remember how old I was when we attended that wedding, but I had to have been under 10 years old. It really was a unique experience.

When I went to Abbotsford back in 2002 to introduce this new service, I was speaking to some of the community elders. They were so proud to show us the heritage site. I was not aware of this, but the langars and gurdwaras will never turn anybody away. The langars are there to feed whoever would like to attend and receive free food. They will not turn anybody away, regardless of their religious beliefs and denominations.

I have visited India a number of times, most recently back in 2017 with my wife. Actually, those were our summer holidays. One would not expect that to be a hot spot most people would circle on their map, but it was on ours. We visited members of our community's families who were there, people I have known since I was probably eight, nine or 10 years old. We went to Chandigarh and Amritsar, and we were in Ludhiana, Pandori and Jalandhar. We went to the Golden Temple. It is true that attending the Golden Temple gives one a very particular feeling. I cannot explain it, but it is there.

Aside from visiting the homes, communities and small villages of our family friends and experiencing the generosity of the people and stunning beauty of the countryside, one of the other memorable moments was visiting the Rock Garden of Chandigarh. It was started by a government employee by the name of Nek Chand, who over the course of years would secretly take household and industrial waste and turn it into art. It has grown into about a 40-acre park, and it is absolutely beautiful.

We also visited a gurdwara in Fatehgarh Sahib. Right after being elected, I went and watched an animated movie about the two sons of Guru Gobind Singh. The movie talked about their strength against men who wanted to do them harm. Fatehgarh Sahib is named after the seven-year-old son of Guru Gobind Singh, and his brother, who were buried alive a long time ago.

I wish I could have spoken longer on this. Some of my closest friends, who I call family, are Sikhs. I am so proud to stand and walk with them. I am proud to call them my friends. They silently make contributions in our community. They donate to our communities. They make sure those who are hungry get the food they need. As I said earlier, the langars are opened 24 hours a day. When people need them, they are there.

I am proud to stand and support our hon. colleague's bill, Bill C-376. Sikhs in our country have contributed to many areas within our economy and politics. Indeed, there is a lesson to be learned from their stick-to-it-iveness. It has not always been easy for Sikhs in Canada, but they love this country. My friends love this country and are very proud to call Canada home.

I urge all our colleagues to take any chance they get to visit a gurdwara in their community and attend the langar.

With that, I will cede the floor. I thank my hon. colleague from Surrey—Newton for bringing this important bill forward.

• (1805)

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to support Bill C-376, an act to designate the month of April as Sikh heritage month.

I know that in previous Parliaments we have had motions on a number of different things concerning Sikh culture. I would say that one of the most important heritage moments for social justice was when the *Komagata Maru* incident was recognized. The incident was raised by Jasbir Sandhu and Jinny Simms in previous Parliaments. During the former Harper government, an official apology was given here in the House of Commons. It was an important part of Canadian heritage to recognize that injustice. We carry on that work.

In Windsor-Essex County which I represent, we have the fourth-largest diverse community in terms of city population. For over 100 years a number of different groups and organizations have made the social fabric of our area very special, especially given the fact that we are on the front line to the United States. Diversity and multiculturalism, especially the way we express it as Canadians, is quite unique. We see it in our streets, businesses and services. The Sikh culture in Windsor-Essex County is a very important part of that.

This proposed Sikh heritage month act also builds on the efforts that have been done in the past in Ontario. Ontario passed Bill 52, an Act to proclaim the month of April as Sikh heritage month. It received royal assent on December 12, 2013. It was a private member's bill by the former NDP MPP for the provincial riding of Bramalea—Gore—Malton, Jagmeet Singh, our current leader of the NDP. That bill was the first in Canada and also the world, which recognized the contributions of Sikhs to the community. It is nice that in Canada we are going to have a sister bill for that legislation. It shows the importance we place on educating others and recognizing the contributions made by those of Sikh heritage in Canada.

It is important to note that it takes a lot of, I guess, courage and moxie to come to a new country, to build a new life and contribute. One wants to be able to have the type of supports not only to maintain and showcase and provide links back to the home of origin but also to have those things here. That extension is very important.

As New Democrats, we believe in family reunification, for example, in immigration and visitation. It is a big issue and one that has occupied my office to make sure that people who have come to Canada also get a chance to have continued relationships with people they left behind. That includes my own family and my wife's family, as well as the families of other members. The Sikh culture and community in my riding deserve that same respect, especially due to the fact that their contributions are significant.

Private Members' Business

Harjinder Singh Kandola is the president of the Sikh Cultural Society of Windsor. We have a temple, the Gurdwara Khalsa Parkash in Windsor, as well. It is not just a place of worship. It is also a place of contribution. Most recently, I was extremely impressed by the Sikh youth in our community who donated over 1,000 items of clothing to help those in need as well as 600 items for a food bank which was very important.

What is not often known is that the population of my riding of Windsor West varies from the very affluent to the poor. It was recognized in Campaign 2020's report as being one of the places with high poverty and child poverty.

The Sikh contribution to the community and the Sikhs' philosophy when we think of Vaisakhi really emphasize traits of selflessness, love and compassion. It is connected to the actions we saw with the clothing and food donations. It is a recognition of how well this fits within the Windsor-Essex County framework for giving.

I would add that when we have discussions about Sikh heritage month, we need to understand the professionalism and contributions that Sikh members of the community have made. I know for a fact that we have seen this in the auto sector.

● (1810)

I cannot tell members how many times I have been impressed, whether it was with the assembly component, the engineering component or other services that are part of our successful auto sector. We have seen immigration and this contribution be very successful. We have also seen it with regard to education, health care services, and other types of contributions to our economy.

It is very important that these heritage months be part of our national framework. There have been several passed here to recognize diversity in Canada. They also provide opportunities for public education and involvement.

Prior to my work as a member of Parliament, I worked as an employment specialist on behalf of persons with disabilities and new Canadians. Part of that work included work at the Multicultural Council of Windsor and Essex County. We had a number of newcomers to Canada from various types of backgrounds, including the Sikh community, and we had some Canadians, and we mixed them together in a program that had a 90% success rate for either returning to school or finding employment. What we found was that there were a number of prejudiced or unintended assumptions people had. In fact, we have a society where we are still dealing with racism and bigotry. There is no doubt about that. It is often faced by people who are visibly different from the majority.

One aspect of this program was to expose individuals from the school system and the employment system to different cultures and experiences they had not had before. We found that we had great success with that formula, because in that mix were individuals who were not experienced or open before, and they made assumptions about people. That is one of the reasons we have been supporting not only this particular initiative but also many others, because they help erode some of those things.

As I mentioned earlier, the opportunity we have here matches what we did in Ontario with Bill 52. I have been at the ceremonies in Windsor and Essex county, where people of all persuasions and

different backgrounds in the community really enjoy having that validation. We have a flag-raising ceremony, the last one being when our mayor, Drew Dilkens, took part. It is held at City Hall Square, and a number of different people come from the community. Bill 52, with respect to Ontario Sikh Heritage Month, is very much part of that.

The member should be congratulated for bringing this to the chamber, because it now affords the opportunity for this to not just be an Ontario experience or a city flag-raising experience but a national experience. That is important, because we will see the impact not only in Windsor-Essex but also across our country.

● (1815)

Ms. Kamal Khara (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Development, Lib.): Madam Speaker,

[Member spoke in Punjabi]

[English]

I rise today to speak on Bill C-376, the Sikh heritage month act. First and foremost, I want to take this opportunity to thank my good friend from Surrey—Newton for bringing this bill forward. This bill would help to provide recognition of the contributions made by the Sikh community to Canada. As a proud Sikh Canadian myself, I am proud to speak to this legislation.

Sikhs have a long history in Canada. In 1897, the first Sikhs came to Canada as members of the British Indian Army, on their way to Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, with the first Sikh settler being credited to be Kesur Singh, a risaldar-major in the British Indian Army. Sikhs found employment working as manual labourers, including laying tracks on the Canadian Pacific Railway, and in a few years the Sikh population numbered in the thousands. Unfortunately, though, public opinion at the time was not favourable to the Sikh population, which led to many discriminatory laws being passed.

All this tension came to a head when, in 1914, a ship named the *Komagata Maru* attempted to dock in Vancouver, carrying mostly Sikh passengers from India. Because of the laws at the time, this ship was not allowed to dock and was, instead, diverted back to India. When it arrived back in India, the British fired at the ship and 20 of the passengers were killed. This incident was a dark period in our country's history, but I am very thankful and proud that our government delivered a formal apology for these actions in 2016.

Private Members' Business

From humble beginnings, the Sikh community in Canada has grown to over 500,000 today, with Sikhs from coast to coast to coast calling Canada home. The Sikh community in Canada is represented in all professional fields today: medicine, business, law, academia and politics. One very prominent Sikh business leader in Canada today is Manjit Minhas. Some who are fans of the show *Dragons' Den* may recognize her name, as she has been one of the dragons since 2015. She, along with her brother, founded Minhas Craft Brewery and Minhas Micro Distillery when she was just a young student at the University of Calgary. Today, Minhas Craft Brewery is the 10th largest craft brewery in the United States, with operations in Canada as well. As a prominent Sikh business woman, she is a role model for young women all across Canada and an example of what is possible with hard work and determination.

The Sikh community has great representation in Canadian politics as well. In the 2015 election, 17 Sikh members of Parliament were elected, in stark contrast to the situation just 100 years ago. This means that Punjabi, a language spoken among Sikhs, is now the third most spoken language in the House after English and French.

Of these 17 members, four are currently ministers in our government's cabinet, including the hon. government House leader, who is the first woman, regardless of ethnicity, to hold the position. I am also very proud to see the appointment of the first-ever Sikh senator, Senator Sarabjit Marwah, as well as the appointment of Palbinder Kaur Shergill to the Supreme Court of British Columbia, as Canada's first turbaned female Supreme Court judge.

From the national level here in Ottawa to local communities across Canada, the contributions of Sikh Canadians are an important part of our Canadian identity. Sikhism was founded on the fundamental principles of equality, unity, selfless service and social justice, values that we are all so proud to share as Canadians. These values are exemplified by many local organizations making a difference in our communities.

In my riding of Brampton West, the Gurdwara Sikh Sangat is a place not just for the Sikh community but for all community members to come together as well.

● (1820)

As is customary in all Sikh places of worship, the langar, also known as a community kitchen, provides free food to the masses. Meals are served each and every day to Bramptonians regardless of their faith.

The Gurdwara Sikh Sangat also takes part in local food drives and recreational programs for our youth in our community. As well it partners with local organizations like the Seva Food Bank to help hundreds and thousands of individuals in the region of Peel.

As Remembrance Day is just a few days away, I would be remiss not to mention Private Buckam Singh. Buckam Singh arrived in Canada in 1907 in British Columbia and later settled in Toronto. At the onset of World War I, Buckam Singh enlisted in the Canadian Armed Forces and became just one of nine Canadian Sikhs to fight in the war. Buckam Singh served with the 20th Canadian Infantry Battalion in the battlefields of Flanders where he was wounded twice in two separate battles.

After his service in the war, he contracted TB and passed away at the young age of 25. His grave in Kitchener-Waterloo is the only one known to be of a Canadian Sikh soldier.

The sacrifices made by Private Buckam Singh, along with all the other young men and women during that time is the reason we can enjoy the freedom that we have today.

Since the time Buckam Singh enlisted, the Canadian Armed Forces have welcomed many Sikhs to their ranks, most notably our current Minister of National Defence, who became the first Sikh to command a Canadian regiment.

I also want to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank a member of our Royal Canadian Air Force, my brother, Gurminder Khera, who is an aviation engineer stationed at Canadian Forces Base Trenton.

The passage of this bill would recognize the rich history of Sikhs in Canada and help promote greater appreciation of our achievements by future generations of Sikhs. I encourage each and every member of the House to support this bill.

Once again, I want to take this opportunity to thank all the community leaders, all the stakeholders, advocates and of course, my good friend from Surrey—Newton for bringing the bill to life.

I want to take this opportunity to wish all the Sikhs celebrating this month the birth of Guru Nanak Dev Ji. Happy Gurburab to all of them.

[*Member spoke in Punjabi*]

● (1825)

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Eva Nassif (Vimy, Lib.): Madam Speaker,

[*Member spoke in Punjabi*]

[*Translation*]

I am pleased to rise today at third reading of Bill C-376, an act to designate the month of April as Sikh heritage month. This bill was sponsored by my colleague, the hon. member for Surrey—Newton, and it highlights the many contributions made by Sikh Canadians. It is estimated that 500,000 Canadians of Sikh heritage live in Canada. According to some sources, Canada has the second-largest Sikh population in the world.

I would like to explain why I support this motion. It is in line with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which officially recognizes multiculturalism as a Canadian value. It is also in line with the Canadian Multiculturalism Act, which is based on a multiculturalism policy designed to preserve and enhance the multicultural heritage of Canadians.

Vaisakhi is celebrated in April. This month marks the birth of Khalsa and his teachings of equality, community service and social justice. For many years, I have participated in these celebrations with the Sikh community in Vimy, in Montreal, and I can say that this community contributes significantly to Canadian society. The Sikh heritage and the richness of this community's language and culture must be protected for future generations.

Private Members' Business

[Member spoke in Punjabi]

[Translation]

Ms. Anju Dhillon (Dorval—Lachine—LaSalle, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Winnipeg North. I have a lot to say in two minutes, so I am going to try to get through it as quickly as possible.

First, I would like to thank the member for Surrey—Newton for introducing this bill to designate April as Sikh heritage month. I myself am a member of the Sikh community. I am also the first Sikh from Quebec to ever be elected to any of the three levels of government. What is more, I was the first Sikh to practise law in the courts of Quebec.

I would like to talk a little about the Sikh religion. Sikhs believe in a single God, who is the sole creator and who takes care of us. That sums up the Sikh philosophy. Sikh principles are in keeping with Canadian values. Sikhs must earn a living through honest work and give generously to the poor and those in need, always mindful that God is the one who gives us everything. When we share what we have been given, we are sharing it with others who were created by Him.

I am very proud of all my colleagues who talked about the Sikh community and this bill. It really warmed my heart to hear them talk about their visits to India and their own experiences in the community. It is very important for our community, whether here in Canada or elsewhere in the world, to help one another and to see one another as human beings. Kinship and solidarity are very important. I listened with great interest to everything my colleagues had to say, and I am very proud that all of the members of all of the parties in the House support this bill. I am very proud of them, and I thank them.

Members of the Sikh community abide by a code that governs the way we live and behave. For example, we must always accept the will of God. If something bad happens in life, we always say that it is God's will and everything He does is for our own good. This is how we keep the peace amongst ourselves and accept the will of God. There are a lot of bad things that happen in life, and they cannot always be explained, but it is important to understand this. Everyone has their own way of thinking or practising their religion, but Sikhs believe in respecting God's will and working hard to help one another.

Furthermore, the Sikh community has made great contributions to Canada, as we have heard in many of our colleague's speeches in the House of Commons.

For all these reasons, the Sikh community has been able to integrate well into the Canadian community. I think we can call it a success. Members have talked about the *Komagata Maru* and about the negative response to the Sikh community when it first arrived here. This community was subjected to a lot of violence and suffering. However, we eventually managed to integrate into the Canadian community, and now, like my hon. colleague just said, there are 17 Sikh members of Parliament here in the House of Commons.

[Member spoke in Punjabi]

● (1830)

[English]

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

[Member spoke in Punjabi]

[English]

What a pleasure it is to rise this afternoon and speak to what is a really significant and historic piece of legislation. I thank my *paaji* from Surrey—Newton for introducing this legislation. He has been able to manipulate it by working with other MPs to get it to the stage it is at today. From here, the legislation will go to the Senate.

Knowing the desire of so many in this chamber to recognize the month of April as Sikh heritage month, and because of the fine work and outstanding lobbying done by the member for Surrey—Newton, I am confident that we will see Sikh heritage month in law in April 2019. I am very grateful for that.

Earlier today, I spoke about the 50th anniversary of the Sikh Society of Manitoba. It is one of the Gurudwaras that I have actually attended since 1988.

I also have a very good Gurudwara close to my home, the Gurdwara Kalgidhar Darbar, which is on King Edward Street in my riding. I often pay a visit to it. There is also Singh Sabha on Sturgeon Road, which I have had the opportunity to visit over the years. By visiting these Gurudwaras, I have been able to develop many wonderful, blessed friendships that I really value today in a personal way.

I have a very special friend, someone who was elected at the same time I was elected, and I am speaking of Dr. Gulzar Cheema. Dr. Gulzar Cheema was the very first Sikh elected to a legislature in Canada in 1988. It was a very proud day when we saw that take place. Dr. Gulzar Cheema, who now lives in Victoria, went from the Manitoba legislature to the British Columbia legislature. An individual being elected to two provincial legislatures is very rare. Dr. Gulzar Cheema “baptized” me into the Sikh community. I am so grateful because of what I have been able to witness over the years.

In 1999, I had the privilege to introduce in the Manitoba legislature a recognition of the Khalsa in the form of a resolution. The Conservative government of the day, working with New Democrats, was able to pass that resolution unanimously, recognizing the importance of the Khalsa to the Sikh faith. One gets a better understanding of why the turban is so important.

My colleague and friend was talking about what one could expect when going to a Gurudwara. People sit on the floor as equals. After some worship and some meditation and some beautiful hymns, a free meal is provided to the worshippers to continue that fellowship.

I was really touched by the Prime Minister, within the first year, finally offering a formal apology for the *Komagata Maru*. Many of us were aware of what had taken place many years ago and how far we have come. Today the Sikh community is in every aspect of our society, whether political, economic or social. In every aspect, the Sikh community is part of our Canadian identity.

Adjournment Proceedings

I wanted to share those few thoughts. I thank my colleague for making sure that we have this legislation. I hope that it will be passed into law very soon.

• (1835)

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal (Surrey—Newton, Lib.): Madam Speaker,

[Member spoke in Punjabi]

[English]

I want to start by thanking all members in the House for their support for this bill to have the month of April designated as Sikh heritage month. I would like to give special thanks to the heritage committee chair, the hon. member for Toronto—Danforth, and all committee members for the quick and unanimous passage of the bill at the committee stage. I would also like to thank my good friend and hon. member for Etobicoke Centre for allowing me to move up on the order of precedence and have the final reading of the bill today.

This bill is close to me because it not only represents the journey and growth of Canada, but it speaks to my personal journey and that of so many other immigrants who have made our great country their home.

When I migrated to Canada in 1984, I would never have imagined that I would be standing here today, representing the riding of Surrey—Newton and presenting this bill, which I hope will leave a legacy for all Canadians for many generations to come.

It has been a very humbling experience and it has been made possible because of the support from my family, my constituents, my colleagues and from individuals throughout our great country. So many people have supported me in my personal, professional and political life. The passing of the bill would represent another step in the progress we as Canadians have made in becoming a more diverse, welcoming and equal nation.

The days of intolerant laws being enacted through the House, in denying entry of Sikhs into Canada or denying Sikhs the right to vote, have long since passed but cannot be forgotten. Sikh Canadians have fought to earn the right to become equal members of society, where we have become contributing members in all walks of life, whether in business, arts, sports, media, philanthropy or politics.

I am proud to say that Sikh Canadians have been elected to all levels of municipal, provincial and federal governments. The year 2016 also marked the appointment of the first Sikh senator, Hon. Sarbjit Singh Marwah, who I am proud to say will be sponsoring this bill in the Senate. I thank Senator Sabi Marwah.

Before I continue further, I would also like to thank and praise Senator Salma Ataullahjan for all her hard work as critic and supporter of the bill in the red chamber.

This is a story unique to Canada, and we must recognize and celebrate all of the moments and individuals who have shaped our great nation. This is not just the story of Sikhs; this is the story of Canada. We are known around the world as a proudly welcoming, diverse and tolerant nation, but this did not happen on its own. It happened because people from all ethnicities, languages and cultures worked together to ensure Canada over time became this great nation of which we are so proud of.

Learning about the deep roots of Canadian history helps to strengthen our diversity. To quote the Prime Minister and hon. member for Papineau:

Canadians understand that diversity is our strength. We know that Canada has succeeded—culturally, politically, economically—because of our diversity, not in spite of it.

This is why I urge all members to support the bill, to honour the remarkable story and to share it with all Canadians today and with future generations, so that we remain a resilient, strong and diverse nation.

• (1840)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The question is on the motion.

[Translation]

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 yeas have it.

And five or more members having risen:

[English]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Pursuant to Standing Order 98, the recorded division stands deferred until Wednesday, November 7, 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.

[English]

ASBESTOS

Ms. Sheri Benson (Saskatoon West, NDP): Madam Speaker, I would like to dedicate my remarks this evening to Howard Willems, a federal public servant who died from being unknowingly exposed to asbestos in his workplace. Before his death, Howard was a tireless advocate of a ban on asbestos because of his work and that of his stepson, Jessie Todd. Saskatchewan was the first province to have a public registry of buildings containing asbestos. In Howard's words, "Enough is enough. We need to know."

Adjournment Proceedings

In June, I asked the government if it would be implementing a comprehensive strategy for asbestos removal to protect all Canadians and all workers. At the time, the answer was that the strategy was under construction. Four months later, we still have nothing even resembling a comprehensive asbestos removal and remediation strategy. Instead, what we have are regulations with notable exemptions.

As Kathleen Ruff, a prominent Canadian human rights activist and board member of Rideau Institute has said: "I would give them credit for finally moving to ban asbestos, but I'm troubled by these weaknesses and gaps and, if anything, they seem to have gotten worse.... They seemed to have weakened their proposed regulations."

If the health and safety of Canadians is the reason for a ban on asbestos, why allow exemptions? These exemptions include magnesium extraction companies being permitted to work on nearly 800 million tonnes of asbestos residue remaining near the mines in Quebec. The use of road infrastructure containing asbestos will also be exempt from the ban, and with no exemption date in mind. The ban also does not apply to structures or products that already contain asbestos, another reason many think the ban is not strong enough. Asbestos in Canada will still be found in a wide variety of products, including building insulation, ceiling and floor tiles, automobile brake pads, cement and plaster products.

Canadians were expecting a complete and comprehensive ban. When is ban not a ban? It is when we get so many exemptions that workers will continue to be exposed to deadly asbestos. It seems that despite the lofty goals the government likes to talk about, its actions reflect instead the desires of powerful and well-financed lobby groups.

The federal government is even financing companies that are hoping to continue to make profits from using asbestos. The asbestos lobby is rejoicing that the Canadian and Quebec governments are financing a project to extract magnesium from the millions of tonnes of asbestos mining waste near the town of Asbestos, Quebec, and the Canadian government has given the company \$12 million for this project. It appears that no independent environmental assessment has been carried out. Public health experts have been excluded and both the Quebec and federal governments have turned a deaf ear to their concerns.

The International Chrysotile Association and pro-chrysotile movement deny the science on asbestos and oppose banning asbestos, claiming it is virtually harmless. If the government is all about evidence-based decision-making and truly believes that any exposure to asbestos is harmful, which the evidence shows, then why has it allowed these exemptions that will continue to put Canadians' lives at risk?

• (1845)

Ms. Kate Young (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Science and Sport and to the Minister of Public Services and Procurement and Accessibility (Accessibility), Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am happy to respond to comments made by the hon. member for Saskatoon West regarding asbestos.

Protecting the health and safety of all Canadians is one of our government's foremost responsibilities and one that we are

committed to upholding. The Government of Canada takes great precautions to manage and control the risks associated with asbestos in accordance with federal policy and legislative requirements from applicable acts and regulations for health and safety.

Our government has already taken proactive and concrete action to address this issue and to reduce the risk of exposure to asbestos. In 2016, my colleague, the Minister of Public Services and Procurement announced that the use of asbestos in new government construction and major renovation projects under its purview would be prohibited, and published an initial publicly available inventory of government-owned and leased buildings that contain asbestos.

Furthermore, in December 2016, my colleagues and I announced a number of measures as part of a whole-of-government approach to ban asbestos and asbestos-containing products in Canada by 2018. I am pleased to report that we have followed through on our promise to deliver on all commitments announced in the strategy.

For example, in June 2017, new federal workplace health and safety rules came into force that drastically limit the risk of people coming into contact with asbestos on the job. The Government of Canada's position regarding the listing of asbestos as a hazardous material under the Rotterdam convention was updated based on Canada's domestic ban.

The National Research Council and its partners have been reviewing all instances of asbestos under the national model building codes.

Health Canada is working to raise awareness of the health impacts of asbestos through social media and other communications products.

On October 17, 2018, Environment and Climate Change Canada, in collaboration with Health Canada, published regulations to prohibit the import, sale and use of asbestos, as well as the manufacture, import, sale and use of products containing asbestos with a limited number of exclusions. The new regulations and related amendments will take effect on December 30, 2018.

In closing, I thank the member opposite for her questions and for sharing the government's interest and concern with protecting the health and safety of Canadians.

• (1850)

Ms. Sheri Benson: Madam Speaker, I would like to remind the parliamentary secretary that Quebec's commission on occupational standards, equity, health and safety, as well as all of Quebec's health authorities, have called for zero tolerance for exposure to asbestos, because it is so deadly and because that is the scientific evidence.

In closing, I would like to echo Kathleen Ruff again:

...the Canadian government has endorsed a double standard within Canada itself and is supporting a project that allows workers to be exposed to 10 times higher levels of asbestos than are permitted elsewhere in Canada....Why did [the Liberal government] deny the clear scientific evidence for so long?....The answer is clear: It was because public policy was captured by the asbestos industry.

Adjournment Proceedings

That is shameful. Where is the comprehensive removal and remediation plan? Is the government still waiting for the asbestos lobby to write it?

Ms. Kate Young: Madam Speaker, the Government of Canada's activities in working to reduce Canadians' risk of exposure to asbestos is another example of our government demonstrating its leadership and vision.

We have taken a proactive and comprehensive approach, one that is founded in science and based on evidence. We have taken action by developing regulations to ban the manufacture, use, import and export of asbestos and products containing asbestos under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act.

Evidence-based policy-making is important to the government and to Canadians. Examining the evidence and ensuring that operational and policy decisions are informed by the best possible scientific data are cornerstones of our government. Our actions on asbestos are comprehensive, coordinated and well researched, and will protect the health and safety of all Canadians.

* * *

[Translation]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. François Choquette (Drummond, NDP): Madam Speaker, it is always a pleasure for me to rise in the House to talk about the environment, the economy, sustainable development, the fight against climate change and renewable energy.

On June 12, I had the opportunity to ask a question about creating good jobs in a sustainable, green economy. Unfortunately, these days, the Liberal government is ignoring the environment and investing in the economy of the past. The government plans to invest \$4.5 billion in an old pipeline using taxpayers' money, money belonging to Canadians, Quebecers, and residents of Drummond. The current Liberal government is still living in the past. The government should not be investing in pipelines, of all things. It should be investing in renewable energy, energy efficiency and those sorts of things.

According to Équiterre, every dollar invested in renewable energy will create six to eight times more jobs than a dollar invested in fossil fuels. That means that investing in renewable energy or fossil fuels is not about jobs or the economy. Investing in renewable energy is even better for the economy than investing in the energies of the past.

Our leader, Jagmeet Singh, criss-crossed Quebec talking about the environment, renewable energy and the green economy, and I had the opportunity to welcome him to Drummond. He visited a number of businesses, shops and attractions in the region. He met with Jean-Denis Lampron, the founder of Rose Drummond, and Carl Binette of Aéronergie. Aéronergie specializes in energy efficiency and heat recovery and also combines its systems with solar walls. That is what the economy of the future looks like, and the company is growing. Our region is very proud of this company.

Mr. Singh also met with Pascal Bouffard of Nakama-thé, who is also working to reduce his company's ecological footprint. His business provides paper straws and reusable metal straws, which are

better for the environment and help combat the scourge of ocean plastics.

He also visited Maison d'Herbes, whose owner, Dany Lefebvre, is using more and more techniques to reduce his company's ecological footprint.

Lastly, Mr. Singh visited Soprema, a well-established company we are very proud of. Its North American headquarters is located in Drummond. Soprema's new building was built according to Aéronergie principles and is LEED certified. I can be proud of my region.

Canadians want initiatives like these. They want concrete measures to tackle climate change.

Not long ago, we had an emergency debate in the House of Commons to illustrate the importance of taking action. As shown in the IPCC report, we have the technology. We can be efficient. The only thing missing is the political will.

Where is this government's political will?

● (1855)

Mr. Arif Virani (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I thank the member for Drummond for his question and for his speech.

I would like to point out that our political will on this side of the House is quite clear. We are putting a price on pollution all across the country.

The province of Quebec, my colleague's home province, has adopted a policy on pollution, and that is a good thing. Unfortunately, that is not the case in every part of our country. In fact, that is not the case in my home province of Ontario. It is important to point out that there is a will to do this in Quebec, in Drummond and elsewhere in Canada, and that will is reflected at the federal level, in our government.

[English]

The minister, in response to his question when it was originally raised in the chamber, indicated what kinds of investments we were making. He has again stated this evening that he is looking toward things such a more efficient, more green economy. What I would underscore is the exact same points that the Minister of Natural Resources made in the first instance when this question was asked.

There are \$20 billion being committed by our government toward public transit; \$21.9 billion is being committed toward green infrastructure to improve energy efficiency and help Canadians save money. However, there is more. We have been ensuring from the get-go, from November 2015 when the cabinet was first sworn in, that the economy and the environment indeed go hand in hand. By doing that, we signed the Paris agreement on climate change. We helped shape it, a historic, ambitious and balanced plan for bringing together economic prosperity and environmental protection.

Adjournment Proceedings

Then we sat down with provinces and territories. We consulted with indigenous persons. We drafted the pan-Canadian framework to implement the Paris agreement, which promotes clean growth and combats climate change. We are now putting a price on pollution, as I just mentioned. We have accelerated the phasing out of coal-fired electricity in favour of clean options like renewable energy. We are making generational investments in clean technology and green infrastructure.

We are doing this for two reasons: first, because the way we develop, move and use energy accounts for 80% of Canada's greenhouse gas emissions; and second, because the world is in the midst of something that has happened only a few times in history, a fundamental shift in the types of energy that power our society. That is being prompted by the very report the member for Drummond just outlined, the IPCC report, which indicated that we were on the precipice of a global crisis. People have to act, nations have to act, governments have to act. That is why we are acting.

This was the inspiration behind a group that we formed, called Generation Energy. It was the largest national conversation about energy in our country's history. We invited stakeholders to talk about what their world might look like for their kids and grandchildren and how we would get there. They told us that they wanted us to waste less energy, switch to cleaner sources of electricity, to use more renewable fuels and produce cleaner oil and gas. That Generation Energy concept produced 14 members with diverse backgrounds and experience in the energy sector.

We are listening to their suggestions. We are moving forward, most important, with a price on pollution. Thankfully, it occurs in Drummond in the province of Quebec, but not everywhere in Canada. Until it does, we will continue forward with that plan, because the consequences are too dramatic to contemplate if we do not.

• (1900)

[*Translation*]

Mr. François Choquette: Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague and his party for putting a price on carbon. That is extremely important.

As he said, there is already a price on carbon in Quebec and British Columbia. However, we need to have carbon pricing across Canada. We also need more meaningful action. We cannot talk about bringing in carbon pricing and then go out and buy a pipeline that conflicts with the measures to fight climate change.

Today, my colleague from Edmonton Strathcona moved a motion calling on the federal government to enact legislation that would establish a legal process to ensure binding measures for greater transparency and accountability in the fight against climate change.

Does my colleague agree that we must enact legislation for greater transparency and accountability? Does he agree with the motion?

Mr. Arif Virani: Madam Speaker, what I can stress this evening in the House is that there is a battle to be waged against climate change. This battle must be fought across the country, working with as many partners as possible. It is very important that the NDP agree with us that we must face this crisis by making changes and implementing policies.

As I mentioned at the outset, we are investing in our economy, public transit and green infrastructure. We have also increased the low carbon economy fund.

[*English*]

We are investing \$2 billion dollars for a low-carbon economy fund. Also we put in \$220 million to help rural and remote communities move off diesel. These are all comprehensive efforts. They all work toward the same goal. It is a goal the member for Drummond and I share.

[*Translation*]

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 10 a.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 7:02 p.m.)

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