



CANADA

# House of Commons Debates

---

VOLUME 145 • NUMBER 005 • 3rd SESSION • 40th PARLIAMENT

---

OFFICIAL REPORT  
(HANSARD)

**Tuesday, March 9, 2010**

—

**Speaker: The Honourable Peter Milliken**

## **CONTENTS**

(Table of Contents appears at back of this issue.)

# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, March 9, 2010

The House met at 10 a.m.

---

*Prayers*

---

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1000)

[*English*]

### INTERPARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS

**Mr. David Tilson (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34(1) I have the honour to present to the House, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian delegation of the Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association, respecting its participation at the 32nd European Parliament-Canada Interparliamentary meeting, held in Brussels, Belgium, November 9-13, 2009.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Michel Guimond:** Mr. Speaker, I seek the unanimous consent of the House to adopt the following motion:

That, notwithstanding any Standing Order or usual practice of the House, Bill C-434, An Act to amend the Corrections and Conditional Release Act (day parole — six months or one sixth of the sentence rule) be deemed to have been read a second time and referred to a Committee of the Whole, deemed considered in Committee of the Whole, deemed reported without amendment, deemed concurred in at report stage, and deemed read a third time and passed.

**The Speaker:** Does the hon. member for Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord have the unanimous consent of the House to move this motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Speaker:** There is no unanimous consent.

\* \* \*

### PETITIONS

CANADA POST

**Ms. France Bonsant (Compton—Stanstead, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions to table.

The first petition calls on the government and Canada Post to maintain and improve its network of public post offices and to consult the public and elected officials.

These several dozen signatures show that citizens in my riding and across Quebec are frustrated about the potential closure of rural post offices.

• (1005)

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

**Ms. France Bonsant (Compton—Stanstead, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am tabling in this House a petition that calls for the adoption of my bill, Bill C-343, which would allow victims of crime and their families to receive their fair share of employment insurance. This petition was signed by more than 800 people in my riding and from across Quebec.

These signatures show that citizens are concerned about the plight of victims' families and that they want the government to act as quickly as possible.

[*English*]

ASSISTED SUICIDE

**Hon. Judy Sgro (York West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present petitions again, following yesterday. I will be presenting thousands of names in opposition to Bill C-384, the bill that deals with euthanasia. I have been asked to present these petitions to the House of Commons, calling on all members of Parliament to vote against Bill C-384.

HALIFAX CONVENTION CENTRE

**Ms. Megan Leslie (Halifax, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to present a petition today from residents of the riding of Halifax and the surrounding areas about the view from Halifax Citadel National Historic Park specifically. The petitioners say that if public funds are used to build a convention centre on two specific city blocks in downtown Halifax, the towers would actually block the view. They are asking government not to provide funds for development that would block the view of the centre harbour and George's Island from the Halifax Citadel National Historic Park. They look forward to the minister's answer.

ANIMAL WELFARE

**Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present a petition today on behalf of residents of Selkirk—Interlake and around Manitoba, asking the government to support a universal declaration on animal welfare.

*The Budget*

[Translation]

**Mr. Marcel Proulx (Hull—Aylmer, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to present a petition with a large number of signatures.

The petitioners state that over a billion people around the world need animals for their livelihood and that many people have pets. They are asking the Government of Canada to support a universal declaration on animal welfare.

\* \* \*

[English]

**QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER**

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I ask that all questions be allowed to stand.

**The Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

---

**GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

[English]

**THE BUDGET**

## FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF MINISTER OF FINANCE

The House resumed from March 8 consideration of the motion that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government, of the amendment and of the amendment to the amendment.

**Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Canada's economic action plan is working and is helping to keep all Canadians working. Our plan is expected to create or maintain 220,000 jobs by the end of 2010 with an estimated 130,000 created or maintained to date already. This does not include the 225,000 jobs that were saved through our expanded work sharing program, a program that has been used by companies and manufacturers in my riding to ensure that they kept their employee base in place.

We are in the middle of the largest federal investment of infrastructure over the past 60 years. We are putting Canadians to work in some 16,000 projects across Canada and are building better roads, bridges, public transit, colleges, universities, recreational infrastructure and much more. We are providing the sector help by training Canadians who are out of work and helping businesses avoid layoffs to keep Canadians working.

Statistics Canada recently announced that Canada's economy for the second straight quarter grew by 5% on an annualized basis in the fourth quarter of 2009. This represents the strongest quarterly rate of economic growth in almost a decade.

Household spending is increasing thanks to our tax cuts for Canadian families. Spending on homes continued to rebound with help from our temporary home renovation tax credit last year. Infrastructure spending increased, supported by stimulus projects underway right across the country.

Our plan is ensuring that we will lead the global recovery. Not only was Canada at the head of the pack of the G7 countries for quarterly economic growth, we also had the strongest growth in domestic demand. What is more, in the coming year the International Monetary Fund predicts Canada's economic growth will continue to be at the head of the G7 pack.

There is a lot of great stuff that is in budget 2010 and I want to highlight a few of these areas. In the budget we are injecting another \$19 billion of new stimulus to create and protect jobs. We are securing our economic recovery and sustaining our economic advantage through a number of measures.

Personal income tax relief will save Canadians \$3.2 billion in personal income tax. This is happening through adjustments in the federal tax brackets. We are enhancing the working income tax benefit. There are going to be higher child benefits for parents, and lower taxes for low and middle income seniors.

There is also a lowering of the corporate tax rate to 15% in 2012 that is planned through this budget. That is moving toward our goal of having the lowest tax rate on new investment in the G7 at a 25% combined federal-provincial corporate tax rate making us one of the most competitive countries in the world to have business.

More importantly, that lower corporate tax rate also helps all of our small businesses that are up and down our main streets in our small communities. Those are all family operations, whether they are restaurants, convenience stores or maybe the local hardware stores. All those businesses rely on making sure that they continue to have a lower tax burden. That is going to help them to create more jobs and make them more profitable in the long-term.

We are also improving the taxation on the universal child care benefit by allowing single parents to choose to include it in their own income or a dependent, thereby providing treatment similar to single earner two-parent families. We are going to continue to support families.

We are going to continue support for the housing market through the first time homebuyers tax credit and additional access to registered retirement savings plan savings to purchase a building or a home.

We are also going to enhance the working income tax benefit which will reduce the welfare rolls by making work pay better for many low income Canadians. There is also \$340 million in targeted tax relief in this budget for our seniors.

I want to jump into what this actually means in the province of Manitoba. In Manitoba we do have a thriving agriculture industry. I am a farmer myself. I was a cattle producer. One of the main investments we are making through budget 2010-11 is an investment in cattle processing facilities.

One thing that has happened over the last number of years is that we have been dealing with the BSE situation. Because of that we have had to have increased SRM removals that go beyond and above what other competitors do in the international market so that we can have access to more trade opportunities and more beneficial market opportunities for our cattle producers across this country.

*The Budget*

Through the AgriFlexibility fund we are going to give \$75 million to help our processors look at new technology to deal with things like the enhanced feed ban, like SRM removal, trying to develop some way to generate some income from these buy value credits that right now are just being thrown away as garbage.

• (1010)

Essentially we want to ensure that if they can make a little more money off those buy value credits that will be returned to the producers, especially for those who are selling a lot of cows because the animal is over 30 months of age and dealing with this major fall down in the marketplace.

We have already seen some government dollars being used in facilities like the new Keystone plant in Winnipeg. We are also looking at supporting other regional processors throughout the province.

The funding under this new slaughter program includes a slaughter improvement program that will increase by \$10 million to support the introduction of new cost effective technologies. There is an additional \$25 million targeted at processing plants that only handle animals over 30 months of age. There is also \$40 million to support the development and commercialization of innovative technologies related to the removal and use of SRMs, specified risk materials, to reduce those handling costs and create potential revenue sources for these materials.

With my involvement in the environment committee and, of course, having both Lake Manitoba and Lake Winnipeg in my riding of Selkirk—Interlake, I was encouraged to see that we will be investing \$190 million to support a cleaner and more sustainable environment to help meet our climate change objectives.

Some other things in the budget include \$100 million over four years to support clean energy generation in Canada's forestry sector through the new generation and renewable power initiative. I know that many of our old forestry plants are looking at perhaps moving to a more sustainable energy production. This will help them to become more competitive. This funding will help reduce their overall greenhouse gas emissions as well by supporting their development, commercialization and implementation of new emerging clean energy technologies which could include everything from biofuels and renewable electricity and biomass which we seem to need to look at more as being in the area of biomass and using that to replace some of our other dirtier energy sources.

There is also the expansion of the accelerated capital cost allowance for clean energy generation equipment for additional applications involving heat recovery and district energies. The more we can become efficient the better we will be as an overall industry.

There is \$60 million over two years to continue to implement the government's action plan to protect the Great Lakes by cleaning up areas identified as being the most degraded. Of course we already have a strategy for Lake Winnipeg and the entire Lake Winnipeg basin to identify those problems as well.

There is \$38 million over two years for Canada's invasive alien species strategy to reduce the risk of invasive animal and plant species being introduced to Canada. With the movement of fishing equipment back and forth between our boundaries and the

introduction of new species that are coming into our basin, it is even more important today that we protect the ecosystem that we have in our freshwater systems.

There is also up to \$11.4 million over two years to deliver meteorological services and navigational services in the north to meet our commitment to the International Maritime Organization.

There is \$8 million for two years to support community based environmental monitoring, reporting and baseline data collection in the north. Another \$18.4 million over two years to support the government's annual report on clean environmental indicators, such as clean air, clean water and greenhouse gas emissions.

This keeps building upon what we are doing in resources under our Canada economic action plan, like the \$1 billion for five years for the clean energy fund and supporting clean energy research, development and demonstration projects, including carbon capture and storage.

There is \$1 billion over five years for the green infrastructure fund for priorities such as a green energy generation and transmission infrastructure, carbon transmission and storage infrastructure.

There is \$380 million in dedicated new resources for the ecoENERGY for homes retrofit program to support Canadians making their homes more energy efficient.

Manitoba wins big time through the new budget because we continue to increase equalization and transfers to the provinces. Manitoba gets another \$924 million in this budget compared to where we were in 2004-05 under the previous Liberal government. That is \$3.8 billion that Manitoba will receive this year: \$1.8 billion through equalization; \$953 million through the Canada health transfer, an increase of \$50 million from last year; and \$405 million through the Canada social transfer. Therefore, Manitoba continues to get more money.

If we look back at the previous government when it was facing its fiscal challenges, it cut equalization, health transfers and social transfers and provinces like Manitoba suffered under that government. Under this government, we are ensuring that we continue to deliver those services to Manitoba. We know that will be great for all Manitobans.

*The Budget*

•(1015)

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, what I am concerned about is what Canada will look like as we move down the road. During the last recession three things happened. First, the crime rate in Canada increased, particularly property crime, and it had to do with how people would pay the next bill. The second thing was that the demands on the health care system increased enormously because people were stressed out and had all kinds of consequential problems. The third thing was the significant demand on the social network, the social programs that are delivered through the provinces.

The common element through those three things is that those are services that are all delivered by provincial governments but the budget does not deal effectively with transfers to provinces anticipating these problems. The issue is not so much for me as to how we get the deficit and fiscal house back in order. It is how at the same time we ensure people do not fall into a situation in which they cannot help themselves.

Does the member consider the issues of the increased demands on our policing services, our health care system and our social services network when there is nothing in this budget to address those needs of Canadians?

•(1020)

**Mr. James Bezan:** Mr. Speaker, that is kind of rich coming from the member of the opposition to suggest that during this recession there will be this huge increase in demand. We know that in the last recession when the Liberals were in government, instead of adjusting for the increased needs in social assistance and health care, they decided to slash the economies of the provinces by cutting back on equalization and health and social transfers. As I just stated, we will not do that. We are increasing the overall equalization, social and health care transfers to all provinces, which will be a major way to help those provinces deal with any increased needs.

When the previous Liberal government went into its deficit fighting, not only did it cut equalization, social and health care transfers, but it cut, slashed and burned our military budget. In this budget, we will continue to address that and help our Canada first defence strategy. We will slow some of that growth but there will still be increases of 20% compared to where we were when we took over the Department of National Defence from the previous Liberal government.

National Defence will continue to grow. We will continue to meet the needs of our military personnel, allow them to keep their equipment up-to-date and keep increasing their personnel to deal with the challenges they face around the world and do such a great job representing us as a country.

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the government is bent on reducing corporate taxes. In fact, it has reduced corporate taxes from around 40% and is projected to go down to 15%. The members may applaud that and if they were getting results as a result of the corporate tax reductions then that would be well placed, but the fact is that business investment, rather than going up as a result of corporate taxes, has actually gone down. No better sources than Statistics Canada and Finance Canada which indicate that business spending on machinery and equipment has

declined as a share of GDP and total business investment spending has declined as a percentage of corporate cashflow.

Why does the government keep doing things that do not work?

**Mr. James Bezan:** Mr. Speaker, the member for Elmwood—Transcona must have missed the fact that a recession occurred which slowed down the economic growth of businesses and the entire economy. People actually draw in and that is why there is a recession. Maybe someone needs to sit down with him and explain how recessions work and how businesses need to think hard about what they will do as investments and wait for a recovery to happen.

We are starting to witness that recovery and we know businesses will continue to invest and create jobs. Tim Hortons is a great example of where it has now moved its corporate headquarters back to Canada from the United States because this is the place to be creating jobs.

We know we will see more of that happening. I see what is happening in CentrePort in Winnipeg, as the hon. member across for Elmwood—Transcona understands. We are seeing a lot of interest coming not just from Canadian companies but companies around the world that want to make CentrePort their place to set up for manufacturing.

What we are doing right now in eliminating the tariffs for manufacturers for all their inputs, as well as the accelerated capital cost allowance, ensures they will be not only more competitive but they will want to look at growth and expansion and create more jobs right here in Canada. That is a great news story for all Canadians.

**Mr. Kevin Sorenson (Crowfoot, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I commend my friend from Selkirk—Interlake for his speech and for his answers to the questions that he faced.

We have heard members of the NDP stand and say that this terrible Conservative government will lower taxes. We say, with a great deal of pride, that is correct. We will lower personal income taxes and we will keep the GST down as we lowered it in the past. We will keep corporate taxes down so our small businesses can be competitive and survive. We will not do what the Liberals did and just simply boost taxes in order to meet this deficit.

The government has said three things in this budget: that the stimulus will end, that the targeted spending growth restraint must happen and that there must be a review of government. Is this just a good news budget or does it tell Canadians that there must be a slow down in spending?

•(1025)

**Mr. James Bezan:** Mr. Speaker, we are hearing from people across the country that they do not want ongoing deficits. This budget is responsibly attacking that and we will keep spending under control.

**Hon. Judy Sgro (York West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with my colleague from Mississauga—Brampton South.

*The Budget*

I am very pleased to speak to the budget and to mention a few of the concerns that I have as we move forward in an interesting session.

There is an old saying that to fully understand where we are going, we must first know where we have been. Today I am going to focus on where we have been and a bit on where I hope we are going. Never has a saying been so appropriate. With that, let us take a moment to look back on the time the current government has been in office.

In 2006 the government inherited a national fiscal situation that was unmatched in the entire world. We had a budget surplus of more than \$13 billion. We had just completed the fifth year of a five year \$100 billion income tax cut. We had just allocated \$5 billion to create a new national child care and early learning strategy, the first new national social program in more than a generation. Interest rates were low. Employment numbers were good. Our tourism and manufacturing sectors were growing in leaps and bounds.

In short, as a result of more than a decade of prudent fiscal planning under Paul Martin and Jean Chrétien, Canada was the fiscal envy of the world. Then in 2006 this all began to change.

I want to be fair. I fully understand that the current economic slowdown is a global phenomenon, and so do Canadians. I understand that Canada needed to put extra resources into our economy, a move that contributed to increasing expenditures. I understand that putting money into infrastructure helped our communities and our cities, and helped to stimulate the economy. Again, it was a move that contributed to the spiralling deficit. What I do not understand is the total lack of foresight and preparation before the crisis hit.

As children many of us were taught the story of the ant and the grasshopper. The fable concerns a grasshopper who spends the warm months singing away while the ant works to store up food for winter. When the winter arrives, the grasshopper finds itself dying of hunger and upon asking the ant for food is only rebuked for its idleness. The story is used to teach the virtues of hard work and saving while times are good so as to prepare for the hard times ahead, something that was not done by the current government.

While I am deeply concerned about the fact that the government has now unveiled the largest deficit in Canadian history, I am even more concerned with the total lack of prudence, preparation and long-term planning exercised by the government in the months prior to the global economic slowdown.

In 2006 Canada boasted the largest fiscal surplus in its history. That standing was achieved after many years of prudent Liberal leadership. Sadly, that surplus was eyed with hungry glee by the incoming Conservatives who thought it was Christmastime.

Despite Paul Martin declaring that Canada had cut up its credit cards, the current Prime Minister immediately called the banks and increased our national limits. Despite professing to be an economist, in just three short years his government has taken Canada from a position of unmatched fiscal strength to a place where the government is already spending the tax dollars that our grandchildren have yet to pay, never mind earn. In all of our

newspapers across Canada, most economists, with the exception of one, have recognized this as a recipe for disaster.

Imagine if Canadians adopted these kinds of fiscal practices within their own households, spending wildly beyond their means, promising to pay minimum credit card payments by eliminating only small and insignificant daily expenditures, and eliminating all savings and future planning. Imagine if the plan to fix current problems was simply to make more money. We do not have to imagine it because the government has adopted exactly that kind of a plan.

For the most part the 2010 budget says the economy will grow at such a pace that our deficit will simply melt away without any real work on behalf of parliamentarians or Canadians, or effort on the part of the government.

● (1030)

The government has made a few symbolic steps to trim away expenses, but I am surprised to see that the Conservatives still do not seem to get it. With respect to freezing MPs' and ministers' budgets and salaries, do that; we all have to contribute to bringing down the current deficit, but those are simply optics.

Canada now has a \$56 billion deficit, a number that is substantially higher than the \$39 billion predicted just a few short months ago. Again, it does not seem that the finance minister and the Prime Minister have their numbers right, or they are simply wearing rose-coloured glasses.

It is also worth noting that in October 2008, the Minister of Finance and the Prime Minister, just prior to an election day, said that we were not going to have a recession and that of course they would never run a deficit. How can Canadians possibly trust the finance minister when he paints that kind of rosy picture and they are given the kind of lines that were given in the budget and throne speech?

Notwithstanding this and despite the ballooning shortcomings of the budget, the document fails to act by delivering nothing on pensions, and we all know the concern about people's pensions. There is nothing on climate change, or very little at most. There is nothing on health care, which is extremely important especially going into some difficult times and given our aging demographics.

What about the veterans who are suffering from post traumatic stress disorder that I am hearing about in the veterans committee? There is nothing that identifies that problem. There is nothing for new Canadians or to close the immigrant success gap which we also know is important. The sooner newcomers begin to work, the faster they are able to pay taxes and contribute to the economy.

*The Budget*

I say that I am surprised, but I certainly should not be. Prior to being handed a \$13 billion annual surplus, the last Conservative government to balance the budget was the government of Sir Robert Borden back in the early days of the 20th century. Past practice has shown us that every time the Conservatives get into power we end up with huge deficits, but Sir Robert Borden clearly knew how to handle both. It is true that despite being the leader of a minority government, as Sir Robert Borden was, and despite the fact that he too was battling a global calamity, he made fiscal prudence a priority. I wish his modern-day successor across the way would adopt that focus.

Unfortunately, despite being awash in this new debt, the government has delivered nothing of substance on many of the issues that Canadians care about. Worse yet, it seems to have turned its back on the very plan that it unveiled just a day earlier in the throne speech.

In the throne speech the government promised to get serious about protecting pensions. Despite that promise, there is \$10 million in the budget to encourage volunteerism, which is very important, but there is nothing concrete to fix pensions except commit to do more consultation. In the throne speech the government committed to make job creation a priority but in the budget it did nothing to stop its \$13 billion payroll tax hike that is going to kill 220,000 small business jobs.

There is a difference between prudence and recklessness and the word is courage. It takes courage to make the tough decisions and the finance minister's first move was to hop on a private plane. It took courage to make difficult decisions when the Liberals were in power. It takes courage to set a hard course and to stay on it. It takes courage to be honest with the Canadian people and to plan long term.

The Liberals clearly showed that they know how to deal with these issues. I would hope the Conservative government would look at just how it will balance the pressures of dealing with a \$56 billion deficit and at the same time recognize the pressure that Canadians are facing throughout this country while they are unemployed and trying to support their families along with the pressure of the issue of pensions.

• (1035)

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Nicole Demers (Laval, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I listened closely to the member for York West's remarks, and I applaud everything she said. What she said about this budget's shortcomings is absolutely right.

I would like to know what the member thinks of the fact that the government chose to create a seniors day to recognize their contribution instead of improving the guaranteed income supplement, which is something that we and seniors have been asking for for a long time.

[*English*]

**Hon. Judy Sgro:** Mr. Speaker, we know that there are still a considerable amount of seniors across Canada who are living below the \$18,000 cutoff line. I would much rather have seen the \$10 million the Conservatives are earmarking for volunteerism, as

wonderful as it is, go toward increasing the GIS. The maximum today in GIS, OAS and so on is \$14,000. We are not talking about billions of dollars. We are talking about a certain amount of people who are still only at \$14,000. The amount should be brought up to \$18,000 so that people in this country, especially seniors, are not living below the poverty line.

It would have been a much better use of very scarce dollars. If the Conservatives did not do it now, I doubt there will ever be an increase in any of it.

**Mr. Phil McColeman (Brant, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I totally agree with the member that it is important to know where we have been to know where we are going and have our plan for the future.

I would like the hon. member to respond to the fact that upon taking power, our government did handle the surplus in a very prudent way. We paid down the debt. We paid it down by \$40 billion, which prepared the way for us to have capacity in spending money during this global economic downturn.

The record of the Liberals that I would like to point out is the more than \$500 million that was handed to friends of the Liberal Party in Quebec through the sponsorship scandal, and how their handling of that was so-called good fiscal management.

I would like to ask the member, if planning is such a priority in knowing where we are going, the Canadian people have yet to hear what her party's plan is for our country. Could she respond to that, please?

**Hon. Judy Sgro:** Mr. Speaker, to begin with, I will not get into talking about Mr. Mulroney, Airbus and scandals, because what Canadians want us to do is talk about serious issues such as the \$56 billion deficit and what is the plan.

Just to remind the hon. member, with all due respect, his party is the government. The Conservatives are the ones who are in power right now. They are the ones who handle the budget. It is up to them to make the plan.

We can stand on our track record and be very proud of it. When we got into office in 1993 there was a \$42 billion deficit left by the Conservatives. We dealt with that. We worked with Canadians. Canadians tightened their belts, and yes, it was a tough time, but let me tell you, it will be tough the next time too.

I would like to know what exact cuts you are planning to do to deal with a deficit that is probably going to be double what it was when we got into power.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I just remind the hon. member to make her comments through the Chair and not directly to her colleagues.

The member for Elmwood—Transcona has enough time for a short question.

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, once again we have a government and a Prime Minister here who are basically like ostriches with their heads in the sand, doing things that do not work as opposed to doing things that do work.



*The Budget*

For example, the home renovation tax credit, which the Conservatives made much hay out of last year, was a very successful program. What did they do? They cancelled the program. I would like to ask the member whether she agrees that the government's approach is totally wrong in that sense.

In addition, the government promised to look at pension reform. There is nothing in the budget on pension reform. The Nortel workers are still standing out there in the cold. We want to know why the government is not acting.

**Hon. Judy Sgro:** Mr. Speaker, I am glad the hon. member raised the issue on the pension front in particular. The Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act is a federal responsibility. Amending that act could be done very quickly. It would help thousands of people whose pensions are in jeopardy today. That would not cost the government any money. It certainly would help to protect many of the pensioners out there.

• (1040)

**Hon. Navdeep Bains (Mississauga—Brampton South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague from York West for sharing her time with me. She spoke eloquently about the budget, and I too would like to add my voice to the debate.

This budget does not look at the challenges of our times and it is not a budget the Liberals can support. Therefore, my colleagues and I will be voting against it. However, we will be responsible in opposing it to ensure that Canadians are not burdened with an unwanted election. We will work very hard to provide an alternative, and my remarks today will speak to that. I will identify some areas of concern and provide some alternatives.

The question is: How did we get here today, this March 9? How did we arrive at this point, where the Conservatives had to resort to a sideshow of proposing changes to *O Canada* simply to distract from the fact they took three months off to present a budget that is simply the status quo? Back in December 2009, the government was being rocked by the Afghan detainee controversy and was desperate to avoid accountability. When confronted with serious allegations, the Prime Minister decided to do what he does best: he shut things down.

In fact, when asked about the Prime Minister's strategy behind prorogation, his former chief of staff, Tom Flanagan, said:

I think...the government's talking points really don't have much credibility. Everybody knows that Parliament was prorogued in order to shut down the Afghan inquiry, and the trouble is that the government doesn't want to explain why that was necessary. Personally I think it was highly defensible action, but instead of having an adult defence of it, the government comes up with these childish talking points. So then you try and backfill with other stuff that doesn't make much sense either. So it's a self-created problem.

That is a quotation of the Prime Minister's former adviser Tom Flanagan. There were rallies across this country against prorogation. Regardless of political affiliation, people came out and expressed their concerns. Over 220,000 Canadians went onto Facebook to present their concerns with regard to why Parliament was shut down.

On January 25, the Liberals came back to the House of Commons. We were willing to work, and we did work. We organized a series of round tables on a range of issues that matter to Canadians. We wanted to listen to Canadians. We had an open and inclusive process

to engage people, as opposed to the Prime Minister, who shut things down, including debate. We had over 30 round table discussions.

Why do we not support this budget? There are a lot of reasons, but there are a few issues I would like to speak to that pertain to my constituency of Mississauga—Brampton South. The number one priority in my riding is jobs. People are concerned day in and day out about finding jobs. We needed a real plan. Instead, the government in this budget again reaffirmed that it was going to increase payroll taxes by \$13 billion.

This is a job killer, as numerous independent sources have said. The Canadian Federation of Independent Business, CFIB, did a study and said that this would kill over 220,000 jobs. It is also another broken promise. The government is raising payroll taxes, killing jobs, increasing taxes again and misleading Canadians about it. It is being intellectually dishonest.

The Liberal Party, as opposed to simply opposing the government and being a protest party, put forward three concrete proposals. First, we were going to support manufacturers by providing a cash advance on capital cost allowances to help manufacturers purchase new equipment. This is very important when it comes to our productivity and innovation agenda. Small and medium size businesses and large corporations need to invest in machinery and equipment to become more productive and more innovative. Thus, the cash advance was a necessary tool and would enable them to create more jobs.

The second initiative we put forward was to tackle the worst youth unemployment in a generation by introducing a financial incentive to hire young Canadians, giving companies the ability to use the tax system and providing them with the incentives to hire young people. We have an unprecedented unemployment rate, but it is almost three times as high in my riding of Mississauga—Brampton South. Close to 20% of the youth in my riding are unemployed. This would have been a key initiative in hiring young Canadians looking for jobs.

We would also encourage investment in startup companies by introducing additional tax measures for Canadians who invest in entrepreneurs and startup companies, especially in emerging sectors such as clean energy and the life sciences. We already have an amazing cluster of life sciences in Mississauga—Brampton South, so we already have the basic infrastructure. This would provide additional incentives to companies in my riding and across the country to make the investments necessary to have the jobs of tomorrow.

*The Budget*

●(1045)

The other issue not addressed in this budget and that is a cause of concern, which the hon. member for York West has been working so hard day in and day out to advocate for, is pensions. Canada has changing demographics, but the budget offers nothing on pensions except for further consultations. If the government had its way, it would be consulting Canadians for the next 10 to 15 years without making any concrete proposals. Again, the Liberal Party is not simply going to oppose the consultations, but has provided a set of solutions.

The Liberal Party included three specific proposals on pensions in its reform package. First was to create a supplementary Canada pension plan to help Canadians save more. We want to use the CPP as a vehicle to enable Canadians to have the savings and pensions necessary to live with dignity. Second was to give employees with stranded pensions following corporate bankruptcies the option of growing their pensions through the assets of the Canada pension plan. Third was to protect vulnerable Canadians on long-term disability by giving them preferred status as creditors in cases of bankruptcy. Again, these are all initiatives on which the hon. member for York West has been working hard, and are proposals put forward by the Liberal Party to the government in a letter sent prior to the budget.

The Liberal Party gave the government advance notice before the latter put together the budget. We had round table discussions and engaged Canadians. We said, here are some concrete proposals we would like to see in the budget. Unfortunately, the government again ignored the proposals.

Another area that stands out as a cause of concern to many Canadians is the environment and the government's policy since being elected of really denying the science of climate change and, ultimately, having no action plan. This budget completely ignores climate change initiatives and cuts up to \$50 million in funding from Environment Canada.

The Liberal Party has again put forward proposals here, a plan to restore Canada's leadership on climate change, with a target of quadrupling Canada's production of renewable energy by 2017. It is about clean energy, green jobs, the jobs of today and tomorrow, and creating an environment where children can breathe clean air and drink clean water. It makes good economic and environmental sense. The Liberal Party does not treat environmental policy in silos; it thinks that environmental sustainability is very much a part of Canada's economic turnaround.

Again, the Conservatives have failed on that front. It is something that is very important to note as well.

The next area that stood out in the budget as another cause of concern is early learning. Note again that I am speaking mostly from my experiences in my constituency and of the issues raised by people who write to me and call me.

Early learning and child care are not simply about day care spaces; they are about lifelong learning and giving young people the ability and tools to succeed. I have a two and a half year old daughter and am expecting a second baby pretty soon. I am very fortunate and blessed to have young kids. I wish that in my constituency, they and

other kids would have a greater opportunity for early learning and child care initiatives, including more spaces. Unfortunately, that is not the case.

When the government came into power, it tore up the agreement signed by Paul Martin, the former Prime Minister. He had worked with all of the provinces and territories to put forward an agenda to create the framework for early learning and child care.

In my constituency in 2008, for every 1,000 children up to the age of 12, there were only 10.5 licensed child care spaces available in the region of Peel. Imagine, there are 1,000 kids and only 10.5 spaces available. What a large disparity, and it is a cause of concern as well.

The other area I would like to mention very briefly is immigration. It is a major issue in my constituency and across the country. Again, it is an economic driver. The government thinks it is simply a matter of a song and dance. Government members will go to cut a few ribbons, give a few speeches and dance around. It is much more than that. It is about making substantial investments in Canada's immigration system so we can provide additional resources for application processing, provide more support for immigrant settlement, and increase the number of permanent residents that Canada accepts.

I want indicate very clearly the resulting savings, because I have put forward a bunch of proposals that I think the government should have included in the budget. There is government waste that could have been eliminated in order to put forward a plan to help create jobs. Approximately \$1.2 billion worth of savings could have been included in the budget if the Conservatives had done the following: if the government had restored departmental spending on transport and communications to 2005-06 levels by \$820 million, and curtailed the use of management consultants, which would have saved \$355 million. If the government had rolled back the expenses of the Privy Council Office, that would have been another \$31 million. The list goes on and on.

●(1050)

Thus we have put forward proposals, but we have also identified government waste. This is a fundamental difference between us and the government, and that is why we will be opposing this budget.

**Mr. LaVar Payne (Medicine Hat, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I found the speech of the member opposite somewhat disturbing when he talked about the House being prorogued for three months. I am not sure how his calendar reads, but my calendar reads that we were to be back here on January 25. That left a very short period of time when we were actually prorogued.

The second thing he talked about, of course, was the Afghan issue as a result of prorogation. I would like to point out that the Afghan committee is still in place and members will still have the opportunity to ask those questions.

I am concerned about what my colleague brought up. There is also the Liberal scandal that resulted in the Gomery inquiry.

However, why would the member vote against providing \$30 million in the budget for youth skills and helping young Canadians? He actually talked about helping youth, but now he is going to vote against the budget.

*The Budget*

**Hon. Navdeep Bains:** Mr. Speaker, with respect to prorogation, I find it ironic that the government is still trying to defend that ill-advised move when it shut down Parliament to avoid accountability on the Afghan inquiry. Clearly the Conservatives are still running away from and avoiding being accountable on this important issue. More important, there are advisers like Tom Flanagan, the former advisor to the Prime Minister, who have clearly indicated that the Conservative government was shying away from accountability.

However, I want to talk about the government's record of mismanagement because it is an example of the question the member asked.

We sent out a press release not too long ago entitled, "Conservatives admit job creation funds held back when Canadians needed it most". It basically outlined \$874 million of unspent money in the \$2 billion infrastructure stimulus fund; \$186 million unspent in the \$200 million green infrastructure fund; and \$240 million unspent in the \$495 million fund for provincial and territorial-based funding. These are examples of mismanagement and incompetence.

The government asks why we are not supporting this budget. Aside from the whole range of examples I gave of the budget not dealing with the job crisis and helping the middle class, this is a clear example of mismanagement. The government is trying to shy away from the real issues, and that is why it is important for Canadians to see these numbers.

**Ms. Megan Leslie (Halifax, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I was particularly interested in the member's comments on the supposed productivity and innovation agenda. I think about what is going on in Halifax and across Canada and the fact that free trade, corporate tax cuts and deregulation were really supposed to solve the problem, but have not. In fact, our productivity has dropped. What they have done is really reinforced our dependence on natural resources. We are the hewers of wood, the drawers of water and the pumpers of oil.

Innovation, by definition, actually means experimenting. It means promoting diversification in our economy. When I think of Halifax and the incredible thinkers and innovators there, none of this money is going to them. It is going to the tar sands.

Would the member agree that a real strategy for innovation would provide direct support to entrepreneurs and the communities they are a part of? Would a real strategy nurture them in early experimentation and help them network with other centres?

A real strategy would provide basic infrastructure, including social infrastructure like access to family security and other strategies, to ensure that we have a cutting edge economy.

**Hon. Navdeep Bains:** Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt there needs to be a clear strategy on innovation. This government does a great job at spin and with gimmicks. However, there was no substance around the innovation agenda.

There is an absolutely tremendous opportunity going forward when it comes to the innovation agenda, specifically in terms of jobs. That is a key priority for us on this side of the House. We put forward concrete proposals that would help move that agenda forward and help devise a strategy going forward.

I mentioned three concrete proposals in my remarks. One was a cash advance on the capital cost allowance to allow companies to buy the equipment they need, so they can be more innovative and productive. That obviously would help the innovation agenda as well. The second proposal was to get our young people involved, the ones who have ideas and energy, via the youth employment tax credit.

It is a cause of concern that although innovation strategy is based on education, the government has cut funding time and time again when it comes to education.

● (1055)

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the House today to speak to budget 2010. I am also pleased to tell you that I will be sharing my time with my colleague, the member for Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission.

In 2009 Canada's government presented Canadians with a viable long-term economic action plan. This side of the House has been endlessly working to deliver that plan to Canadians. Our budget has and continues to be great for my riding of Oxford and Canadians, young and old alike.

Since 2009, Oxford alone has been the recipient of over \$26 million in federal funding for multiple programs and initiatives, varying from social housing projects to the upkeep of our national trail system.

I would like to tell the House what one of the mayors in riding had to say about budget 2010. Tillsonburg mayor Stephen Molnar was glad to see a commitment to continue with infrastructure funding for municipalities. He also welcomed the continuation of the federal gas tax funding, calling the distribution transparent, equitable and sustainable. Molnar noted that the way the program was set up there was no competition between neighbours or prioritization to larger urban centres, which he saw as a positive. Mayor Molnar also saw possibilities for technology funding that could work into economic efforts the town of Tillsonburg was pursuing.

This new budget is the right one for the times for Tillsonburg, for my riding and for Canadians.

One simply needs to fly into the soon newly-expanded and upgraded Tillsonburg airport, take in a game at the Embro arena, which will soon be refurbished and updated, or visit Innerkip's revitalized park or ask one of Otterville's dedicated volunteer firefighters about their new fire hall to see Canada's economic action plan at work.

*The Budget*

Oxford residents can also look forward to continued benefits of the federal gas tax funds transfer, which has been extended to 2014. In fact, Oxford has been so blessed the *Globe and Mail* even took notice on October 21, 2009 and placed Oxford as the third-largest recipient of RInC stimulus projects. My only regret is reporting that Oxford ranked third not first.

Families are a vital component to our society as they provide a nurturing and safe environment in which individuals can grow and succeed. That is why our government is investing in families in order to ensure that families receive the support and encouragement they deserve.

The universal child care benefit gives families the flexibility to decide how to best provide for their children. Budget 2010 proposes to improve the taxation of the universal child care benefit for single parent families by ensuring that they receive comparable treatment as single earner two parent families. This change will provide up to \$168 in tax relief for single parents with one child under six in 2010.

In addition, it provides support for families of children with disabilities by allowing a 10-year carry forward of Canadian disability savings grants and Canada disability savings bonds and entitlements.

In addition, as a former chief of police, I have witnessed first-hand the effects of crime on its victims and their families. I applaud the \$6.6 million over two years that have been committed to the federal victims strategy, which enhances support for victims of crime and provides access to employment insurance benefits for eligible workers who have lost a family member due to crime.

We have not forgotten about the senior pillars of our communities. This month we are taking action and launching public consultations on how to improve Canada's retirement income system. We are also delivering an additional \$45 million over three years to the enabling accessibility fund. In my riding the town of Tillsonburg has already benefited from this program by installing public accessible wash-rooms in the town and audible pedestrian signs at three intersections.

Budget 2010 delivers an additional \$10 million to the new horizons for seniors program. The Alzheimer Society of Oxford, the Oxford County Elder Abuse Network, the Women's Employment Resource Centre in the township of Norwich, all in my riding, can attest to the positive impact the new horizons for seniors program has had in aiding them in delivering successful inclusive programs for seniors in the community.

It is plain to see that a healthy, productive and vital part of any community thrives around its professional, amateur and recreational activities. Canada's government is a firm believer in promoting healthy living and a sense of community through sport. One can easily look to Vancouver 2010 for the endless sense of unity, pride and inspiration that was provided at Canada's games.

• (1100)

Budget 2010 will continue to build upon the tremendous success of these uniting events by investing \$62 million for Canada's high performance athletes. That is \$44 million for the own the podium program and \$12 million for Paralympic athletes. In addition to these great programs, we are investing \$6 million in the participation program.

In the coming months, the minister of sport will announce details on this new funding to ensure the existing funding is targeted effectively and encourages private sector investment in elite athlete training. This funding will build upon the success of the current own the podium program.

Canada's government understands the trials and tribulations of Canada's hard-working and dedicated labour force. In these uncertain economic times, we are supporting the Oxford and Canadian workforces, offering a temporary extension of the popular work-sharing program. Work-sharing avoids layoffs by offering employment insurance income benefits to qualifying workers willing to work a reduced work week while their employer recovers.

Budget 2010 extends this measure. Existing or recently terminated work-sharing agreements will be extended by an additional 26 weeks to a maximum of 78 weeks. Greater flexibility in the qualifying criteria for new work-sharing agreements will also continue to be provided, and both of these enhancements will be in place until March 31, 2011. This measure, estimated to cost \$106 million over two years, means even more workers will keep their jobs, while employers will also be able to retain skilled employees with years of experience. This extension to work-sharing will continue to reduce the financial impact of the downturn on workers and their communities.

Budget 2010 is freezing the employment insurance premium at \$1.73 per \$100 of insurable earnings to the end of 2010, the lowest rate since 1982, and delivering five extra weeks of regular EI benefits and greater access to EI benefits for long-tenured workers.

Oxford's manufacturing and transportation sectors can also look forward to a tariff-free zone by the elimination of all remaining tariffs on productivity-improving machinery and equipment and goods imported for further manufacturing in Canada. When fully implemented, this will provide \$300 million in annual duty savings to Canadians, while increasing productivity for Canadian business and protecting and increasing employment.

Canada's government is protecting and creating jobs now, establishing them for the future. At the same time, we will be reducing the deficit. The proposed red tape commission, a partnership between parliamentarians and the private sector, will prove to be a valuable aid to small business.

*The Budget*

Canada is faring far better than our G8 counterparts. Budget 2010 reminds us all that we must proceed with caution and plan accordingly for the long-term financial well-being of Canada. We are delivering targeted funding initiatives and working toward returning to the budgetary balance. Our stimulus packages will end by following the exit strategies set out in the economic action plan. We have targeted spending growth restraint through targeted measures and we are delivering a comprehensive review of this government's administrative functions to ensure maximum productivity and cost-effectiveness.

Not only have we set a clear, concise and fiscally responsible path to reducing the national deficit nearly in half in two years, we have implemented previously unheard of support programs for our athletes, who have demonstrated time and time again that they do indeed own the podium, and stood up for families and seniors in the communities they are proud to serve. We extended meaningful support and programs to Canada's dedicated labour force and to industry.

The opposition can play games, while we on this side of the House stay focused on the economy and getting things done for hard-working Canadians.

• (1105)

**Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I read today in the newspaper that the major climate studies unit at UQAM, l'Université du Québec à Montréal, will have to shut down as a result of discontinued federal funding. No doubt many of those researchers will migrate to other countries, principally to the United States.

First, would the hon. member tell us how that policy of cutting funds for climate research at universities squares with the government's stated intent of investing in science and innovation?

Second, how does this policy of cutting funding to climate change programs square with all the verbiage that we read in the throne speech and budget about the Conservative government wanting to do something about climate change?

Third, is it in the interests of a government, which has climate change deniers among its ranks, to cut funding to climate programs at Quebec universities?

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** Mr. Speaker, I have heard the term "pretty rich" used on that side earlier today.

I think back to the party opposite signing on to an international accord that was going to do great things for Canada and the world. At the same time, during its time in power, Canada's greenhouse gas emissions rose 35%. It is pretty hard to believe the Liberals have a great belief in what they say. It is frequently what one does that is more important and the past would tell us that their importance was on words and signing agreements or, in some cases, scrap pieces of paper. They did not put it into real action.

This government has taken action and will continue to take action. We are working with the international community. If my hon. colleague were honest, he would know that Canada has actually taken a very major role in international discussions with world powers. Yesterday one of the international communities agreed to sign on to the Copenhagen accord, which probably will bring far

more benefit to Canada and Canadians than the Kyoto accord that was proposed by the previous government.

**Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I would like the hon. member to withdraw his insinuation that I am not being honest. I did not impugn the hon. member's motives in his speech. The honourable thing would be for him to withdraw that reference.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I will allow the parliamentary secretary a chance to respond.

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** Mr. Speaker, I certainly did not intend to impugn the integrity of my colleague opposite. What I meant was he should be open to telling the world what the Liberals did when they signed on to the Kyoto accord, which was nothing, and then compare it to where Canada is today in leading the world in developing standards as we go forward.

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, clearly the link between tax cuts and performance is a myth. In 1999, one year before Paul Martin's corporate tax cuts began, Canada was fifth on the World Economic Forum's competitive list. Today we are in ninth place.

In addition, since the corporate tax cuts have been phased in, business spending on machinery and equipment has declined, so says Statistics Canada. IT use by Canadian businesses is half of what it is in the United States. As well, productivity growth is actually worse. Clearly the approach of the government is not having the desired effects.

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** Mr. Speaker, I actually enjoy the opportunity to respond to my colleague's comments. I will provide him with a few statistics. He is probably aware of them, but I would still like to remind him.

Canadian labour markets have fared much better than in the U.S. The Obama administration is reporting job losses that are proportionally three times higher in Canada. The reason for that is the productivity in Canada and the economy is much better.

Canadian domestic demand growth has rebounded more strongly than all other G7 countries since the beginning of 2009. This led Canada out of the recession in mid-2009. The reason for that is Canadians are enjoying a certain level of spending that does not exist in other countries. Our manufacturing and agricultural economies are all doing reasonably well during the worldwide recession. Canada is dealing with it in a very good way. I believe the tariff-free incentive to industry to bring in new equipment will prove to be of great benefit to us all.

• (1110)

**Mr. Randy Kamp (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise, representing the people of Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission where, by the way, the daffodils are blooming and the cherry trees are in flower. On their behalf, I want to congratulate the Minister of Finance on a good budget.

### *The Budget*

I remember being in a meeting about 18 months ago where we were all expressing concern about the global economic situation. The recession had really not hit us yet but we could see it coming. Like a tsunami, we knew we could not avoid the effects of it. It did not start here, but we knew we needed to take strong action to mitigate those negative effects that were coming and that is what we did.

Since July 2009, 135,000 jobs have been created and that is not including the 225,000 jobs that were maintained through our work sharing program, a very good program. Some 16,000 infrastructure projects have been completed or started and we delivered \$3 billion in general personal income tax relief as a way to address this economic downturn.

Statistics Canada recently announced that Canada's economy for the second straight quarter grew and in the fourth quarter of 2009 by 5%. This represents the strongest quarterly rate of economic growth in almost a decade partly due to an increase in infrastructure funding supported by stimulus projects across Canada. So our government is taking action to ensure that Canada leads the global economic recovery and budget 2010 will help us lead the way.

Jobs and growth, which is what this budget is all about, come in a variety of forms. I am here today to speak briefly on this budget and what actions our government has taken to ensure that Canada's fisheries sector is a key player in our goal to lead the way on jobs and growth.

The fishing industry in Canada employs over 80,000 people and is worth approximately \$14 billion. The commitments our government has made in budget 2010 prove once again that we recognize the importance of fisheries to a robust Canadian economy. Specifically, budget 2010 contains funding for seafood certification and traceability, small craft harbours, and a new hovercraft for our Coast Guard, among other things.

Let me talk a little bit more about each of these. First of all, there is catch certification. Many people do not realize the contribution that our seafood industry makes to our economy and our coastal community. Canada is the world's sixth largest seafood exporter with fish and seafood being Canada's largest single food export commodity. It is not grain, or beef, or pork, it is fisheries products. So access to international markets is essential to Canada's fish and seafood industry which exports 85% of its production. In 2010, the European Union will implement a new regulation where fisheries exporting countries need to provide catch certificates attesting that the marine fish and seafood products are legally and sustainably harvested.

Our government recognized the need to protect the livelihood of our fishing communities and is committed to ensuring that the Canadian fish and seafood industry maintains access to key markets around the world.

Budget 2010 provides \$7.2 million over two years to support a new catch certification office. Through this office Fisheries and Oceans will issue certificates to exporters ensuring that the Canadian fish and seafood industry remains competitive and maintains employment in both the harvesting and fish processing sectors.

More specifically, the funding provided in this budget enhances DFO's ability to: first, provide traceability systems and support to the

fish and seafood industry; second, to support IT upgrades to facilitate DFO audits of industry record keeping systems to ensure the validity of legal harvest; and third, to issue Government of Canada validated catch certificates within prescribed service standards to these exporters based on checks of licence status, catch reports, and existence of a fisheries management plan.

Our catch certificate will provide assurance that the seafood products come from a properly licensed, regulated and reported fishery that is regularly monitored and audited to ensure that catches are obtained legally.

• (1115)

Currently, only the European Union has the legal requirement to demonstrate this for imports coming into its countries, but we expect that this might well happen in other countries. This funding will allow our government to support the industry in meeting these new market requirements.

Given that the European market is worth approximately \$500 million annually to the Canadian fish and seafood industry, I believe that this is a very sound investment. I know that Canada's fish and seafood industry, as well as its hard-working employees, will feel the same.

Along our coast the small craft harbours program provides a network of safe and accessible harbours. These harbours support the commercial fishing industry and the broader interests of the coastal communities. In many communities small craft harbours represent the only federal presence.

In fact, I have a colleague from Newfoundland and Labrador who reminds me from time to time that harbours in his province are as important as Highway 401 is to Torontonians and the only refuge for vessels during rough weather.

Nearly 90% of all fishing landings in Canada, valued at approximately \$2 billion, occur at small craft harbours. This alone illustrates how important these harbours are, not only to our coastal communities but to Canada as a whole and to our economy.

Our government recognizes the important roles that small craft harbours have in our communities. Funding initiated under the 2009 economic action plan for small craft harbours, \$200 million additional over two years, will continue in 2010. To date 242 repair, maintenance and dredging projects are in the engineering or tendering process or are under construction and some have been completed and \$88 million of this allotment will be spent in 2010-11.

*The Budget*

This funding will improve fish harvesters access to better harbours and will facilitate their ongoing operations. It will also provide a stimulus to small communities by maintaining and creating construction jobs, and by supporting employment in other industries such as the service and tourism industry.

This I feel perfectly embodies the title of budget 2010, “Leading the Way on Jobs and Growth”. With our government's funding for small craft harbours we are continuing to lead the way.

More than just numbers, these investments illustrate our government's ongoing commitment to the people who live in smaller coastal communities and rely on small craft harbours so they can do their jobs and provide for their families in a safe and secure way.

In budget 2010 our government continues to invest in the safety and security of Canadians by committing \$27.25 million for a new Canadian Coast Guard air cushion vehicle, otherwise known as a hovercraft.

On the west coast at the Sea Island base, the Coast Guard operates two hovercraft, one of which needs to be replaced. These vessels are used to conduct searches, transport ill and injured people, tow disabled vessels and provide logistical support during on-water incidents.

We hope we never have anything like the landing on the Hudson River to deal with, but if we ever do, we will be very glad to have this investment in British Columbia.

Another issue which affects all Canadians in waters from coast to coast is the issue of invasive species. Aquatic invasive species pose a major threat to Canada's biodiversity, our ecosystems, and ultimately to our economy. That is why we have put in place Canada's invasive alien species strategy. Budget 2010 renews the funding for that program to the tune of \$38 million.

DFO will receive \$8 million over two years to allow Fisheries and Oceans Canada to continue to invest in research, prevention and control of these invasive species, including the management of the sea lamprey in the Great Lakes and the minimization of the risk of new introductions such as the Asian carp.

I am pleased to support the budget. I think British Columbians are supportive of the budget. I know the premier is.

Under the previous Liberal government the federal government starved the provinces. That is not the approach we are going to take. There is \$3.6 billion under the Canada health transfer, \$1.5 billion in the social transfer. All of those are increases over the previous years and over the previous Liberal government.

That is why the budget has been welcomed by so many across the country. I encourage all members of the House to support the budget.

• (1120)

**Mr. Scott Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend my colleague on his speech. I have worked with the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans for quite some time, being the former critic myself.

I do want to focus on that. There are a couple of things on which I would like to get clarification. Currently, in Newfoundland and Labrador there was a memorandum of understanding worked out between the union as well as the provincial government. It seems that they are now asking the federal government for answers on many of these things. I was wondering what he would like to bring to the House as to the situation on that.

The Speech from the Throne talked about the possibility of new management under the guise of a Fisheries Act, which is very interesting, because before it was brought up, and it lacked consultation, I have not heard of any consultation process. When it comes to the local management of fisheries, I am wondering, similar to the consultation period the Conservatives are planning with pensions, will they do the same under a new Fisheries Act?

One final thing regarding the Coast guard. I believe it is moving to Newfoundland from Nova Scotia. I am wondering if the hon. member could update us on that situation.

**Mr. Randy Kamp:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his interest in these issues.

Let me just focus on the Fisheries Act. I find it interesting, because while my colleague was the critic for fisheries, he claimed that there was a need to modernize a piece of legislation that is about 143 years old. Most Canadians would agree with him, including the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Yet, when we attempted to do that, he, on behalf of his party, put in place all kinds of mechanisms to obstruct us. People in his province were disappointed by those actions. We hope he got over that and is not inclined to do that again as we move forward on it.

He will know that we did introduce it twice, and both times there was an opportunity for fisheries stakeholders across the country to give us their input, and certainly they did that. In addition to that, he will need to stay tuned about the kind of approach we take in terms of consultation to make sure that we have the very best Fisheries Act possible.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Raynald Blais (Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize the parliamentary secretary's work as a member of the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans. I enjoyed his speech because he was talking about fisheries, and I am always interested in hearing remarks on the subject.

We have an expression back home about putting a band-aid on a wooden leg, which is, of course, pointless. In my opinion, that philosophy sums up the government's plan for small craft harbours. An additional \$200 million over two years is great. As a first step, this is somewhat encouraging. But the department calculated that it needs \$600 million. The government is allocating \$200 million to meet a \$600 million need.

*The Budget*

Clearly, things do not add up. It is likely that when the \$200 million program ends in 2011, we will be back where we started with a bunch of harbours that will deteriorate every time they get hit by a storm. Climate change affects harbours too.

In that light, can the parliamentary secretary, who just talked about the small craft harbour file, comment on the fact that there will be only \$200 million instead of \$600 million, which is only one-third of the money needed?

● (1125)

[English]

**Mr. Randy Kamp:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his interest, which perked up when we talked about small craft harbours just a few moments ago. This is an important issue.

What I find fascinating about that whole topic, which we talked about before, is that \$200 million over two years is a very significant amount of money. He is right, though, that there is an infrastructure deficit with small craft harbour facilities and we need to keep working on that, and it is the commitment of our government to do so.

I find it interesting that the \$200 million which we announced in our economic action plan of 2009 and now the continuation of the project that is announced in budget 2010, in both of those cases my colleague voted against those initiatives. I am very surprised by that.

**Mr. Tony Martin (Sault Ste. Marie, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, this morning I will provide a few thoughts on the budget. I am pleased to be sharing my time with the wonderful member for Burnaby—New Westminster. He is a real champion in the House on many fronts, but none more important than the battle he is fighting on the international trade front and the free trade agreement which the government wants to impose on us and the people of Colombia.

I stand here today hopeful that we have an opportunity finally to make some choices that did not seem to be there for us until the last year or so. The inevitability of the economy becoming global and unregulated and that somehow that was going to be good for all of us was something we just could not seem to make any headway with.

I believe very profoundly that what happened last year in that economy, the collapse of the financial world and the impact on people everywhere on the planet brings us to a place recognized by Jim Wallis in the wonderful book he recently wrote entitled *Rediscovering Values: On Wall Street, Main Street, and Your Street*.

We have the potential for a transformational moment in our history. We can make choices as a government. Government can become important again in providing leadership. We can do things that will be in the best interest of the people we serve and the planet that serves all of us.

We have a chance at this point to look at what went wrong in a very clear way, to name it and then to put forward a different vision for ourselves and those we care about, our country and indeed for the world. We have a chance to make different choices, as we in the New Democratic Party are saying these days, in this budget. We can make different choices.

Until last year, we believed almost religiously that government should be smaller, that government should play less of a role in the

life of the jurisdiction in which it is elected to give leadership and that somehow if we deregulated industry and finance, it would serve us better, that it would be more efficient. We also believed that if we created a lower tax regime for industry and investment, the country would be better off. If all of us were honest with ourselves, we would see that that recipe is what got us to the dysfunction in the economy we experienced last year and the very difficult challenge that we continue to face today.

This does not have to be the way it is. We in this country do not have to continue to be driven by an ethos of greed and fear. We can choose to focus on the common good and making sure that everybody has enough.

I think back to my days as a young boy growing up in the small town of Wawa in northern Ontario. Some members may know where that is. Back in the 1960s and 1970s, 1,200 people mined ore, burned the sulphur out of it and turned it into sinter. We sent that to Sault Ste. Marie where 12,000 people turned it into steel.

That steel was sent across the country to communities in the Maritimes such as Saint John, where it was used in building ships. It was sent to Vancouver, Thunder Bay and Windsor, where it was used in making buses and cars. All of those industries had good jobs that paid decent wages. There were benefit packages that looked after families. There were pensions for people when they retired, so they could live in the dignity their work made them deserving of.

● (1130)

We went even further back in those days because we believed in government. We believed in the ability of government to use the very generous tax base to provide supports and services for all Canadians and to create a competitive advantage for locally owned and controlled industry. We brought in health care, employment insurance, the Canada pension plan.

When the government brought in all of those very important and helpful institutions, we found that they became part of the Canadian identity. People around the world admired us for what we were able to accomplish together. We found that also created for us a very competitive advantage in the world as trade began to evolve and become global.

We found that having a healthy and well-educated populace was something in which investors were very interested. We found that providing health care through a government run system provided cost advantages to industry. The cost of health care can be very expensive, as we know when we look south of the border where our American friends are debating that today. That was a very great competitive advantage.



*The Budget*

We found that when together we built the infrastructure, the buildings, roads, libraries, recreational centres in communities across this country, not only did it make those communities centres of excellence, but it was also very attractive to people looking for a place to set up shop, do business and create work. Back in those days communities, individuals, organizations and government worked together to make sure that was happening.

Some may say that was then and this is now. Yes, and government made choices back then. We have the opportunity to make choices here right now that could get us to a place where we hold dear those values once more.

Our country is so large, so vast and so remote, and so much of it is in the north. We really need to invest in transportation infrastructure. For example, in my riding people are looking for investments from the federal and provincial governments to make sure the railway does not go the path of so many of the country's corporate headquarters which have disappeared altogether or gone someplace else. We should make the necessary investments to maintain the vital links between communities and manufacturing centres and the markets in which they sell their goods. It should be done in a generous way that not only makes up for the lack of investment in those pieces of infrastructure over the last few years, but also in a way that indicates there is a future for towns like Wawa, White River, Marathon, Nipigon, Red Rock, Thunder Bay, Sault Ste. Marie and Timmins. These communities are important. The resource base that has served the country so well continues to be an important element in Canada's economy going forward.

In one very specific instance, I ask the government to make a choice today to stop the unwarranted and unneeded rollout of further corporate tax breaks to entities that are doing quite well, thanks very much, and to invest those billions of dollars in things that will serve all Canadians better, such as health care and education. In this instance we need investment in the railroad to have a railroad to move freight, and also to once again look at the possibility of having a railroad to move people throughout the country. Canada's demographic is changing. The population is getting older. We are centralizing health care, for example, and people need to travel and our highways are not always the safest way to do it.

● (1135)

We need a huge investment in rail, for example, the same as we need it in health care and education. Investment is needed in all kinds of other important things to protect the environment and make this country the green economy that we all know it has the potential to become.

**Mr. Brian Murphy (Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to take the opportunity to thank the hon. member for his speech, and to thank him for his work on the Canada-Ireland friendship committee and to wish him in advance a happy St. Patrick's Day. I am aware of his Irish roots.

The member represents a riding that is outside the great metropolis of Toronto. There are great cities in this country, such as Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver, Winnipeg, and others, but there are other regions of Canada as well. There are people who live outside the cities in Atlantic Canada and elsewhere.

One of the obvious things in this budget is there will be cuts to the Canada Border Services Agency and CATSA, which handle our airport security. The cuts will affect regional airports, border entry points in the case of the Sault, I imagine, and access to markets and tourism will be hurt. Could he comment on how those cuts will affect not only his own region in Ontario but all of Canada?

**Mr. Tony Martin:** Mr. Speaker, 9/11 created a whole new regime of bureaucracy at borders which has impacted very negatively on trade and the free movement of people and goods back and forth across the border. I live on a border. Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario is the sister city to Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan. Literally thousands more vehicles used to travel back and forth across that border every day. That was very important to the local economies of both of those wonderful cities.

The government makes choices that we in the NDP would not make. The Conservatives have decided that they will cut government yet again, a government that has already been cut to the bone in the interest of managing the present deficit and significantly because of the big corporate tax cuts made, frankly, by the former Liberal government as well, which have been rolled out to corporations over the last 10 to 15 years.

There is another way. There are other choices. We could invest intelligently in safety at our borders. We could use some of the money that we would recoup if we simply did not flow those corporate tax breaks any more.

**Ms. Irene Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, very recently I met someone from Sault Ste. Marie who asked me to thank the member for his work for the poor and those in our community who need to have a government that cares.

I noted in the budget that the homelessness partnership strategy is to end in 2011. The money for this strategy is used for emergency shelter for people in desperate need. In my own community of London, there are several agencies that provide help to the most desperate, such as homeless people and women who suffer from mental illness. I would like my colleague to comment on the fact that this program will be ending despite the fact that the government seems to be able to find \$60 billion to support profitable corporations.

● (1140)

**Mr. Tony Martin:** Mr. Speaker, I say to my colleague from London—Fanshawe that, absolutely, this is a stark example of the choices the government is making. It is going to continue to roll out billions of dollars in corporate tax breaks to financial institutions and big oil companies that frankly do not need it and cut funding to homeless shelters, people who are the most at risk and marginalized in our society.

What kind of a country are we building when those kinds of choices are made knowing the resources exist to do it differently?

*The Budget*

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is anticipated that EI benefits will lapse for about 500,000 Canadians during the coming year. The government is boasting about how the work share program is going to reduce the financial burden on employers and employees. The member may want to comment on the fact that the government has also announced a \$13 billion increase in EI premiums, job-killing premiums for small and medium size businesses which will be particularly hard hit. I think the government has it wrong.

**Mr. Tony Martin:** Mr. Speaker, the member is absolutely right when he again points out the choices the government makes that are wrong. It is going to tax the ordinary working man and woman and small business in this country with this increase in the contribution that each will need to make in terms of employment insurance and, at the same time, roll out literally billions of dollars in tax breaks to corporations that are doing very well.

I do not see this as an intelligent choice. It is certainly not the choice that we will make as a caucus in this place. We are waiting for the government to indicate that it might do something different.

**Mr. Peter Julian (Burnaby—New Westminster, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to follow my colleague for Sault Ste. Marie who is one of the foremost advocates in this House of Commons for the middle class and poor Canadians. He is a very eloquent speaker and it is an honour to follow him, particularly in light of what this budget means.

There is no doubt that this budget is clearly an attack on middle class and poor Canadians. I will explain why in just a moment. Many of my other NDP colleagues have expressed the same concerns over the budget. The important thing is to start with what the context is in this country right now.

The government does not deny that unemployment will grow throughout the course of this year. We also have record levels of seniors living in poverty despite the prosperity and the resources that we have in this country. We are seeing record levels of student debt.

Because this is probably the fundamental difference between the NDP as compared to the old parties, the Liberals and the Conservatives who love to shovel money at the wealthiest of Canadians and love to bring forward these great ideological concepts like free trade, the most important division in this House is that the NDP is the only party that recognizes what has happened to the middle class over the last 20 years.

Under the former Liberal government and under the current Conservative government, we have seen the most sustained decline in incomes for Canadian families that we have ever seen in our history right across income categories. Once we put aside the very rich, who are wealthier than ever and now take most of the income pie, middle class, lower middle class and the poorest of Canadians have all seen a sustained decline in their family income. As a result of that, the average Canadian family, not the wealthy, the lobbyists who the Conservatives and Liberals love to sit down with, but the average Canadian family has actually seen its debtload double over the past 20 years.

That quiet crisis was present even before this very clear full blown economic crisis that we have seen over the past year or two. That is

the context in which this budget was developed. One needs to ask what kind of measures the government is taking to actually help middle class Canadians.

What it is doing is actually cutting back on public services, services that provide supports to middle income Canadians. It is middle class Canadians who benefit the most from the services the federal government produces. It is the public services, those who help the middle class, who are under attack by the government.

What did the government choose to do? It chose to go into one of the largest deficits in Canadian history; a \$54 billion deficit that is largely due to massive corporate tax cuts.

In this corner of the House, we read through the budget, as we do diligently. The NDP members in this House of Commons have been likened to army ants because we are the ones who are diligently doing the work and, in the great Canadian tradition, doing our homework.

I would ask the Conservative members opposite to take the plastic off their budget, take it out of their desks and look through it. On page 281 we see that the finance ministry itself is undermining the premise of what the Conservatives have done with this budget. On page 281 there is a very interesting graph that expresses what the NDP has been saying all along. This comes from the finance ministry and it is written into the budget. It talks about the dollar impact on the level of GDP of a permanent \$1 increase in fiscal measures.

Mr. Speaker, I know it is no surprise to you and no surprise to the NDP caucus that when one invests in infrastructure there is a 100% return. If \$1 is invested, that multiplier effect is 100%. There is no secret there. It is very clearly written in the budget document.

Housing investment, which the NDP has been pushing for some time, is contained within the amendment that we have brought forward. It would be a 100% benefit as well. When the government makes that decision, there is a 100% benefit to Canadians as a whole.

We can look at other spending measures and it is an 80% benefit, a very important benefit, the full range of other benefits that are provided by the federal government, by the public services that we are talking about. For measures for low income households and the unemployed, it is again an 80% return on investment, which is still pretty good.

• (1145)

Then we get to the measures that the government loves to bring in. For fiscal measures, personal income tax measures are not the best investment of federal government funds. We have said that all along. It is reflected here in the budget document itself. It is a 40% return.

The federal government loves to invest in personal income tax measures for the wealthiest and most privileged Canadians but for middle class and low income Canadians it is a 40% return. Personal income tax measures are the worst possible use of funds.

*The Budget*

According to the Conservative government's own budget documents on page 281 are corporate income tax measures, 90% of which is simply blown away. It is like going to the casino and wasting Canadian taxpayer money by throwing it at the corporate sector. That is written into the budget document itself.

One has to wonder if any of the Conservatives in the House have even bothered to read the budget documents to see that they are making the worse possible use of Canadian taxpayer money, of fiscal policy, by blowing away 90% of it on corporate income tax measures. There is simply no return to the federal government and no return to Canadians by cutting back public services and throwing all of that money at profitable corporations.

We must remember that this is borrowed money. The government has a \$54 billion deficit largely due to corporate income tax measures, the money it is shovelling at very profitable Canadian banks, at very profitable energy companies and shovelling out the door without any due respect, due diligence and any sense of responsibility, while cutting back on the services that help Canadians the most. According to the government's own documents, that money is not being effectively used.

I know there are well-meaning Canadians who vote Conservative in Conservative ridings but those Canadians, those who are listening in today, need to know that the Conservatives are knowingly making the worse possible use of Canadian taxpayer money in fiscal policy. I know well-meaning Conservatives right across this country would say that does not make sense.

When the budget documents state that this is the worst possible use of money, why would we use all of that resource that Canadians have in common and push it at a very profitable corporate sector when Canadians need help?

We have referenced some of the other needs, such as the fact that right now up to 800,000 Canadians are running to the end of EI.

Just to reference and close the debate around these huge income gifts the Conservatives love to shovel out the door to the wealthiest and most privileged Canadians, it now turns out that the lowest marginal tax rate in the country is paid by the wealthiest of Canadians. Lower middle class Canadians are now paying the taxes. According to figures from 1990 to 2005, the poorest of Canadians are now paying a higher marginal tax rate than the wealthiest of Canadians. Yes, this did start under the Liberals. That is absolutely irresponsible.

I would like to briefly reference for British Columbians why we are voting against this budget. There is not a single reference to salmon, to the pine beetle or to leaky condos. The only reference to softwood lumber is the softwood lumber sellout that, in my riding of Burnaby—New Westminster, cost us 2,000 direct jobs and the closure of three softwood mills.

What we have seen under the Conservative government is a completely irresponsible approach to fiscal policy and to balanced budgets with a self-inflicted \$54 billion deficit.

All the Conservatives had to do was be responsible and read their own budget documents to realize that was an appallingly irresponsible use of taxpayers' fiscal capacity and the resources that

we have. They then would have pulled back on the corporate income taxes, the further ones that they are implementing, on the recommendation of the NDP, and it would be putting forward policies that would help people, such as investing in infrastructure, in housing and in social policy, all of which provide a multiple of additional benefits to Canadians as opposed to corporate taxes.

There is one reference in the budget that British Columbians find offensive and that is the reference to the HST. There are pages and pages on the HST but nothing on the salmon, leaky condos or on the pine beetle. That is why we are voting against this budget.

● (1150)

**Mr. Randy Kamp (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I listened quite carefully to my colleague's speech hoping to hear the NDP plan if it were to bring in a budget. However, I found it quite disturbing, although expected, that it was mostly socialist diatribe.

He made a comment about what was in the budget regarding corporate tax. I want to correct one thing and then make an additional comment. I do not know if he read the footnote there but it reads:

Corporate income tax measures have a limited impact on aggregate demand over the periods displayed in the table but have among the highest multiplier effects in the long run. This is because they increase the incentive to invest and accumulate capital, which leads to a higher capacity to produce goods and services.

I listened carefully, and I apologize if I missed it, but I do not think I heard once the word job. Jobs are what this budget is about, which is what we should be about, jobs. I have not heard anything from the NDP on how it might actually create something for somebody to have a job and earn a living.

**Mr. Peter Julian:** Mr. Speaker, what the member is identifying is exactly my point. It is the worst possible use of moneys that the Conservatives could hope to make and it is right here.

I understand. He is reading the table for the very first time. He is now opening it up and wondering if it is really true that there is a 100% return for infrastructure investment, a 100% return for housing investment and yet only a 10% return for corporate investment.

Now that he has read it and understands that it is the worst possible use of money, from the finance minister's own internal documents, he has a responsibility to his constituents to justify why they are wasting Canadian resources by throwing them at very profitable Canadian companies.

I referenced jobs a whole number of times in my 10 minutes, so I will not go over that ground again, the softwood sellout being the most egregious decision by the government for loss of jobs in British Columbia. I referenced 2,000 lost jobs because of the softwood sellout. That was appallingly irresponsible, but then he—

*The Budget*

•(1155)

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. I will stop the member there so we can allow for more questions.

The hon. member for Mississauga South.

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the government is proposing to grow out of the fiscal deficit. Scott Clark, the former deputy finance minister, said that there was no advanced economy, ever, that has grown out of a deficit.

The Parliamentary Budget Officer has gone even further and has said that there is a structural deficit and that we cannot grow out of it. So there is a problem.

It comes down to trust and, if we want to talk about trust, maybe we want to think about income trusts and the broken promise: how they taxed income trusts when they said that they would not; how they broke the law on fixed election dates; how they bought an election by reducing the GST when they could not afford to reduce it; having a 200-page binder to make Parliament dysfunctional; the Afghan papers; and the list goes on.

There is, however, a social deficit. I know the member is very concerned about jobs, as are all the opposition parties, but not the government. EI benefits will run out for 500,000 people over the next short while and, at the same time, the government will be introducing about \$13 billion in increases of EI premiums, job-killing premiums that will hurt not only businesses but also employees.

I wonder if the member wants to amplify on the need to protect Canadian workers.

**Mr. Peter Julian:** Mr. Speaker, we need to protect Canadian workers from the Conservative government because it has sold out so much of what has been the backbone of our industrial and manufacturing economy in this country.

The Conservatives like to sit down with lobbyists and hand out corporate tax cuts. They just love to be irresponsible with the public purse but they have no job strategy. That is why unemployment has continued to rise and even in the budget documents themselves will continue to rise over the course of the next year. They simply have absolutely no solutions.

I appreciate the member referencing the Parliamentary Budget Officer, because what he says, to back up what the ministry of finance folks are obviously telling the government as well, is that the structural deficit is due to the corporate tax cuts that the government is bringing in so recklessly and irresponsibly.

It has no jobs plan. It simply does not know how to generate employment. It has no industrial strategy. It is a failed government and this is a failed budget.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Steven Blaney (Lévis—Bellechasse, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to rise in the House today to speak on behalf of the people of Lévis, Bellechasse and Etchemins in order to show my support for the government's budget 2010. This is an excellent budget because it will help solidify a recovery in the Canadian economy and manage expenditures in order to return to a balanced budget.

We are at the halfway point of our economic action plan and already, in less than a year, 135,000 net jobs have been created in Canada. Thanks to our work sharing program, 225,000 jobs have been saved and businesses have been able to keep their labour force. Now those businesses have new contracts and can be optimistic about the economic recovery thanks to a skilled, qualified labour force that has been able to stay employed by the business.

This year in Quebec and across Canada, the Canadian government has invested more in infrastructure than any government over the last 60 years.

Consider the example of the water treatment plant in Lévis or the sports centre that will be built north of Montreal. Consider the projects in Laval or Saint-Louis-de-Gonzague, both of which had no sewage system. We are investing, along with the Quebec government, to ensure that the citizens there have a waste water treatment system that meets modern standards.

Our economy is doing well and Canada is emerging from this economic crisis in better shape than before. Why? I think several factors are at play. First of all, our businesses are productive and boast a skilled, qualified labour force. One of this country's greatest resources is its people, who are innovative, creative and resourceful. Our businesses are supported by a sound banking system that is recognized as one of the safest and most reliable in this world. Not only do we have a good banking system, but we also have our economic action plan, which has provided the boost our economy needed to recover from the difficult economic times we have just been through.

We are entering the second year of the economic action plan, even though the debt represents 31% of the gross domestic product. In fact, our debt to GDP ratio is the lowest of all G7 countries. In Canada, the unemployment rate is 1.4% lower than that of our American neighbours. We hope to continue to bring these numbers even lower across the continent.

Canada has made the most significant recovery in the G7. One thing that leads us to believe we can continue on that path is that with our tax measures, not just the economic action plan, but also Advantage Canada, our tax system will be the lowest for companies. By the end of 2012, we will have the most advantageous competitive tax system for companies, which will encourage them to create jobs.

Today, our ministers are pointing out that there are no longer any tariffs for manufacturers. They can buy equipment, inputs and goods under existing legislation. As such, there is more room for investing, creating jobs and moving forward.

Our government continues to move forward with measures to stimulate the economy. In total, we are injecting more than \$19 billion into the economy. The best way to stimulate the economy is to put money in the pockets of taxpayers. They know how to meet the needs of their families. Seniors have significant needs. We are cutting taxes by \$3.2 billion. That money will circulate in our economy and create wealth. Since our tax policies came into effect, one million Canadians with the lowest incomes no longer pay income tax.

*The Budget*

●(1200)

We have a tax system that benefits low-income earners. We continue to ensure that taxes are low for all taxpayers.

We are also investing in our workers, with \$4 billion in additional employment insurance benefits and training as well. For sectors that are losing ground, we want to make the transition to value-added sectors in order to meet the challenges and ensure prosperity in the long term.

I spoke about infrastructure projects. We continue to move forward. In Lévis—Bellechasse et les Etchemins, as elsewhere in Canada, the needs are great and we will continue to invest in our infrastructure to support development.

This budget has the smallest increase in the overall envelope since 1997. We can clearly see our government's desire to cut expenses. However, one area where it has not cut back is research and development, especially scientific development. We want to develop and attract talent and brain power, enhance research capacity, improve commercialization, accelerate private sector investment and expand access to the market and competitiveness in order to maintain our leading-edge economy. Naturally, for the hardest hit sectors, we have measures in place such as the community adjustment fund, among others.

I was shocked by the response to the throne speech from the new Bloc finance critic. Two things he said surprised me, and I would like to use my time today to mention those two things to my colleague opposite, the member for Hochelaga. He said that there was nothing in the budget for social housing. Nothing could be further from the truth. I invite my colleague to look at page 236 of the budget, which states that our government is investing \$1 billion this year, in addition to the \$1 billion it invested last year, which he did not have the chance to vote for. This time, I am sure that he will be able to convince his colleagues that this measure and the entire budget are worthwhile, so that they will support this unprecedented \$1 billion investment in social housing in Canada. This is part of the second phase of our economic action plan.

As a Quebecker, another thing that shocked me was when the Bloc finance critic said that there was nothing in the budget for Quebec. Once again, I invite the member for Hochelaga to check the figures for equalization and social transfers. Quebec has never received as much from the federal government as in budget 2010, the second year of the economic action plan.

Quebec will receive increased federal support under budget 2010. Transfers will total \$19.3 billion in 2010-11, \$281 million more than last year. That is \$6.8 billion more than when the Liberals were in power. What does that mean? It means that budget 2010 maintains investments in health and education and maintains quality services across the country. For Quebec, it means \$8.6 billion in equalization. So Quebec will get more than ever before, and the government will invest in all sectors.

This budget was drafted to be balanced and fair. It includes special measures. There is one measure I take a particular interest in. The budget corrects a historical error to enable Mouvement Desjardins to incorporate as a federal entity. It also contains money to help farm producers modernize slaughterhouse capacity. Of course, a symposium

on biomass will be held in Les Etchemins on May 14. The theme of this symposium is "I heat with biomass". The budget already includes \$100 million for developing clean technologies in the forestry industry.

●(1205)

I urge my colleagues to support this budget, which will strengthen Canada's economic performance.

**Mr. Daniel Paillé (Hochelaga, BQ):** Madam Speaker, my grandfather used to say that if you are not sure how to corner someone, either you set a trap or you shoot straight.

What was your stance, sir, when your government caucus was talking about assistance for the forestry industry? What was your stance when small municipalities kept saying that one-third/one-third/one-third was too much for them? What was your stance when everyone was talking about a March 31, 2011, end date, which is not viable? Where were you on the \$2.2 billion tax harmonization issue —

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie):** I just want to interrupt the hon. member briefly. I would ask that he address his remarks through the Chair.

**Mr. Daniel Paillé:** Madam Speaker, it is much more pleasant to speak to you than to the member for Lévis—Bellechasse.

What was his stance when we were talking about sales tax harmonization and the \$2.2 billion that his government, the Government of Canada, has owed Quebeckers for 18 years?

Some people just do not measure up, and it is up to the member opposite to tell us where he was on those issues.

**Mr. Steven Blaney:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question.

In my speech, I said that the project in Saint-Louis-de-Gonzague, a wonderful municipality in my riding, would receive funding for more than one-third of the costs, to take into account the municipal taxpayers' ability to pay. The economic action plan allows for such flexibility, which is another good reason to support it.

I am happy that my colleague brought up the importance of the forestry sector to Quebec. Wood is a renewable resource. He was not yet here to support the \$1 billion we invested in the pulp and paper green transformation program and the \$170 million we allocated to natural resources, but he has an opportunity to support the 2010 budget.

The Canadian Forestry Association has recognized the importance of this investment and said that the government was right to invest in leading-edge sectors, in sectors of the future in the forestry industry. The government is investing \$100 million per year in projects to develop value-added products. Quebec is a leader in the wood processing sector and must take this opportunity to support the 2010 budget.

*The Budget*

• (1210)

[English]

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Madam Speaker, the flaws in our pension system certainly showed up last year. Clearly the Conservatives have had a year now to think about this whole issue and do something about it. For example, they could have brought in changes to the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act.

Nortel workers have been in trouble now for about a year, and the Conservatives have known that. In fact, they could have made movements already to set up an insurance fund for pensions, an issue that has been discussed for a while, but there is nothing in the budget to deal with any of those issues.

Why is the government so slow in responding to an issue that concerns all of Canada?

[Translation]

**Mr. Steven Blaney:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for highlighting the important contribution made by our seniors, who may fall victim to the tough economic times.

I can assure him that our government is maintaining all of its measures for seniors, and has implemented a number of measures, for example, support for New Horizons for Seniors.

To answer my colleague's question more specifically, our department is carefully examining the issue and will organize a federal-provincial summit in May 2010.

We know that 90% of pensions are regulated by the provinces. So it is important to examine the issue. We will work with the provinces to examine this in the spirit of open federalism. We will continue to work to find solutions.

[English]

**Mr. Tim Uppal (Edmonton—Sherwood Park, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to follow my colleague, who is no doubt one of the hardest working members of Parliament and an advocate for his constituents.

A number of important points about this budget have been brought forward already. I would like to highlight two of the main reasons why I support the budget.

First, it is a transition budget. It recognizes that last year we were in the midst of one of the worst global financial crises the world has ever seen. Across the border in the United States, banks were failing and the markets crashed. When Bear Stearns and Lehman Brothers went under, it ignited a financial panic that we had not seen since Black Monday.

It is important to remember how bad it actually was. Even though our banks were strong, the Canadian economy was hit. Retirement savings plummeted, exports fell and Canadians lost their jobs. The first year of our economic action plan focused on holding the line, ensuring our banks did not collapse, holding back job losses and stabilizing the economy. I am proud that it worked.

Our infrastructure spending was rolled out in record time, creating jobs at a time when they were needed the most. Our tax cuts, such as the home renovation tax credit, encouraged ordinary Canadians to help stimulate the economy, while improving their homes. Now it is

time to get Canadians back on their feet, to create new jobs and to get the economy growing again. This budget shifts the focus from crisis management to economic growth.

Economists across the country have made it clear that although the worst is over, the economy is still fragile. One of our priorities is to help the unemployed. The work-sharing program was a massive success, saving thousands of jobs across the country. In my riding, companies like Horton CBI and Advanced Engineering Products Ltd. have used this program. This program saved 166 jobs in my riding alone. It was an important part of our economic action plan, and my constituents very strongly support the extra 26 weeks as proposed in this budget.

As I mentioned earlier, I believe the focus on job creation in the budget is a key reason for supporting it. Infrastructure is one of the best ways to help the economy. Not only creates jobs, but it leaves a legacy for decades to come. I am sure many of my colleagues know of projects in their own ridings that are improving roads, improving universities and building community buildings.

In the city of Fort Saskatchewan in my riding, Highway 15 is a major route and is receiving a major upgrade. This is creating local jobs and boosting the regional economy. It will also make transportation more efficient and help my constituents by making their commute faster and safer.

However, it is not just building roads. In Sherwood Park, Millennium Place, a multi-use recreational facility, is an important part of our community that brings us together as families, friends and neighbours. It is being upgraded through Canada's economic action plan. Millennium Place received much needed funding to add an additional leisure ice centre and a new refrigeration room. This funding will go a long way to improving opportunities for minor ice hockey organizations in my riding as well as providing additional wellness and recreational skating opportunities for our residents.

The infrastructure programs have been a major success, creating over 135,000 jobs in the first year alone. Now we need to finish the job and the funding in this budget will do that. By the time the second year of the economic action plan is finished, the economy will be fully recovered and the infrastructure stimulus will be winding down.

That brings me to my second reason to support this budget. As a Conservative, I believe in small government, lower taxes and living within our means. Governments sometimes have to go into deficit, but only in times of crisis or serious recessions. This is why it is important that our spending is temporary.

*The Budget*

●(1215)

When we started the economic action plan, we said it would cover over two years and we meant it. Unlike the opposition, we are not going to raise taxes. Once upon a time when governments needed money for their projects of the day, they would just hike taxes on Canadians yet again. The era of tax and spend government is over. We will not take more money out of the pockets of Canadians. As Conservatives, we believe Canadians should keep more of the money that they earn and they should decide how and where to spend it.

This government will not slash health care funding like the Liberals did. Passing the burden on to Canadians just is not responsible. Instead, we have a plan to balance the budget that is responsible. I have already mentioned that the stimulus spending was temporary, so the first step is to start at home.

We are freezing the salaries of members of Parliament and ministers because it is not right to give raises to politicians when we are making cuts elsewhere.

Then we are going to cut the extra boards of directors, commissioners and other appointed positions that crop up around governments. There are hundreds of them and many are not delivering any value to taxpayers. The budget will start with 245 positions, and I hope we will find more. We will take a long hard look for the loopholes and pointless spending. This means actually taking time and effort to go through the books.

As Conservatives, we are very aware that even when governments are well meaning, a lot of the time they end up wasting money. One example of this is the medical tax credit. It is an important program, but for some reason it also gives tax breaks for Botox and teeth whitening. Now maybe some people feel that facelifts are a human right, but I am pretty sure Canadians do not want to spend millions of dollars subsidizing Botox treatments. We are going to stop it. There are more of these frivolous money wasters and loopholes and we are going to find them and eliminate them.

Finally, we are putting a cap on spending. Department operational budgets, salaries, programs and overhead, is going to be held steady. This is much more important than it seems at first glance. After all, we have a tendency to think that our own projects are the most important, that they should be bigger and deserve more funding. It is just human nature. However, the end result is that it is very hard to stop government spending from rising. My colleagues on the Liberal side, who have been in government, understand this very well.

Our solution is that if government departments want to spend more on programs, they have to find savings elsewhere in cutting their overhead, in becoming more efficient. To spend more in one area, departments will have to save somewhere else. We have a very dedicated and talented civil service and I am confident it will find ways to deliver programs for less now that we are setting up a system that encourages saving money rather than spending more. This is a responsible approach to cutting the deficit without slashing transfers to provinces, which would affect health care, seniors and education.

During my extensive consultations over the past few months, I have met with chambers in both of my communities, small businesses and constituents to hear their thoughts. Throughout my

conversations, the same themes emerged. Creating jobs and proposing a responsible plan to deal with the deficit were most important to my constituents. This is why Canadians support the budget. I encourage my colleagues on the other side of the House to also support this budget.

●(1220)

**Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the hon. mentioned in his speech that his government was not a tax and spend government, yet his government has increased payroll taxes and run a \$56 billion deficit. It will also increase spending on the building of prisons.

How does the hon. member reconcile those facts with his statements?

**Mr. Tim Uppal:** Madam Speaker, this global economic crisis hit the entire world. As I said, it also affected Canada, but not as much as other countries because the Conservative government paid down our debt and came in with strong balanced budgets. However, it is important to spend in times of crisis or in times of global economic recession. We created jobs and invested into our infrastructure, which is helping the economy all across Canada. That is the responsible thing to do. We have cut taxes. We brought the GST down. We have cut personal taxes. Being a responsible government, we have to spend when the time is right and save money when the time is right.

**Ms. Megan Leslie (Halifax, NDP):** Madam Speaker, the Speech from the Throne talked about Canada becoming “a leader in green job creation”, but unfortunately the budget does not walk that talk.

I was reading a budget analysis by the Pembina Institute. It talks about China, where 1.12 million people work in the renewable energy sector and more than 100,000 new jobs are added every year in this sector.

Right now the Conference Board of Canada says that Canada ranks 14th out of 17 countries for innovation.

The U.S. set aside \$98 billion for environmental and sustainable energy projects in the last budget. It outspends Canada 14 to 1.

What is the excuse this time for the fact that Canada is lagging desperately behind when it comes to green technologies?

**Mr. Tim Uppal:** Madam Speaker, it is very important to invest in science and technology and the environment, and the government is doing that.

In my province and in Edmonton we are investing in the National Research Council's regional innovation structures on nanotechnology. We are investing in the high Arctic research station. There is additional funding for colleges and communities programs and the National Research Council's innovation clusters. We are putting over \$400 million into Canada's Space Agency.

*The Budget*

We are investing in the jobs of the future and those will include green jobs as well. We have invested a great deal in carbon capture and storage.

The investments we have put into my riding of Edmonton—Sherwood Park, in the area of Fort Saskatchewan, are helping the residents and are increasing the number of jobs.

• (1225)

**Mr. John Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, CPC):** Madam Speaker, the speech by my colleague from Edmonton—Sherwood Park was excellent. I heard three themes: first, continue stimulus to get us out of the recession; second, move toward deficit reduction; and third, Canada and the international world.

Canada is way below our companion countries in the industrialized world in terms of debt to the GDP ratio. It is something like one-half of the Americans and perhaps even less vis-à-vis the U.K.

We have moved toward the lowest corporate tax structure in the G7. We have continued to cut personal taxes. This is all in the year of the Olympics and the Paralympics when the world's eyes are on us.

How would my colleague respond to our role in terms of attracting investment in business and making Canada continue to be the best place on earth?

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie):** The member has 30 seconds to respond.

**Mr. Tim Uppal:** Madam Speaker, that is a tough one to sum up in 30 seconds, but my colleague talked about the elimination of the tariffs. It is expected to create over 12,000 jobs in the manufacturing industry.

Having Canada as one of the number one countries in the world to invest in, because of what the Conservative government is doing, is going to help Canadians across the country by creating jobs and increasing the investment into Canada. It is good government and it will help the economy.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Robert Carrier (Alfred-Pellan, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Chambly—Borduas.

I would like to take this time to share with the House my comments on the budget brought down by the Conservative government.

During the prorogation imposed by the government at the end of 2009, I had the chance to take part in the Bloc Québécois' prebudget consultation tour of the various regions of Quebec with my colleague from Hochelaga, who is also the Bloc finance critic.

Quebeckers were very happy to see us and share their needs and expectations with regard to a budget they dreaded. They often told us that other political parties did not visit their region. The Bloc's closeness to Quebeckers is a key reason why the Bloc has always enjoyed the support of the majority of voters in Quebec.

Whether we are talking about forestry, aerospace, the environment or culture, Quebeckers' priorities, as expressed during our tour, are completely ignored in this budget.

By bringing down such an empty budget, the Conservative government is showing us once again that federalism simply does not benefit Quebec.

Once again, the Conservatives are missing an opportunity to properly address Quebec's economic, social, environmental and financial needs.

They have shown once again that, as far as Canada is concerned, it is as though Quebec does not exist. The Conservative government is continuing to follow the course set by its 2006 economic statement, which established policies geared to the needs of Ontario and Alberta to the detriment of the very pressing needs of Quebec.

Despite all the wonderful Conservative promises in 2006 of a new openness towards Quebec, there is nothing in the new Conservative budget to address the needs of Quebec's economy.

Like the Quebec Forest Industry Council, the Bloc Québécois is calling for loans and loan guarantees, such as those made available by Investissement Québec, an agency of the Quebec government.

Furthermore, a comprehensive policy to support and modernize the forestry industry is needed. For example—as shown so clearly in the budget where the figures are set out side-by-side—the automotive sector, which is concentrated in Ontario, has received \$9.7 billion over the past two years whereas the forestry industry, which is so important to Quebec, received only \$170 million for the whole country.

Investment in Ontario was 57 times greater. After the government invested so much money to save jobs in Ontario, which was legitimate, forestry workers would have expected that protecting the forestry industry and its jobs would be given consideration in this budget.

In another area, in response to the budget, the Front d'action populaire en réaménagement urbain, the FRAPRU, a well-known community organization in Quebec, accused the government of creating a deficit at the expense of the poor. In fact, fighting the deficit will affect the most disadvantaged in society: those living without proper housing, the homeless and individuals and families living in poverty. During our consultation tour, people inevitably talked about the lack of social housing.

In Montreal alone, more than 23,000 households are waiting for affordable housing. In the province of Quebec, there are 35,000 households on the waiting list.

Although construction of social housing for seniors and the disabled is required because it was already in the government's action plan, the current budget does not propose to construct social housing for the poorest families. That would be housing with more than two or three bedrooms, which it makes sense to build for our society.

• (1230)

People from across Quebec also pointed out many flaws in the EI system. My colleague from Chambly—Borduas will surely expand on this later.



*The Budget*

In any case, the budget does not propose any measures for unemployed workers, except for an extension of the work sharing program. This is not a new measure, since it was announced in the last budget.

There is no mention of the reforms needed in order to improve accessibility. It must be repeated over and over that less than 50% of workers have access to employment insurance. That is why a major overhaul is so important, although it has yet to be included in a budget.

Although the budget will lift the freeze that had been placed on premium rates, this will not improve the system.

What is most appalling about all of this is the fact that the government plans to pilfer a total of \$19 billion from the EI fund between 2011 and 2015. Those figures are written in black and white in the budget. That money will be taken directly from the workers. Instead of helping workers improve their situation, the Conservatives are going to take more money from them.

Now what about our seniors who are living in poverty? The guaranteed income supplement paid to the most disadvantaged is keeping them below the poverty line. In addition, over 40,000 people in Quebec are still not receiving it, because they do not know it exists or because they cannot understand and complete the application form.

On June 4, 2008, Bill C-490, which I had the honour to introduce, passed second reading in the House after being supported by a majority of members, with the exception of the Conservatives. I find that shameful.

The government put an end to the bill when it called an election in September 2008, thereby preventing the bill's passage.

The bill proposed automatic registration for the guaranteed income supplement—since the government has access to people's income, and an additional \$110 a month just to help them reach the low-income cutoff, which used to be called the poverty line, as well as full retroactivity for seniors who have been shortchanged and realized it when they finally applied. At present, retroactivity is limited to 11 months. The bill proposed full retroactivity, since that money was owed to them.

Now that the worst of this crisis is behind us, we could have expected the government to use this budget to correct the situation by helping people who are relatively poor and allowing our seniors to live in dignity.

I say dignity because that is the word seniors used when they spoke to us during the guaranteed income supplement consultation tour we went on when we introduced the bill. These people are not looking for charity. They just want to live in a dignified way.

Unfortunately, despite all the steps often taken by the Bloc Québécois, our seniors will again have to settle for their government's lack of consideration because there is nothing for them in this budget.

I would now like to reiterate that Quebec is the only province to have harmonized its sales tax and not receive compensation for it. The Atlantic provinces are receiving a \$1 billion compensation over

four years, Ontario will receive \$4.3 billion and British Columbia will receive \$1.6 billion.

It is very complicated for Quebec. The government has been saying for a year that it is in talks with Quebec to finalize compensation for harmonizing the tax, which has been applied in that province for 18 years now.

Quebec assessed the cost at \$2.2 billion and it said officially that it needed that money in order to prepare its budget in the coming weeks. It is inconceivable that the current budget is not correcting this injustice, which has been dragging on for so many years.

Unless there are major changes, it is clear that the Bloc Québécois will vote against this budget.

• (1235)

[*English*]

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am particularly pleased that the member took the time to talk about seniors and the difficulties that they are facing.

They have come through a low interest rate scenario where the return on their retirement nest egg has been very small. They are probably living off their capital now. The demands on the health care system are rising. The demands on our social services are rising. Their pensions have been at risk and have been damaged by decisions of the government.

This seems to be an issue of the government feeling that all we have is a fiscal deficit and it has focused on that. It has not focused on the social deficit. It is almost like a tsunami where the earthquake was the global economic recession but the wave yet to come is going to be the impact on people.

I want to thank the member for raising the plight of seniors. There are some major matters coming forward, certainly with the aging society issues such as mental health problems, Alzheimer's and the like, dementia. These are serious problems that government is going to ignore at a time when it should be planning to provide the support and services that our seniors need.

I wonder if the member would like to comment.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Robert Carrier:** Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my Liberal Party colleague for his question and for bringing up the subject. This subject is very important to me; I introduced a bill about it.

Right now, the government's problem is that it is obviously looking for sources of cash to try to eliminate the deficit. The Bloc Québécois is well aware of the problem, but solving it at the expense of the poorest members of society is not the right thing to do. We suggest that those in the highest tax bracket—those earning over \$150,000—pay an additional 2% to cover the government's revenue shortfall. Everyone will agree that this is a logical solution: people with high incomes ranging from \$150,000 to \$200,000 and up can kick in a little extra to help cover the government's shortfall. The government cannot keep low-income earners in poverty while it allows the rich to go on living large.

*The Budget*

[English]

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I want to note that just yesterday one of his colleagues spoke about the whole area of nuclear power development. I note in the budget that \$126 million is being put aside for nuclear research.

We in Manitoba have a vast supply, as Quebec does, of hydroelectric power, and only half of it has been developed at this point. Even the minister of democratic reform has been on record trying to encourage his own government to develop an east-west power grid. So rather than selling all of our electrical power in Manitoba to the American market, we would be able to share that power with Saskatchewan, Alberta, and B.C., and we would be able to send the power east into Ontario so that it may not have to develop the nuclear power plants that it is suggesting will be developed in Ontario.

We know that nuclear waste is certainly going to be a big problem. We know that it is going to be almost impossible to get approvals because at the end of the day no citizen in this country will want to have a nuclear plant anywhere near where they live.

Why does the government think it is somehow going to solve the problem by developing nuclear plants when it already knows in advance that the road is going to be a rough one to get approvals and to deal with the waste issue? All it has to do is start building an east-west power grid, something that its own minister of democratic reform has been supporting and cannot convince the government to do.

• (1240)

[Translation]

**Mr. Robert Carrier:** Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for his very specific question.

Nuclear power does raise a lot of issues, particularly with respect to radioactive waste. Atomic energy is not actually that clean. There are a lot of doubts surrounding this plan. The government could choose to support many other forms of green energy instead of nuclear, which could end up causing us a lot of problems in the long term.

**Mr. Yves Lessard (Chambly—Borduas, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I would like to begin by congratulating my colleague from Alfred-Pellan on his speech. I also want to say how pleased we are to see him in good health. We certainly need a member of his calibre to keep standing up for Quebec's interests and for people who have taken hit after hit, as we have discussed repeatedly. Society needs people like him. I would also like to acknowledge my colleague from Hochelaga, the finance critic. I believe that he is doing an extraordinary job.

The Bloc Québécois is against this budget. There can be no doubt that it is an unacceptable budget. We will only be able to support this budget if the House passes the Bloc Québécois' proposed amendment. Our amendment would remove all of the elements that constitute an attack on Quebec's sovereign rights with respect to a number of tools, including its securities commission.

After hearing the budget, I was asked to sum it up in one word. I immediately replied, "conservative". If I had to answer that question today, I would say "reformist".

This budget is conservative or reformist because it is based on a government strategy to take away social tools such as the social safety net. That would later enable the government to justify the measures it wants to put in place. But they have shown virtually no restraint when it comes to helping the military and oil industries.

I remind members that the government first gave away one of its tools when it lowered the GST by 2%. For more than a year now, it has frozen EI premiums at \$1.73, when we know very well that that is not enough to fulfill the obligations of that system. Members will also remember that nearly \$60 billion was removed from this fund and spent elsewhere. Even worse, this government, just like the Liberal government before it, is prepared to divert another \$19 billion from employment insurance by 2014.

It has also abolished measures that supported women's groups, in particular, one of the essential measures to achieve pay equity in the public service or in any federally-regulated workplace: the ability to take legal action to achieve pay equity. It is unbelievable. With the support of the Liberals, the Conservatives managed to do it. Worse yet, they forbid unions from going to court to represent these working women, threatening them with fines of up to \$50,000 a day. That is unbelievable. This country defends these rights when we send our young soldiers to fight in other countries. Here, these rights, rights that were the result of a long struggle, are being taken away from female workers.

I am saying this because I think the government's offensive against women is shameful. Once again, women are standing up and asking us to walk with them and for them. This past Sunday, March 7, I attended an event, the beginning of a worldwide march, in my riding. This march will culminate in the Republic of Congo on October 18. A number of marches are planned in Quebec and Canada between now and then.

• (1245)

The women presented me and my colleague from the National Assembly, Mr. Curzi, with beautiful decorative bouquets of shoes, as a symbol of the march and a reminder of the situation facing women, regardless of their social situation. From sandals, which are often worn by the poorest women, to work boots, running shoes and moccasins, all kinds of shoes were represented in order to symbolize women's various situations.

The rules of the House prohibit me from showing the bouquet here today, but I nevertheless kept a moccasin with me, since the rights of aboriginal women are among the most often ignored. Yet aboriginal communities are under federal jurisdiction. It is the only segment of the population to which the federal government has a fiduciary responsibility. However, the federal government has been failing miserably in that regard.

*The Budget*

We must once again allow these women the recourse to go before the courts and exercise their right to equality. We must also ensure that funding for literacy programs is restored. All these measures, like social housing, affect women most of all. When there is not enough housing, women and children are most likely to be affected. Of course it affects the entire family, but it affects women more directly.

As my colleague was saying earlier, the unemployed have been neglected in this budget. It is unbelievable. In Canada, even when we get a new government it is more of the same. They are so similar that, when it comes to attacking women's rights, the Liberals vote with the Conservatives. When it comes time to vote against the rights of the unemployed, the Liberals vote with the Conservatives. In earlier times, it was the Conservatives who voted with the Liberals when they were slashing the employment insurance programs.

On the department's site, the government acknowledges that only 46% of people who are not working can hope to receive employment insurance benefits. Of that group, only 33% are women. Discrimination exists even there. In the meantime, injustice exists for everyone. In normal circumstances, almost 88% of the unemployed should expect to benefit from employment insurance.

In closing, I will quickly address the issue of seniors. It is outrageous. As I was saying at the beginning of my speech, the government has shown no restraint in granting funding to the war industry and the nuclear industry. There is no holding back. We see astronomical funds allocated to those sectors. We see to what extent this government is attacking the rights of the unemployed, women and seniors.

This government still owes seniors \$3.2 billion in guaranteed income supplement payments. The most appalling thing is that the government is hoping that as many as possible of those seniors—because it knows who it owes that money to—will die, so that it can shirk this responsibility.

Measures and bills have been introduced to overhaul the employment insurance system with respect to the number of hours, weeks of benefits and level of benefits. The same should be true for seniors. Their pensions need to be improved and the flagrant injustice surrounding the guaranteed income supplement needs to be corrected.

• (1250)

[English]

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the hon. member for Chambly—Borduas is a very good member of Parliament and is always thoughtful in his comments. I appreciate what he brings to the House. He has demonstrated what many have said today in the debate on the budget, that the budget should not simply address the fiscal deficit, that there is a social deficit and there are implications.

The last time Canada had a recession, three things happened. First, there was an increase in the property crime rate. Second, there was an increase in the demands on the health care system. Third, there was an increase in the demand on social services, particularly for women and seniors.

I agree wholeheartedly with the hon. member with regard to women's issues, whether they be pay equity, court challenges, or equal opportunity. He laid out a sound view that we need to address Canada's aging society as there are significant consequences. He also talked about jobs and the importance of EI. He mentioned the increase in premiums, some \$19 billion over the next five years.

The fact is that over the next couple of years, the EI benefits for 500,000 Canadians are going to lapse; they will be done and then we will have a problem. On top of that, the unemployment rate is going from 8.2% to 8.5% in the coming year. These are social deficits that we must address.

I want to give the hon. member an opportunity to add a few more comments regarding those arguments.

[Translation]

**Mr. Yves Lessard:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague, who always has something very appropriate to say.

His comments remind us that only employees and employers pay into employment insurance and that there was enough money to make all the changes and improvements that should have been made. The surplus was built up on the backs of people who lost their jobs and on the backs of their families and the regions concerned.

How can the system be fixed now? Simply by using EI contributions for the purposes for which they were intended. Next year, the government is going to start increasing premiums again, which will create the surplus he mentioned, but that is where they must be used.

If I have another 30 seconds, I will finish by saying that what is shameful in all this is that in order to fill the holes in the social safety net, the government is relying on the social solidarity net, which is made up of community groups whose funding it is also cutting. To add to the irony, the government is giving them a day of celebration, but it is not giving them any money to celebrate. It is the same thing for seniors. There is no money for them, but they are getting a day—

• (1255)

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie):** The hon. member for Edmonton—Strathcona.

[English]

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I would like to direct the hon. member's attention to the \$126 million that the Conservatives have put in the budget for nuclear research, and their signal that they are going to promote and develop nuclear plants in Ontario and Saskatchewan.

*The Budget*

Nine of the fourteen members from Manitoba are in the Conservative caucus. One of the Conservative members, the Minister of State for Democratic Reform, has been on record now for two or three years as supporting an east-west power grid so that Manitoba hydro power can be developed. Manitoba has only developed half of its power. Rather than sending all the power that it currently does to the United States, in the future Manitoba could send power to Saskatchewan and Ontario to help with Canada's energy problems.

I would like to ask the member, why does he think the Manitoba Conservative caucus has not had much of an effect in convincing the government to develop that east-west power grid?

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Yves Lessard:** Madam Speaker, they have not been successful probably because they suffer from the same weakness as the Quebec Conservatives. I do not know what they are up to.

Quebec does not want nuclear power, but the government is promoting it. Where were the members from Quebec? It is just like the situation in the member's province. Who is leading? It may be the Prime Minister, but who is leading the Prime Minister? Good question. This government has made political choices to develop the war industry, the oil industry, and we could add the nuclear industry. But Quebec is not in favour of developing the war industry and the nuclear industry.

[*English*]

**Mrs. Kelly Block (Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I will be sharing my time with my colleague, the member for Saint John.

I will take this opportunity to thank the House for this chance to speak in support of budget 2010 and year two of Canada's economic action plan.

I also want to thank the chair of finance committee, as well as the other government members with whom I have the privilege to serve, who worked so diligently in preparation for budget 2010.

As a new member of the finance committee, I appreciate the many hours spent in prebudget consultations. In just two and a half short months, our committee logged over 70 meetings and met with over 400 organizations, universities, professional associations, industry and business leaders, and financial institutions in preparation for budget 2010.

We did not stop there. Once our report was tabled, we returned home to our ridings where we have been busy listening to Canadians across the country to help shape this budget.

While in my riding and travelling across the country over the past months, I have heard from many residents. I have also received a huge amount of feedback as a result of a survey I sent to the residents of Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar regarding what they would like to see in this budget. The response was overwhelming. I am proud to report that many issues raised by the residents of my riding are addressed in this budget.

After hearing stories from Canadians all across the riding of Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar, there was a common theme that

became glaringly obvious: people want the economy to be this government's number one focus.

While this means different things to different people, common among all concerns was the need for Parliament to prioritize the protection and creation of jobs in the short term and to focus on building a competitive framework for long term economic success.

We need to ensure Canada will attract investment from abroad and inspire the confidence and entrepreneurialism from within to ensure Canada continues to be the best place in the world to work, live and raise a family. That is exactly what budget 2010 will do.

The success of the first year of Canada's economic action plan has been felt throughout the country. Through no fault of our own, Canada entered the most severe economic recession since the Great Depression of the 1930s. Canada's economic action plan has helped to stimulate our economy through these difficult times and, at the same time, prepared us for the economy of tomorrow by ensuring we have the economic and fiscal advantage.

Some in the opposition imply that Canada's workers are lazy, or others that the economic action plan this government put in place is not working. I refer them to the recent Statistics Canada report that announced our economy grew 5% in the fourth quarter of 2009, the strongest quarterly rate of economic growth in approximately a decade.

This growth is also right on the heels of global economic uncertainty, proof positive that this government's quick actions and response were effective, well-measured and appropriate. That is something all Canadians can share and be proud of.

Budget 2010 continues to build on almost four years of continued tax relief for Canadians. We are providing personal income tax relief of \$3.2 billion through adjustments to federal tax brackets, enhancing the working income tax benefit, higher child benefits for parents and lower taxes for low and middle income seniors.

This is on top of our Conservative government's initiatives, such as the tax free savings account, the public transit tax credit; the children's fitness tax credit, the disability savings program, the universal child care benefit, pension income splitting, the first time homebuyers tax credit, apprenticeship job creation tax credit, the tradesperson deduction for tools, working income tax benefit, the Canada employment amount meal exemptions for long haul truckers and the textbook tax credit for students. All of these helped Canadians pay less tax.

In budget 2010, we are taking steps to support a strong and competitive Canadian livestock industry. We are opening new markets for agricultural products so that we can sell what we grow. In last year's budget, Canada's economic action plan committed \$550 million to help the agricultural sector deal with global economic pressures. We strengthened Canada's slaughterhouse capacity and have been working on improving our competitiveness.

*The Budget*

In this year's budget, we are building on those successes by investing \$75 million in the agri-flexibility fund, ensuring cattle producers continue to have access to competitive processing operations in Canada.

• (1300)

This is good news for my riding. We will be investing \$10 million in the slaughter improvement program which will introduce new, cost effective technologies. We will be investing \$25 million in processing plants that handle cattle over 30 months of age and another \$40 million to support the development and commercialization of innovative technology that will help with the removal and use of specified risk materials, reducing handling costs and creating potential revenue resources from these materials.

Just yesterday, the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities had this to say about budget 2010:

SARM has always taken the position that Canadian cattle producers must have a level playing field compared to their American counterparts. We are pleased that the government has recognized this problem and is addressing it.

Over the next two years, we will also be investing \$51.7 million in the Canadian Grain Commission. We remain committed to bringing the Canadian Grain Act up to date and ensuring the Canadian Grain Commission evolves to the needs of the sector.

Canada is, without a doubt, the best country in the world to live but it did not become this way overnight. We owe a debt of gratitude to the generations who built this country to be the great place that it is. Our government knows that seniors deserve respect and dignity. Since 2006, our Conservative government has been working hard to improve financial security for seniors. We brought in income splitting for seniors. We increased the age limit for converting RRSPs to RRFs to 71. We have increased the age credit amount twice. We have doubled the pension income credit to \$2,000. We have provided seniors with a tax-free way to save with a tax-free savings account. Withdrawals from the tax-free savings account will not affect government benefits, such as old age security or the guaranteed income supplement.

We have started strong and, in budget 2010, we are building on our accomplishments for seniors. This year, Canada's economic action plan will be investing \$10 million in New Horizons. This program has been a fantastic help in my own riding of Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar and will continue to be so as it provides spaces for seniors to gather, promote volunteering in communities and help to combat the financial abuse of seniors.

Over the past year, we have been consulting with Canadians about larger reforms to Canada's pension and retirement systems. This month we will launch public consultations on how to improve Canada's retirement income system and we will continue to work with our provincial partners that regulate roughly 90% of pensions in Canada to ensure that Canadians can retire with peace of mind.

Since the launch of Canada's economic action plan, our objectives have been absolutely clear: help families, save jobs and stabilize our economy. Let me be clear that we are on track. Canada has weathered the storm better than all other major industrialized countries.

Our government listened and now, in this budget, we are delivering. We know that Canadians, the hard-working men and women of this country, are the people who make this country great. The people who put their trust in Parliament deserve to be honoured by having their tax dollars spent on programs and initiatives that are run effectively and efficiently.

I call on all members of the House to pass this budget for all Canadians.

• (1305)

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, it is always good to hear from my good friend from Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar.

The member mentioned seniors on a couple of occasions. I was very glad to hear that. She also used the words, "seniors should be able to live in dignity and respect". That would tend to indicate that somehow we are talking about those seniors who have some difficulty in meeting their financial requirements and obligations for their own personal health and well-being.

The program the member mentioned, the provision allowing seniors to split their pension income, I would like to advise the member of a recent study that was done that shows how 75% of seniors do not have pensions to split. If we take out of those who do have pensions, those who have no partner, and we take out those who are already at the lowest marginal rate, only 14.2% of seniors can actually benefit from this program and it is only the highest income earning seniors in Canada.

I hope she will take that back to the finance committee and maybe find out how we can help real seniors in need to live in dignity and with respect.

**Mrs. Kelly Block:** Madam Speaker, while that is an interesting question, I want to go back to what we heard from Canadians as we crossed the country in our pre-budget consultations and what I heard when I was in my riding.

What I heard from all Canadians as our government held hundreds of consultations is that they remain concerned about jobs and the economy. Budget 2010 is a jobs and growth budget that continues to see our economic action plan completed by delivering \$19 billion in new federal stimulus in 2010. Without a strong economy, we will not be able to provide for all of the other programs that we are able to. We are taking additional steps to protect existing jobs—

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie):** I try to allow equal time for the question and the answer.

The hon. member for Halifax.

**Ms. Megan Leslie (Halifax, NDP):** Madam Speaker, it is interesting that the Conservative government came forward with an innovation and productivity agenda. It is a bit rich considering that the government recently let Nortel collapse, a company that did the bulk of R and D in the private sector in this country and actually made Canada a leader in telecommunications.

*The Budget*

Now that Nortel will potentially declare bankruptcy under the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act, I would love to hear if the member would be willing to support our Nortel bill, which would solve this problem, put pensioners ahead of the line when it comes to a company that has declared bankruptcy and ensure their pensions are protected.

• (1310)

**Mrs. Kelly Block:** Madam Speaker, we have consulted with Canadians across this great country and what we heard is that they want their government to continue to focus on the economy and to create jobs. Our new budget is about jobs and growth.

Over the long term, balancing the budget is essential to economic growth and job creation, which is why we will implement a clear three-point plan to return to a balanced budget. First, we will follow through with the exit strategy built into the economic action plan. Second, we will take action to ensure that government lives within its means. Third, we will conduct a comprehensive review of government administrative functions and overhead costs.

Our government intends to be a partner in our economic recovery, not an obstacle to growth.

**Mr. Merv Tweed (Brandon—Souris, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I appreciate the comments the member has made. There is a real contrast between what the government is saying and what the opposition is saying on this budget. Many of them are talking about raising Canadians' taxes and spending more money.

I would ask the member for Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar to tell us what the differences are between the government of today and the Liberal Party of tomorrow.

**Mrs. Kelly Block:** Madam Speaker, our Conservative government believes that the private sector, not the public sector, should be the primary source of jobs and economic growth. Everyday Canadians depend on healthy businesses for their jobs, which is why we are proposing to make Canada a tariff-free zone for manufacturers, an initiative—

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie):** Resuming debate. The hon. member for Saint John.

**Mr. Rodney Weston (Saint John, CPC):** Madam Speaker, it is a great pleasure to rise in the House today to congratulate the Minister of Finance for the fine job he has done in balancing the needs of Canadians during this time of global economic recovery with the long-term financial security of Canada.

The second phase of our government's economic action plan sets out a real and achievable plan to solidify Canada's economic recovery. By investing in key stimulus projects, which deliver the necessary infrastructure to our communities, our budget is enabling economic growth and creating jobs for today and tomorrow.

Canada is on track to recover faster than the rest of the world and in better financial condition, with its manageable debt levels and a workforce that is better prepared. Our Conservative government is leading the way in the global economic recovery and our government's insight and understanding of what makes our economy work will be recognized in the future as we move ahead of all other countries.

Canadians have a record of which they can be proud. We have the lowest debt to GDP ratio in the G8. Canada's decline in the real GDP was virtually the smallest of all G8 countries. Our Canadian labour markets have fared much better than that of the U.S., where job losses are proportionally three times larger than Canada's. Canada's banks and other financial institutions were better capitalized and less leveraged than their international peers and we are widely acknowledged as having the soundest banking system in the world. Canada's housing market has not seen the excesses that have caused instability and housing bubbles in other jurisdictions.

Our government has navigated Canadians through the worst global recession since the depression. Now, looking to the future, Canadians are depending on our government to put forward a plan to address the challenges that communities are now facing as our economy begins to recover. That is exactly what the second phase of our economic action plan sets out to do.

Phase two will help solidify Canada's economic recovery by implementing \$19 billion in new stimulus funding to create jobs now. It includes personal income tax relief of \$3.2 billion, retraining and worker support of over \$4 billion, infrastructure funding of \$7.7 billion, research and development funding of over \$1.9 billion and targeted support to industries and communities of \$2.2 billion. Canadians will respond. We will lead the world in our recovery because our government has targeted resources to jobs now and for the future.

The budget creates and protects jobs. It sustains Canada's economic advantage and lays a strong foundation for the future by supporting workers. We are investing \$100 million to extend the maximum length for work-sharing agreements. We are helping younger workers by offering over \$100 million in support to young workers through internship and skills development to help them find jobs.

We are investing in research and development. We are delivering over \$600 million to help develop and attract high-quality jobs, to strengthen our capacity for world leading research and development and to improve the commercialization of research.

We are working with the manufacturing sector, making Canada a tariff-free zone for manufacturing inputs to boost new investment in job creation. We are supporting businesses by establishing a red tape reduction panel to reduce the paperwork for businesses.

The budget did not leave any part of the country out. Our Conservative government's ongoing commitment to strengthen all regions of the country is apparent in our economic action plan.

*The Budget*

While the Liberals starved the provinces and municipalities of the much needed support during their time in office, our Conservative government has increased transfers to provinces. In New Brunswick alone, we are seeing \$1.6 billion through equalization, an increase of \$233 million since 2005-06, \$580 million through the Canada health transfer, an increase of \$23 million from last year alone, and \$246 million in social transfers, an increase of \$34 million over 2005-06.

On behalf of all New Brunswickers, we are pleased. We will continue to receive increased federal support through budget 2010. Total transfers will hit \$2.7 billion, an increase of \$591 million under the old Liberal government. This long-term support will help ensure that New Brunswick has the resources to provide essential public services, such as health care, post-secondary education and many other social services.

New Brunswick has been well served by this budget and will receive many other benefits from it. Local communities and businesses in New Brunswick will benefit from the \$28 million provided to support the operations of ferry services in Atlantic Canada, including the route between Saint John, New Brunswick and Digby, Nova Scotia.

• (1315)

Communities and businesses in New Brunswick will benefit from the \$19 million per year in ongoing funding for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency to support regional growth and innovation through the Atlantic innovation fund and the innovative communities fund, allowing people to earn more income before paying federal income taxes and before being subjected to higher income tax rates. We are working on enhancing the working income tax benefit, which reduces the welfare wall, by making work pay better for many low income Canadians and higher child care benefits for parents and lower taxes for low and middle-income seniors.

There are \$32 million per year for federal research granting councils to support advanced research and improve commercialization, \$8 million per year to support the indirect costs of federally sponsored research at post-secondary institutions, \$15 million a year to double the budget of the college and community innovation program, which fosters research collaborations between businesses and college researchers and the creation of the new Canada post-doctoral fellowship program to help attract the best researchers to Canada.

Forestry companies in New Brunswick could be eligible for the next generation renewable power initiative, which will invest \$100 million over the next four years to support the development, commercialization and implementation of advanced clean energy technologies for the forestry sector.

New Brunswick will also receive \$12 million as its share of the community development trust and the police officers recruitment fund and \$11 million for labour market training as part of the commitment of \$500 million a year in new funding to provinces and territories, beginning in 2008-09.

Our government has held true to its commitment of stimulating economic growth and creating and protecting jobs and this is continued in the second phase of our economic action plan.

The budget also sets out to meet another commitment, reducing the deficit. Our government is planning for the future by initiating the three point plan to reduce the deficit once the economy recovers.

The government will undertake a comprehensive review of government administrative functions and overhead costs by winding down extraordinary stimulus spending in Canada's economic action plan on time and as scheduled, restraining government spending through targeted measures and launching a comprehensive review of government spending on administration and overhead.

Canada cannot afford a tax and spend approach to managing government. I am proud to be a member of a governing party that keeps its commitment to fund key projects required by all regions of our country, while planning for the future with job creation and sound financial controls. This budget shows Canadians that we can be the best, that we can manage without mortgaging the future.

The extensive consultations of the Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance across Canada have proven to be beneficial, with a focused advantageous budget that will help our provinces, municipalities, businesses and, more important, our people. I am very pleased that the Prime Minister chose to come to my riding to gain insight into what Canadians were thinking in preparing the budget and we see a lot of that message reflected in this document.

I am thankful for this opportunity to speak on a budget that will see our country so well positioned for the future.

• (1320)

**Hon. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I listened to the member for Saint John, New Brunswick say how proud he was. I think the people of New Brunswick had better understand. With previous Liberal governments, the money was spent on innovation and development. When the Conservatives came to power, they cancelled that. It was not borrowed money. The member talked about all the wonderful numbers. People should understand that this is the biggest deficit in Canadian history after the previous budget, which was the biggest spending budget in Canadian history. The money the member talks about is borrowed from our children and grandchildren.

The Minister of Finance's prediction is not even living in the land of reality in terms of it going to be paid back by growth. The money the member talks about has not been put out in a responsible way because it has been borrowed from our children and our grandchildren.

*The Budget*

However, I have a specific question for the member. The government has talked for a long time about the Atlantic gateway. Funds were to be put in place to build key infrastructure for the movement of goods in and out of Canada, which would involve all three maritime provinces. Where is the money? The advisory committee tells us there are no funds in place for the Atlantic gateway. Is it another broken promise? Why is that money not in this budget?

**Mr. Rodney Weston:** Madam Speaker, I rather enjoyed the lecture from the member for Malpeque.

The member for Malpeque spoke a lot about borrowed money. He should know very well about borrowed money. When he talked about the surpluses of his government, that was borrowed money all right. It was borrowed from the health care of Canadians. It was borrowed from the education plans of Canadians. It was borrowed from the provinces and the seniors.

The audacity of the member is unbelievable, to stand in the House and lecture our government. We are working with the provinces and the municipalities to fund the social needs of the provinces and the infrastructure needs of the municipalities. For the member to stand in the House and lecture us is unreal and unbelievable.

The member asked about the Atlantic gateway. I can speak to the Atlantic gateway from a New Brunswick context. We have seen many examples of increasing the benefits of the Atlantic gateway.

It was not all that long ago that the Prime Minister was in New Brunswick and we opened the third border crossing, a new border crossing between St. Stephen and Calais. I was pleased to be at that event. Yesterday the Government of New Brunswick announced a program for twinning the highway to that border crossing. These are great examples of the Atlantic gateway.

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Madam Speaker, 800,000 workers are on employment insurance and are about to run out of benefits. There are no jobs for these people to go to. The government says the economy is going to grow by 2.6% in 2010, but it has to do at least that. The working age population is growing at over 1% per year.

The budget's unemployment projection shows jobless rates increasing this year to 8.5% and falling very slowly after that, which is an admission that the job creation efforts have failed.

What were these corporate tax cuts that the members are talking about then, when in fact they are not going to show the results that the member is suggesting?

• (1325)

**Mr. Rodney Weston:** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to stand in response to the question from the member opposite. If we are going to move the country forward, we have to realize the position we are in. We are dealing with a difficult economic recession. It is the worst of its kind since the Great Depression.

Canadians have faith that our government is moving in the right direction. We have put in place the key stimulus funding programs that will help to keep Canadians working. The projects that we have funded have been well grasped by provinces, municipalities and by businesses alike.

We have been funding research and development and job creation. I spoke about the tariff-free zone that will help manufacturers create and maintain jobs. These all speak to what the member opposite was talking about.

**Mr. Scott Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the hon. member for Vancouver Centre.

It is indeed an honour for me to be standing here to talk on this particular issue. I want to talk about and put into perspective, certainly for my riding and also for the nation itself, the fact that over the past two years it has been a time of tumult, restraint and worry. Certainly, it has been a time of worry for people in an aging community like my riding.

The average age in my riding is above average. Thus seniors issues have come to the fore in many respects over the past while, not only the OAS and the guaranteed income supplement, but also pension security. Some of the issues I will touch upon in my speech will speak to the general nervousness, to use the best word I can come up with, over the past while.

My riding comprises 170 communities. That is a lot, and the largest is only 13,000 people. Thus here is a string of communities, where not only do people have to worry about their personal positions, but also about the position of their communities. In many cases, when larger industries shut down branches or smaller plants, a lot of these communities face extinction. It has been a struggle to diversify and reclaim a spot in the provincial economy and, certainly, in the national economy.

One example among many is Lewisporte Wholesalers. One of the problems we faced was skills training. There seems to be a lot of red tape around the idea of skills training. I am not particularly blaming any individual or any past party or government, whatever these may be, but I think this entire House and all politicians, provincial, federal and municipal, could make a concerted effort to adapt these particular situations so these communities and companies can contribute in the future.

It is about empowerment. In times like this we need to empower the people, no matter where they live. So when we talk about plans, budgets, the economic action plan part one or part two, we need to allow people to be empowered so that they can be trained and productive parts of society and masters of their own destiny.

Over the past while, we have seen circumstances change. Unbeknownst to many, the world economy took a large tumble that started in the United States with the housing market crisis and spread its way through places like Europe and around the world. Canada, being dependent on the United States for most of its trade, and now increasingly the European Union, finds itself in a position where it has to adapt to that international regime more than it ever has.



*The Budget*

Let me just return to my riding. This is a particular situation where we are well above average in many respects. Our quality of life is well above average; but, of course, I am biased here, as one of 308 members.

However, in this House we also talk about unemployment. The national unemployment rate hovers around the 8% mark, but in my riding the official number is now 24.9%. I say that again for emphasis: 24.9%. It is well above average.

In this particular situation, many people enjoy seasonal work, which is why we focused on the back end of the EI system when discussing changes to that system. By that, we meant the extension of weeks of eligibility for current recipients of EI. What this discussion did not address was the ability to claim EI benefits in the first place. Therefore, we have an issue that could have benefited my riding if it was addressed. Unfortunately, it did not, because we did not look at that.

I appreciate some of the smaller steps that have been taken when it comes self-employment, which I am sure my colleagues across the way will point out to me, and others as well. However, the missing element in EI reform was the front end of the system and the question of people being able to qualify for, particularly in my riding. With the unemployment rate at around 25%, one can get an idea of just how important that is.

● (1330)

There was one company that disappeared from my riding, and that was in the town of Grand Falls-Windsor. We had a situation where a 100-year-old mill closed. It closed its doors, was padlocked and was no more. Seven hundred direct jobs were involved, and if we include other tertiary activity, we were looking at well over 1,100 or 1,200 people involved in this particular cut.

What do we do? We need to diversify the economy. There were some smaller elements of diversification brought forward by the provincial government, as well as the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency. This particular budget did extend one of the programs, that is, the investment in the communities fund, but what I do not like about it is that there is no long-term commitment to how a community can adapt itself to that international regime; and therein lies what we should be looking at. That is why I put to the House that this budget lacks the vision it requires. It is a year over year, smaller investment that does not allow these people to plan.

For example, one of the industries that is about to take off in the Exploits Valley region where the mill went down is the cranberry industry. Apparently, unbeknownst to many people, Newfoundland is a good place for growing cranberries. With the higher demand for cranberry juice around the world, we have a way to diversify. However, here is the issue. For someone to put a solid investment into that, the problem is that the agencies such as ACOA that help them do not have the long-term commitment to funding, and that is what they need.

When we were in power, we believed in a five-year commitment to innovation money as well as communities money, because that was essential. In order for a community to survive, it must have that long-term agreement. Therefore, I would ask the government to reconsider and to look at ways of allowing a program that would

give people in my riding the chance to diversify in that longer range. One of the programs they had was the community assistance funding, which is a national program.

The other problem is that they did not allow ACOA to have its own program so that it could be the master of its own destiny. I say this because ACOA has the people on the ground who know the most about the players involved.

Let me move on from that particular policy announcement in the budget with regard to the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency. I cannot speak on behalf of other regional development agencies, but I am sure they fall similarly within the same boat.

Youth unemployment is the highest it has been for years. Here is something that occurred to me, which I hear a lot of it in the riding, and that is the connection between the skills of youth and the labour market that awaits these youth.

There is an emphasis on getting individuals skilled to the point where they do what they want to do. They want to be geologists, or they want to be technologists. There are colleges in my home town that deal with mining and a lot of the technical trades that are in high demand, and also from a university standpoint, especially doctors and nurses. However, when it comes to a lot of the jobs and to allowing a community to retain these young people, what is missing here is the ability of a company or industry to reach out to those who are able to work for them in that particular area. Mining has picked up dramatically in central Newfoundland, and with the new-found resources in gold, copper and zinc, there are people around this country right now who would love to move to my riding to work there, but we do not make an effort to bridge that gap.

Companies and industries such as Teck Resources, which owns Duck Pond Mine, need the federal government, along with the provincial government, to help them to find people to work for them.

Here is an example of what I am talking about. One of the things that we can propose is a skills inventory directory, which does not get talked about much. It would allow the local government offices to compile a list of people who are willing and certainly able to work. That is the vision thing. That is just not happening in this particular budget.

Finally, I want to touch upon pension security. Some people will say that the individual who has a secured pension is a secure person, and that is great; but there is another element of pension security that I put forward to this House. Pension security is a vanguard, the beginning of economic development. In a community of only 1,000 people but with 40% to 50% of its inhabitants on pensions, if pension security is not sustained, these people will either have to move to where they can get more work or move in with other family.

● (1335)

The pensioners of AbitibiBowater face a 25% decrease in the value of their pensions. The problem is that we have to make pensions secure so that people can stay in their smaller communities. Who is going to move a company into a small community if there are no people there to work in the industry? That is the vision thing.

I hope the House gives careful consideration to the vision thing in dealing with this budget.

*The Budget*

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I especially want to pay attention to the member's comments on the whole issue of pensions.

While the government promised to lead the charge to improve the pension system in this country, we have seen absolutely no movement in that regard so far. For example, we have known for some time that Nortel workers are suffering as a result of their pension deficiencies. At any time the government could have made changes to the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act. It could have taken the initiative and set up an insurance fund for pensions, because there has been a lot of discussion on that point. We recognize it is one of the answers to the problem.

We have to allow for alternative or supplementary pensions for workers. I believe the Province of Saskatchewan has had a program like that for a couple of years. Moreover, pensions themselves should perhaps be increased, and maybe even doubled.

This is the kind of vision that we need in the pension area and, clearly, it is not happening with the government. It seems the government has to be dragged kicking and screaming into any kind of progressive moves on the legislative front before it actually does things.

I would like to ask the member whether he agrees with that sentiment.

**Mr. Scott Simms:** Madam Speaker, if the member keeps asking relevant and thoughtful questions like that, I just might have to join his fan club. I truly appreciate his comments.

When we were talking about pensions and the whole issue of pension security, we were not just talking about what is publicly available, such as the CPP, old age security and the guaranteed income supplement. In fact, 34% of Canadians have private pensions and RRSPs, and 19% rely solely on CPP and 23% on OAS. You get the idea.

The whole idea of pension security is drifting into new territory. We are going now from defined benefits to defined contributions, which basically means that the entire risk of someone's pension relies on him or her as the individual. That is an onerous responsibility for someone who is not used to playing the market, for someone who is not used to being in that position.

I will not say that the government does not get it. I hope it does, but there has not been much action so far.

What do you think? Does it get it or not?

Getting back to the vision thing, here is the situation. Over the coming five to ten years, we need to look at the elements making pensions easily accessible and to define the universality of the pension plans to allow pension security. A large group of people is going to be pensioned off very quickly, and so there is no time to waste.

• (1340)

**Hon. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, being from Atlantic Canada, my colleague would know that perhaps one of the best opportunities for Atlantic Canada came out of a study by the Liberal members of the Atlantic caucus called "Atlantic Canada:

Catching Tomorrow's Wave". It was a long-term vision looking out 20 years.

One of the programs in that package announced in 2001 was the Atlantic innovation fund, funded with \$300 million. Under a Liberal government in 2005, it was funded with another \$300 million. However, in this budget, ACOA will be given \$19 million for one year.

The member talked about the need for long-term vision.

Is it the policy of the government to announce a little bit of money everywhere but not enough anywhere to really do the job, that is, to have a short-term vision rather than a good long term vision that can actually do something for innovation in this country?

**Mr. Scott Simms:** Madam Speaker, my colleague brings forward a very valid point, as it goes back to the vision thing.

"Atlantic Canada: Catching Tomorrow's Wave" and the other programs we talked about were visionary elements of five to ten years out, from which the benefits are still being reaped in my riding and, as a matter of fact, all over Atlantic Canada.

ACOA was given that responsibility and duty, which it followed through admirably, of putting money throughout the entire region to help people in traditional industries diversify their economies and become that much better within the communities.

The one over, year over year funding does not lend itself toward a visionary policy, and that is the biggest disappointment of all.

**Hon. Hedy Fry (Vancouver Centre, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I want to speak to the elements of the budget that struck me the most.

This was the shortest budget in the last 50 years. If one had gone to the fridge for a snack and come back, one would have missed it. More noteworthy in this budget were its omissions rather than its promises.

It is a cynical budget. It is a budget that cut things that are popular and would be under the radar screen rather than what is really needed to move the economy forward and to build a strong social and economic infrastructure. It is a budget that pretended to cut taxes while surreptitiously increasing taxes in areas that are more likely to cancel out employment than to increase it.

It is a budget that stated that it had a massive stimulus package. Members know that this massive stimulus package only lasts for this one more year. That stimulus package is \$19 billion to do more of what was done last year. Indeed, that stimulus package did create some jobs, but members know those jobs were short-term, temporary, did not pay a lot, and tended to be mostly in sectors that were not going to be sustainable in the 21st century.

Members also talked about this budget being a budget of austerity. That is a good thing, yes, but this budget is cutting program spending and decreasing the role of the federal government in the process. The federal government will have absolutely no relevance in the lives of Canadians, no ability to help Canadians create opportunities for themselves or to help them as things get worse. It is a government that says, "I am washing my hands of my ability to do anything for Canadians. You are going to have to fend for yourselves in the future".

*The Budget*

It is a budget that will leave many of Canada's vulnerable with absolutely nothing to fall back on. Here we see a government that is going to be cutting student subsidies, at a time when we need students to get the education, skills, and training they need to function in today's world of work.

The budget will cut farm subsidies when we are looking at a food shortage around the world and at Canada's ability to be self-sufficient in terms of creating its own safe food for its own people. Yet, the budget is doing that.

The minister said it is a budget that will cut taxes, but it is a budget without daring and innovation, and indeed takes no risks. In fact, the only risk that this budget took was to suggest that the government will eliminate the deficit in six years, and that is a big if. Under that position, it is indeed a very risk-taking budget in that it predicts something that many people are saying will not happen.

I want to speak about this budget being one that I would like to call a sleight of hand budget. In other words, the finance minister says he is going to do something, and then on the other hand he takes it away again, so that he neutralizes any good that might have come for the things he says he was going to do.

Here is a budget that says that it will not increase any new taxes. Yet, the increase in EI premiums, which is going to be 15¢ per \$100 for employees and 21% per \$100 for employers, is going to really harm the ability to create long-term jobs. Small-sized and medium-sized businesses are going to be hurt. Members know that those create 80% of the jobs in this country. Here is a budget that says it is cutting taxes, but it does not tell us that it is increasing the most significant taxes, which are the taxes that affect employment insurance premiums.

Members should remember that while Canada now has 550,000 people on our EI rolls, that is going to sunset very soon. They are going to be off EI. Of course, why should the federal government care? The provinces will take care of them with welfare, will they not? This is a really cynical budget from that perspective.

This budget says it is going to help business, but it took another hit at business. On the one hand its cut to tariffs will help some businesses and that is going to give businesses about \$300 million of investment. The government did not extend the accelerated capital cost allowance, which we heard from businesses was probably the single most important thing that helped enable them to buy new equipment and invest in capital expenditure to expand their businesses. That is no longer going to be there.

On the one hand, this budget is saying that it is going to give business about \$300 million to help with tariffs, thereby saving the government the tax hit it took of about \$535 million by cancelling the accelerated capital gains tax. So members will see the sleight of hand again. The government is saying one thing and doing another.

• (1345)

Here is another example of some of that sleight of hand. What we need to look at in this budget is not what it says on the surface because it says all kinds of nice, innocuous things on the surface. The devil is in the details. We need to sit down and read about what is going to happen when thing A is done with the right hand and thing B with the left hand, cancelling each other out. Everyone

thinks they are getting a deal, but when they look around, their pockets are being picked with the other hand.

Here is a budget that says it is going to increase research and development. It is important to increase research and development because if we are going to be productive and competitive in the 21st century world of work, we have to look at how we develop new technologies. We have to look at how we develop niche markets that will place Canada as a leader in certain sectors in terms of communications technology and biomedical technology. We were world leaders in genomics and nuclear medicine. None of these things are being invested in.

Instead, we are giving NSERC, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council, \$13 million. We are also giving the Canadian Institutes of Health Research \$16 million. The budget is also giving the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council \$3 million. However, given inflation and the fact that these groups are going to be frozen from now on, it is not giving them anything. It is just leaving them exactly where they were. So much for research and development investments.

There is nothing in this budget in terms of R and D for climate change. When we think about the fact that Canada is a leader in environmental technologies and can be the world leader in new energy, nothing has been done to look at the jobs for tomorrow. Nothing has been done to look at some kind of sustainable infrastructure for this country in terms of economic development.

When that stimulus money goes at the end of the year, all of those part-time jobs are going to be gone. Indeed, the government has extended job sharing, but no one is saying that job sharing got people full-time jobs to work half-time so that they are barely able to keep their head above water. Working part-time in very temporary jobs is not the way for people to continue to build and take care of their families.

This budget says a lot but does not do anything. It is going to give \$25 million to the forestry industry. That is another interesting thing and it sounds good on the surface. However, the Liberals had given \$100 million to British Columbia for research and development on the pine beetle and new ways of dealing with climate change with regard to the forestry sector. The government takes \$100 million away and gives \$25 million. That is money math, is it not? One does not have to be a mathematical wizard to know that one is getting \$75 million less than one used to get in the past.

Listen to groups like the Canadian Association of Social Workers. I just spoke about the economic part of the budget. Let us look at the social part of the budget. We cannot build economic infrastructure and ignore our social infrastructure. As the Canadian Association of Social Workers has said that Canada's most vulnerable populations have been handed an empty envelope in this budget, and so they have.

*The Budget*

There is nothing really in this budget to deal with the issue of poverty. With people working in part-time temporary jobs, we are going to have a whole lot of middle-income working class people shifting into dependency on welfare when the stimulus package ends at the end of the year. We are going to see small businesses closing down and people are going to be out of work. That is going to leave people trying to depend on EI when we do not have enough money in the coffers to properly support people who are out of work.

We have to look at the investments in human potential. Human potential is going to be the most important resource for Canada to succeed in this century. We have to build the best and brightest workforce. We have to invest in innovation and people. None of that is in this budget. There is nothing that is going to invest in human potential. Instead, we are giving students the boot by not giving them the subsidies.

There is no mention of arts and culture in this budget. There is no mention of health care and we all know that the higher the unemployment, the less number of people at work, the unhealthier they are, and the need for health care increases. None of these things are even mentioned. It is as if they do not exist in this budget.

This budget is passing the buck on to the provinces, who will then pass it on to the municipalities, all of the need for social infrastructure and services. What is going to happen to the municipalities? There is not a word about them in this budget. We see this budget as just handing off everything to others and not doing anything to help us in the long-term. It sounds nice, but it does not actually deliver.

• (1350)

There was actually one good thing in this budget. It talked about child safety and preventing children from injury. I am going to keep the government's feet to the fire on that because it has refused to do anything about—

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie):** Order. Questions and comments, the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance.

**Mr. Ted Menzies (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, CPC):** Madam Speaker, that was a most interesting speech from a member of a party who says it is going to oppose the budget when I understand that it is actually going to support it.

The hon. member talks about everything that she sees wrong in this budget, including the fact that she does not see where we are actually supporting health care, which of course is provincial jurisdiction. Let me assure everyone that we will not do what the Liberal government did in the 1990s, which was to cut health care funding to the provinces. We will continue to increase it at 3%. We will continue to increase the social assistance that goes to provinces, to give to people that require it, at 3%.

I have heard many people complaining and suggesting that we are not listening to seniors about pensions. I would argue that we have done a lot for pensions. We have put in place funding capabilities so that sponsors that have promised pensions to retirees will actually be able to fulfill that promise.

I would like to know if the hon. member is or is not going to support this great budget?

**Hon. Hedy Fry:** Madam Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition has been very clear about what his feelings are on the budget, so I will not go back into that.

However, I want to talk about health care being a provincial jurisdiction. Since when? The federal government has the Canada Health Act that determines the ability of people to have universal access to comprehensive health care. The provinces deliver the system, but the federal government is there to make sure that every Canadian, no matter where he or she lives, has access to health care.

The member suggests that the Liberals did not do anything about health care. Transferring records is a good thing, but the government has not talked about the fact that we need family physicians in this country. There are three million people who do not have doctors. There is not a word about that in the budget.

There is not a word in the budget about access to health care and waiting lists. That is gone. The last time I heard that language used was in 2004 under the Liberal government. That is no longer being discussed. Health care cannot be delivered if there are no people to deliver it. This is a joke.

As for passing on social assistance to provinces, when people go off EI and onto welfare, the provinces are going to have a huge—

• (1355)

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie):** Order. Questions and comments, the hon. member for Laval.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Nicole Demers (Laval, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I listened carefully to my colleague's speech. I heard her concerns about the lack of social measures in the budget.

However, I would like to know what she thinks about the announcement of \$10 million to combat violence against women, particularly aboriginal women. There was no mention of where this money will go, and no mention of the Sisters in Spirit program, which is calling for renewed funding.

[*English*]

**Hon. Hedy Fry:** Madam Speaker, we will obviously see where the government is going to put the \$10 million for violence against women. The issue of violence against women is well known. We have heard from the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police and Canadian Police Associations everywhere that it has everything to do with gun control legislation. With the government it has always been on the one hand or on the other hand. It is going to put \$10 million toward violence against women and taking away gun control legislation.

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I notice that the last questioner for the government was trying to deflect the government's lack of action on the whole pension issue. It has known that Nortel workers need help. Last year it could have done something but sat on its hands.

*Statements by Members*

The question is this. Does the member actually believe that the government will in fact do anything meaningful in the pension area in the near future?

**Hon. Hedy Fry:** No, Madam Speaker, I do not believe so because there was talk by the government of protecting people whose employers went bankrupt. There is nothing about that in the budget. The pensioners of this country asked for a summit and all they got was a day on which they could celebrate the fact that they have become seniors. Talk about tokenism.

**Hon. Keith Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the devil in the details is that we are suffering because of the huge deficit. The government is going to make cuts of \$3.5 billion a year. How on earth is the government expected to balance its budget with a \$53 billion deficit by cutting \$3.5 billion a year?

Does the member not think this is simply Conservative voodoo economics?

**Hon. Hedy Fry:** Madam Speaker, I do not know if that is doing a disservice to voodoo.

The hon. member's question is very important. I tried to highlight in my response to the budget that we have smoke and mirrors economics. The government is saying it will do one thing and then it is taking it away. The government is saying that it is going to decrease taxes, and then it is socking it to small businesses with EI premium tax increases.

This is a kind of neutral budget in that it almost cancels out everything the government says it is going to do by the negative things it will do to make it not work anymore. Cutting social programs and cutting spending will lead the government exactly to where it wants to go, which is to have no role to play in the lives of Canadians. It wants to hand everything over to the provinces and balkanize Canada into 10 little nation-states.

---

## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

### *KOMAGATA MARU*

**Mr. Devinder Shory (Calgary Northeast, CPC):** Madam Speaker, many across Canada are concerned about the kidnapping and beheading of innocent people in Pakistan. We offer our sympathy to the affected families.

On another note, the *Komagata Maru* incident was a sad time in our nation's history, but the Liberals did nothing about it.

After being elected in 2006, our Conservative government took action. The Prime Minister publicly apologized in the presence of thousands of Indo-Canadians. We set aside \$2.5 million for the historical recognition program and recently made two funding announcements to recognize and preserve the facts of the sad incident.

Are the Liberals angry because our Conservative government is recognizing and preserving the history of the *Komagata Maru* incident, or are they ashamed because we have done so much on this issue in four years?

I call on the Liberals to stop playing cheap politics and appreciate our government for taking action, which the Liberals refused to do during their 80 years in power.

\* \* \*

● (1400)

## HEALTH

**Hon. Keith Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, every minute of every single day a woman dies as a consequence of pregnancy. This is also a death sentence for more than half of the children under the age of five who will also perish. Five hundred and thirty thousand women die every single year from five entirely preventable or treatable causes. Twenty times this number suffer from horrible injuries. Remarkably, 80% of the deaths are entirely preventable.

The solution is simple. Enable people to access basic primary health care, a trained health care worker, basic medications, diagnostics, clean water, basic surgical services, micronutrients and a full array of family planning options. Doing this would also enable us to treat 80% of the big killers, including pneumonia, gastroenteritis, tuberculosis and HIV-AIDS.

This year Canada will host the G8 and G20 summit. We have a moment in time. I ask the Canadian government to bury the politics, bury the ideology, do the right thing and invest in primary health care. In this way we will save the lives of women, men and children.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

## MARCEL SIMARD

**Mrs. Carole Lavallée (Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert, BQ):** Madam Speaker, it was with great sadness that we learned yesterday of the passing of the filmmaker and screenwriter Marcel Simard. His films included *Les mots perdus*, which gave voice to those suffering from aphasia, and *Love-moi*, one of his best known works. His last feature film, *Le petit monde d'Élourdes*, deals with children's distress. His works always reveal the man of action and conviction that he was, as well as his compassion.

He also founded Les Productions Virage, which enabled him to produce a number of documentaries, including *À hauteur d'homme*, directed by Jean-Claude Labrecque.

In my own name and on behalf of my Bloc Québécois colleagues, I wish to extend sincere condolences to his spouse, Monique Simard, with whom I had the pleasure of working in the Parti Québécois, his two daughters, his family and all his friends touched by this loss.

\* \* \*

[English]

## ABORIGINAL HEALING FOUNDATION

**Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill, NDP):** Madam Speaker, in 2008 Parliament made history with its apology to residential school survivors. This moment set our country on a new path.

*Statements by Members*

Healing has been an integral part of that path for aboriginal peoples. For 10 years survivors and their communities have looked to the Aboriginal Healing Foundation for healing and hope.

In communities in our region, northern Manitoba and across our country, the AHF has broken the silence around one of the darkest times in our history. Its work of counselling, creating awareness, working with young people and bringing communities together has been key to moving forward, but its work is not done.

Yet, the government's budget is silent on its support for the Aboriginal Healing Foundation which is set to fold on March 31. The AHF's work is integral to the spirit of the government's apology, integral to our journey toward truth and reconciliation.

It is not too late to do the right thing and stand by the historic commitment to aboriginal peoples and save the Aboriginal Healing Foundation.

\* \* \*

**SHAUGHNESSY COHEN PRIZE FOR POLITICAL WRITING**

**Mr. Andrew Saxton (North Vancouver, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the finalists of the Shaughnessy Cohen Prize for Political Writing. The five finalists are on Parliament Hill today. They are: John English, a former member of this place; Rudyard Griffiths; James Maskalyk; Daniel Poliquin; and Terry Gould, who is from my riding of North Vancouver.

Mr. Gould is an investigative journalist who is being honoured as a finalist for his work, *Murder without Borders*, which is a portrait of seven journalists who were murdered in the line of duty.

The Shaughnessy Cohen prize is a \$25,000 award presented annually by the Writers' Trust of Canada to the best non-fiction book on Canadian political and social issues. The winner will be announced on Wednesday.

I congratulate all finalists and thank them for their contribution to the understanding of political issues among Canadians.

\* \* \*

**KAIROS**

**Ms. Kirsty Duncan (Etobicoke North, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, for nearly 40 years KAIROS has received funding to do projects in the world's poorest countries and is recognized as one of Canada's most respected charitable organizations.

Recently, four inspiring seniors came to my office committed to restoring funding to KAIROS so the organization can continue its work in aboriginal rights, climate change, corporate accountability and poverty reduction.

On January 21, 10 of the most influential national faith leaders from the Anglican, Catholic, Christian Reform, Mennonite, Presbyterian, Quaker and United churches requested a meeting with the Prime Minister to understand why his government made KAIROS a target for vicious attacks, including maliciously and wrongfully slandering the organization as anti-Semitic.

I hope that the Prime Minister will agree to meet with these faith leaders as they have requested, offer a full apology for the

government's defamatory attacks and restore the politically motivated cuts.

\* \* \*

• (1405)

**HAITIAN RELIEF EFFORTS**

**Mr. Patrick Brown (Barrie, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend the work of Barrie residents in the Haitian relief effort.

Our schools, our city hall, our churches and our community groups have done some incredible work in raising funds. St. Joan of Arc Catholic High School in Barrie raised \$2,000 which it provided to the Red Cross effort. St. John Vianney Catholic School and St. Monica's held a toonie drive. St. Mary's parish had a major fundraiser and agreed to match all the schools' donations, not to mention the matching donations of all its parishioners.

Our grade 8 students at Steele Street Public School raised over \$1,000.

The Caribbean Cultural Institute in the City of Barrie in partnership with my office hosted a rally for Haiti concert, which was well attended. Kudos to the leadership of Ricardo Rowe and Quammie Williams on this project.

City of Barrie CEO Jon Babulic and several city staff came together for a hair-raising event. They raised \$6,620 by shaving their heads in the Hairless for Haiti fundraiser.

The Barrie community will continue its fundraising efforts on March 18 when Noel Banavage and the Skyliners band will host a fundraiser at Barrie City Hall.

The heart of Barrie shows in these tremendous efforts.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**ALEXANDRE BILODEAU**

**Mr. Serge Ménard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, a Quebecker won the first gold medal on Canadian soil. Alexandre Bilodeau grew up in Rosemère, in a riding that bears the name of the great artist Marc-Aurèle Fortin. And Alexandre showed us that he too is a great artist.

Freestyle mogul skiing is an extremely demanding sport. His dangerous backflip with two twists, which he was the first to master, is a beautiful but dangerous jump. The rest of his run and the second jump were executed with perfect control, as though it were an easy feat.

The perfection of style gave us an aesthetic show of great beauty as well as an extraordinary sports performance. Too bad it was so short.

But it was tremendously rewarding for Alexandre, and for his family and friends who gave him so much support and encouragement.

This stunning victory revealed a charming person surrounded by an enthusiastic big brother, his best friend, an elated sister, and lovely parents, a family that has already touched our hearts.

\* \* \*

[English]

### THE ECONOMY

**Mr. Ed Holder (London West, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, year two of Canada's economic action plan is all about protecting and helping create jobs now and for the future.

This includes protecting and creating jobs with initiatives such as making Canada the first tariff-free zone for manufacturing in the whole G20. Not only will this reinforce our Conservative government's commitment to open and free trade, but it will keep and grow businesses in Canada. Twelve thousand new jobs alone will be created by this one action that we have undertaken.

While the opposition appears less than supportive of our action plan, Canadians are cheering because it creates jobs. The C.D. Howe Institute said:

Eliminating all tariffs on inputs is an absolutely brilliant move...in terms of attracting investors but also in taking a leadership role in establishing an agenda aimed at trade liberalization and broad-based economic growth.

I encourage all parties opposite to get onside and support our Conservative government's pro-growth, pro-jobs plan for Canada's economy.

\* \* \*

### GIRL GUIDES OF CANADA

**Mrs. Alexandra Mendes (Brossard—La Prairie, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to invite my colleagues to come and celebrate 100 years of girl guiding in Canada at an event on the Hill this evening.

Over the last century, hundreds of thousands of girls and young women have been touched by guiding.

[Translation]

They have had the opportunity to learn new skills, to develop lasting friendships, to improve their leadership skills, to tackle challenges and to experience adventures, all while they learned about the world around them in a supportive environment.

[English]

I was one of those girls. as were many women in the House, and I am proud to say that much of what I am today I owe to guiding.

I ask members of the House to join me and Girl Guides of Canada, Guides du Canada, in 200 West Block after the vote for a fun evening of celebrations, activities and refreshments, including cookies.

[Translation]

I urge them all to come and meet the guides from their communities and together we will celebrate a century of much accomplishment.

### Statements by Members

#### ELIMINATION OF TARIFFS

**Mr. Bernard Généreux (Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, today, our government announced that it would be taking action to eliminate all remaining tariffs on manufacturing inputs and machinery and equipment. This will keep us ahead of the pack and show the rest of the world that we are open for business.

These measures will help keep and create good manufacturing jobs here in Canada, and lead to the creation of 12,000 jobs in the years to come.

Eliminating these tariffs will encourage companies in Quebec and Canada to acquire the equipment they need to become more competitive; companies and workers will be able to compete and win in markets around the world.

Our government has made a commitment to keeping Canada open for trade and investment and we have followed through with concrete measures.

Quebeckers and Canadians can count on our government to keep the economy and jobs our number one priority.

\* \* \*

● (1410)

[English]

#### PRINCE RUPERT, BRITISH COLUMBIA

**Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, today I rise to pay tribute to the great city of Prince Rupert, British Columbia that on March 10 will be celebrating 100 years. Rupert lies on the traditional territory of the Tsimshian Nation which has occupied the land since time immemorial.

The city began its life as a transportation, fishing and logging hub and continues this great legacy today. More than half of the people living in the Prince Rupert area are of first nations ancestry and the community continues to enrich the entire northwestern region and country.

As a vital fishing port, a key port in the second world war and a centre of transportation and commerce, the next 100 years promises to be full of promise and contribution to our economy and our region.

I wish the hard-working and generous people of Prince Rupert a happy 100th birthday.

\* \* \*

#### THE ECONOMY

**Hon. Jim Abbott (Kootenay—Columbia, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, year two of our economic action plan will help solidify Canada's economic recovery by implementing new stimulus to create jobs now, investing in creating the jobs of tomorrow and planning a return to balanced budgets once the economy recovers.

### Oral Questions

However, the Liberal leader does not like our jobs and growth budget. The Liberal leader would rather raise taxes. We know this because he said it before. He has said, "We will have to raise taxes". Unfortunately for taxpayers, the Liberal leader's caucus is full of believers in his high taxes scheme.

The member for Parkdale—High Park said that Canadians are prepared to pay a bit more taxes but we know that is not true. Higher taxes and unaffordable spending do not create jobs. They do not encourage economic growth.

The economy is the top priority of Canadians and that is why our government is dedicated to its recovery and continued growth.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

#### PIERRE VADEBONCOEUR

**Mr. Yves Lessard (Chambly—Borduas, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, on February 11, Quebec lost a great essayist, trade unionist and sovereigntist: Pierre Vadeboncoeur.

Mr. Vadeboncoeur made a name for himself through his writing, often lampooning his subjects in *Cité libre*. As a left-wing intellectual, he believed that freedom of thought is critical to our future. He hoped to counteract the collective alienation of his people, which led him to become a sovereigntist. He joined the labour movement and the CSN, where he served as legal counsel for 25 years.

He fought his battles through his writing, penning *La Ligne du risque* and *L'Autorité du peuple*, among many other works. He received many awards, including the Athanase-David prize in 1976 and the Victor-Barbeau prize in 2001.

My Bloc Québécois colleagues and I would like to express our most sincere condolences to his family and friends. May his pursuit of freedom and independence inspire the people of Quebec for many years to come.

\* \* \*

[English]

#### VU PHAM

**Mr. Glen Pearson (London North Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, too often it takes an incredible tragedy for us to recognize the honour and heroism exemplified by our police officers across the country, the men and women who protect our families and serve as pillars to our communities.

Yesterday, in my community, one of those pillars was prematurely cut down. Vu Pham was only 37 years old when he was shot and killed in the line of duty just north of London. He leaves behind his wife and three young children.

Adopted by a Canadian family from his birthplace in Vietnam, this remarkable officer represented the absolute best of what we hope for as a nation.

There is a gap in our community today where a deeply dedicated man once lived. Let us seek to fill it with our own commitment to better the public space. Let us have no more negative statements this

afternoon. I ask only that we seek to honour a life lived to its highest in mutual respect.

\* \* \*

#### VU PHAM

**Mr. Ben Lobb (Huron—Bruce, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, together with all Canadians, I was deeply saddened by the news yesterday of the passing of Constable Vu Pham of the Ontario Provincial Police. My deepest sympathies go out to his family, friends and colleagues.

This event is a harsh reminder of the dangerous conditions faced daily by the men and women of our law enforcement agencies as they work to protect the safety and security of all Canadians.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the men and women in law enforcement across the country for the brave work they do.

Out thoughts and prayers are with Heather and their three sons as they deal with this tragic loss. God bless.

---

## ORAL QUESTIONS

● (1415)

[English]

#### AFGHANISTAN

**Mr. Michael Ignatieff (Leader of the Opposition, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, every day brings new information about the Afghan detainee scandal.

Yesterday we learned that the government was preparing its damage control strategy in March 2007, months before torture was reported in the press. That means that the government knew full well that credible reports of torture would eventually come to light, so the government's credibility is shot. It is caught in a scandal of its own making because it will not tell Canadians the truth.

Why will the Prime Minister not put an end to this charade and call a public inquiry?

**Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, there are so many inaccuracies in that question that I do not know where to begin. However, let me begin with the so-called revelation of the Leader of the Opposition.

This matter was in fact discussed by senior departmental officials in the Department of Foreign Affairs months ago. Obviously they were preparing contingency plans that ultimately led to a new and enhanced transfer agreement.

**Mr. Michael Ignatieff (Leader of the Opposition, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the issue here is getting to the bottom of this matter.

Justice Iacobucci has no mandate, no subpoena powers and no tools to do the job. Allegation follows allegation, including the allegation that the government allowed rendition to occur. This is a serious matter.

We have now learned that the government was more concerned with preventing political fallout, with the media management of this, than preventing torture.



*Oral Questions*

Justice Iacobucci is ready to serve. Why will the Prime Minister not give him the powers to hold a full public inquiry?

**Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, from the opposition, unsubstantiated allegation follows unsubstantiated allegation, including the fact, which on this particular story the Leader of the Opposition was not aware of, that this had already been discussed months ago.

The fact is that Justice Iacobucci will have access to all relevant documents, all documents referenced in the opposition motion as well as other documents. This government will ensure that everything is looked at and that public confidence in the work of our public servants can remain high.

[Translation]

**Mr. Michael Ignatieff (Leader of the Opposition, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday we learned that the government had a plan to manage the media regarding the Afghan scandal months before it came out.

The government was more concerned with protecting its image than preventing torture. Now it is concealing the truth from Parliament and from Canadians.

Why is the Prime Minister not asking Justice Iacobucci to hold a full public inquiry?

**Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, clearly the Leader of the Opposition has been misinformed in this matter, which was reported months ago and has already been discussed by senior departmental officials in the Department of Foreign Affairs. It was part of their efforts to establish a new agreement or strengthen the existing one with the Afghan government.

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Beauséjour, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the recently revealed information gives rise to some serious questions that deserve serious answers.

The Prime Minister can always try to hide, as he has been doing for some time, but Canadians want answers.

Did the government authorize the transfer of detainees to the Afghan authorities knowing that they would be tortured? Did the government agree to a transfer policy that involved interrogation and torture?

• (1420)

[English]

**Hon. Rob Nicholson (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the government has already indicated that it would make all the information available to the committee as quickly as possible and in a responsible manner. To that end, we have asked Mr. Justice Iacobucci, who has an impeccable reputation in this area dealing with documents, to lend us his assistance, and that should have the support of all hon. members.

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Beauséjour, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as government excuses grow weaker, the evidence continues to grow stronger that the government was fully aware of the risk of torture in Afghanistan. Rather than preventing torture, it was more concerned with its talking points.

Given recent revelations, did any minister ever receive information that indicated that Canadian officials were handing over Afghans for the specific purpose of extracting information, information that Canadian interrogators could not obtain?

**Hon. Rob Nicholson (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the priority of the government has never changed, and that is the safety and the security of the men and women serving in the Canadian Forces in Afghanistan. That has never changed.

In an effort to ensure parliamentarians have all the documents they need, the public servants are working very hard on this. They will be getting the able assistance of Mr. Iacobucci. Again, this should have the support of the hon. member.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**GOVERNMENT SPENDING**

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the government announced that it was abolishing vacant positions. Now that is really something.

Meanwhile, the same government is announcing and creating new layers of bureaucracy such as a body to review bureaucratic spending and a Canada-wide securities commission, which will cost \$165 million starting this year.

Does the Prime Minister realize that by creating more bureaucracy, he is adding to his budget spending? Is that how this government proposes to save money?

**Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the President of the Treasury Board announced yesterday that several hundred positions and government appointments would be eliminated. This is the first time this has been done in years.

As for the Canadian securities commission, all around the world, governments are working to strengthen the systems that monitor financial institutions and operations. It is our duty to do the same thing in Canada. We are working with the provinces that want to work with us.

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is quite right to say that this is a first: it is the first time I have seen a government abolish vacant positions.

The government could recover \$3 billion if it prohibited the use of tax havens, but it prefers to abolish vacant positions. It could do away with tax benefits for the oil companies, which would save \$3.2 billion, but it prefers to abolish vacant positions. It could cut military spending by \$1 billion, but it prefers to abolish vacant positions.

Will the Prime Minister admit that what is lacking is not solutions, but political will?

**Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, obviously, the first step in abolishing positions is not to fill them. If the leader of the Bloc would care to suggest any other positions that should be abolished, I encourage him to do so.

*Oral Questions*

The Bloc leader talks about subsidies for the oil companies. This government has cut taxes for all businesses in Canada, not just the oil companies. This is another example of grandstanding by the Bloc.

**Mr. Daniel Paillé (Hochelaga, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the government is fooling the public by announcing that it is cutting vacant positions.

To achieve a balanced budget, the Bloc Québécois has proposed a surcharge on the richest taxpayers, those whose taxable income is greater than \$150,000 or \$250,000.

Instead of making bogus announcements at Tim Hortons everywhere in Canada, when cutting a modest \$1 million, why does the government not tax the richest to the tune of \$4.8 billion?

**Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Bloc's position on Canada's finances is clear: it wants to increase taxes for everyone. That has always been the policy of the Bloc and its coalition partners, but that is not the Conservative's policy.

• (1425)

**Mr. Daniel Paillé (Hochelaga, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, instead of cutting \$1 million worth of nonexistent positions, the government should tax the bonuses of the top earners. Just by taxing total capital gains on stock options the government could collect \$1 billion. That is 1,000 times more profitable than the bogus announcement it made yesterday.

Why is the government refusing to increase taxes for top earners?

**Hon. Stockwell Day (President of the Treasury Board and Minister for the Asia-Pacific Gateway, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we are going to continue to look for ways to improve government efficiency. This is an approach that will pay off. If a government leaves positions vacant then some people will want to fill them whether or not they are needed.

\* \* \*

[English]

**AFGHANISTAN**

**Hon. Jack Layton (Toronto—Danforth, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, in the matter of the torture of detainees in Afghanistan, the questions have been the same all along. What did the Prime Minister know, when did he know it and who else was in the know?

Members know very clearly that his national security advisor knew quite a bit, enough to write a contingency plan to be used if reports of torture ever became public. It was a spin document, nothing more.

Rather than planning how to spin the media, why did the Prime Minister not simply stop the transfers?

**Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the leader of the NDP should know that this matter was thoroughly aired months ago. Senior officials from the Department of Foreign Affairs made absolutely clear that they were continuing to work on transfer arrangements with the Afghan government, up to and leading to completion of a new and enhanced transfer agreement.

[Translation]

**Hon. Jack Layton (Toronto—Danforth, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister wants to evade his responsibilities. That is why he suspended Parliament for two months. That is why he is trying to create a diversion by appointing a former judge. The truth is clear: the government knew the facts well before they were made public. Transfers to the Afghan DNS continue to take place.

Why? Is it because information obtained by torture is useful to the government or to someone else? Why?

**Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, on the contrary, the facts clearly show that the military and diplomats, and all Canadian personnel, conducted themselves in an extraordinary manner and have always respected our international obligations.

[English]

**Hon. Jack Layton (Toronto—Danforth, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister can try to hide behind a judge, he can try to ignore the orders of the House of Commons, he can try to hide behind bureaucrats, but here are the facts. His national security advisor, who I assume gives him updates on a regular basis, was aware of the problems. The Red Cross had raised the problems. Many other people had raised the problems. Yet the government continues to transfer detainees to the Afghan authorities right now.

Will the Prime Minister admit that his government knew about the torture from the beginning, that it was done to gather intelligence and that rendition is still the policy of his government?

**Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, without any evidence, the allegations, the accusations just keep going further into the stratosphere.

The truth of the matter is Canadian diplomats, Canadian military personnel have at all times respected Canada's international obligations. They work in a very difficult situation to effect prisoner transfer, to effect the military and other developmental operations. They deserve our support and our praise.

**Ms. Judy Foote (Random—Burin—St. George's, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, according to the government, Mr. Iacobucci will decide what affects national security. That is far too narrow.

Will he also report on references to torture, rendition and outsourcing of torture? Will he look at whether the government had a deliberate policy of rendition? Will he report the who, what and where of anything relating to torture? Will any of this be part of the Iacobucci terms of reference?

• (1430)

**Hon. Rob Nicholson (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, first, I can assure the House that the committee and the House will continue to receive all legally available documents. I point out again that any redactions, any advice with respect to these are given by non-partisan, independent public servants. In that regard, Mr. Justice Iacobucci will have full range to have a look at all these documents and advise on them. That should have the support of all hon. members.

*Oral Questions*

**Ms. Judy Foote (Random—Burin—St. George's, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, why the delay of the terms of reference?

The Minister of Justice has said that Mr. Iacobucci will report to him, but why does he not report directly to Parliament and to Canadians? When will this work even begin?

If the government cannot give us such basic information, how can we expect it to give Mr. Iacobucci an appropriate mandate? How can we expect to get the full truth when the government promises only half measures?

**Hon. Rob Nicholson (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Mr. Justice Iacobucci has a proper mandate. He will undertake an independent, comprehensive, proper review of all the documents at issue.

**Hon. Ujjal Dosanjh (Vancouver South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we know the government knew about allegations of torture and was ready with a spin for when they surfaced. It would not tell us whether there was a policy of rendition, outsourcing of torture and interrogation. More allegations are coming forth every day.

Why will the government not end this sorry saga of hide and spin and call a public inquiry? The Prime Minister should try a new strategy: the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

**Hon. Rob Nicholson (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I have the feeling that nothing will satisfy the hon. gentleman. He does not trust the government. He does not trust public servants. He does not trust our men and women who serve in Afghanistan. I am not quite sure, he may or may not trust Mr. Iacobucci. However, we have complete confidence in Mr. Iacobucci and the public servants who advise on these matters.

**Hon. Ujjal Dosanjh (Vancouver South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on this sorry scandal, the government is in damage control. It is making up answers as it goes. It is not telling Canadians the truth. It has lost all credibility. New allegations are emerging every day.

When will it take this seriously and call a full public inquiry that everyone, except the Prime Minister, now believes is necessary?

**Hon. Rob Nicholson (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, one thing for sure is the hon. member is making up his facts as he goes along. The unsubstantiated allegations get more and more outlandish every day.

We are taking a responsible approach on this. We get the advice of non-partisan public servants with respect to the release of documents. Now we will be ably assisted by Mr. Iacobucci on this matter.

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

**EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE**

**Mr. Yves Lessard (Chambly—Borduas, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the government announced plans to eliminate 245 positions, 90% of which are currently vacant. This move is an attempt to hide the government's real plan for fighting the deficit. In the budget, the Conservatives recycled an old Liberal strategy by announcing that they intend to take \$19 billion from the employment insurance fund between 2011 and 2015 to pad the federal treasury.

Does the minister agree that it is appalling to filch money from the pockets of unemployed workers while her government carries on giving all kinds of gifts to oil companies and the rich?

**Hon. Stockwell Day (President of the Treasury Board and Minister for the Asia-Pacific Gateway, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague is correct: the Liberals cut a lot of transfers to those in need. That is not our way of doing things. We will figure out how the government can get the job done more efficiently. We will continue to use this approach. We will not do what the Liberals did while they were in power.

**Mrs. Josée Beaudin (Saint-Lambert, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, seasonal workers in two Canadian regions will be denied employment insurance benefits if the government does not take action. Transitional measures are due to expire on April 10. These measures have already been renewed several times.

Will the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development turn these transitional measures into permanent measures to prolong benefits for workers in the regions that were penalized when the map of economic regions was changed in 2000?

● (1435)

**Hon. Jean-Pierre Blackburn (Minister of Veterans Affairs and Minister of State (Agriculture), CPC):** Mr. Speaker, once again, I would like to remind the Bloc members that, over the past few months, we have implemented no fewer than six new measures to help workers who have lost their jobs. We have also made a huge investment of \$4 billion to support the economy and ensure that work on projects across Canada begins in the next few weeks and months.

Every time we have implemented measures to help workers, the Bloc has voted against us.

\* \* \*

**THE ENVIRONMENT**

**Mr. Bernard Bigras (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, by cutting funding for the Canadian Foundation for Climate and Atmospheric Sciences, the Conservative government is threatening the activities of two major research centres in Quebec, one at UQAM and the other at the Université de Sherbrooke. To cut funding for scientists working in this field is to deny the existence of climate change, as the member for Beauce did quite proudly.

Why is the Conservative government sabotaging Quebec's efforts in the field of climate sciences?

**Hon. Jim Prentice (Minister of the Environment, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Foundation for Climate and Atmospheric Sciences was created in 2000 with \$110 million in public funding until 2011. We are not closing the foundation. We have extended its mandate until 2012. The foundation will still be able to report to the government on the work it has done with public funding. That is a great deal of money.

*Oral Questions*

Climate change research is very important, but we have to ensure that funding is allocated efficiently.

**Mr. Bernard Bigras (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, to save \$10 million a year, the government is cutting climate research. That is the reality. Yet the government does not hesitate to hand out \$3.2 billion in tax goodies to western oil companies while massively subsidizing carbon capture and the nuclear power production needed for tar sands development.

Is this not proof that this government answers to the oil companies, at the expense of Quebec's needs?

**Hon. Jim Prentice (Minister of the Environment, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we are not closing the foundation, and the Bloc should support our efforts.

With the Copenhagen accord, our government is committed to fighting climate change. That is why we are taking real steps to meet those targets.

The Copenhagen accord is the first international agreement that includes major emitters. It is a pleasure to tell the House of Commons today that 104 nations have ratified the accord, which represents 80% of global emissions. Like the Bloc, the whole world supports the accord.

\* \* \*

[English]

**PENSIONS**

**Hon. Judy Sgro (York West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in budget 2009, the Conservatives falsely promised to consult with Canadians about pensions and report on their findings in 90 days. In budget 2010, they promised again to consult about pensions and report on their findings in 90 days. All talk and no action.

Several provinces and the Liberal Party have made concrete proposals, like the supplementary Canada pension plan.

Specifically, what is wrong with the supplementary CPP proposal, and why not right now?

**Hon. Jim Flaherty (Minister of Finance, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the member opposite is one of the few people in Canada who believes she has the sole correct answer on a very important issue for Canadians about retirement income.

In fact, last year consultations were conducted and, as a result of those consultations, we brought in regulations protecting pensioners by requiring companies to fully fund pension benefits on plan termination and certain other measures that arose out of those specific consultations dealing with those specific issues.

Now, working with the provinces and the territories, which I gather the member opposite is against, but working with other governments in Canada we will do these public consultations and then the—

• (1440)

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for York West.

**Hon. Judy Sgro (York West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will not hold my breath waiting for the answer.

The Conservatives have clearly missed it while they were on extended leave but Canadians started the consultations with us some time ago. We have heard from desperate Canadians all across Canada who are demanding action, not just more talk.

Changes to the bankruptcy act are urgently needed today to protect tens of thousands of Canadians who will lose their only source of livelihood at retirement while the Conservatives sit idly by.

Will the Conservatives get past their recycled promises and start taking action on pensions today, not tomorrow?

**Hon. Tony Clement (Minister of Industry, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member may be aware, we have already amended the BIA, the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act, with the changes for super priority for unpaid wages.

As she may know, my colleague and his department are also conducting their cross country consultations and discussions with the provinces.

As the hon. member may be aware, 90% of all pensions are under the jurisdiction and competency of provincial governments but we intend to work with the provinces and territories on this very important issue on behalf of Canadians.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**TAXATION**

**Hon. John McCallum (Markham—Unionville, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, for a long time, the Conservatives have been in the habit of hiding their tax hikes. In 2006, they increased the lowest tax rate, but they falsely claimed to Canadians that they had lowered it. In their 2010 budget, they are increasing employment insurance premiums every year for the next four years, but they refuse to admit it.

Why do the Conservatives not tell the truth when they increase taxes for Canadians?

[English]

**Hon. Jim Flaherty (Minister of Finance, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, unlike the tax and spend views of the Liberal Party, we do not believe Canadians should be paying more taxes. Since coming to office, we have actually reduced the overall tax burden by an incredible number: \$220 billion. Not only that, but we have no intention, like the party opposite, of increasing the GST.

**Hon. John McCallum (Markham—Unionville, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance said that employment insurance premiums are “one of those job-killing taxes, a direct tax on employers and employees”.

The minister knows that an EI premium is a tax, a job-killing tax. Why will he not admit what is obvious to everyone in this chamber? This is a matter of truth, honesty and character. For once, will he tell Canadians the simple truth? The government is raising their payroll taxes.

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Jim Flaherty (Minister of Finance, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, what we have done as part of the economic stimulus is frozen EI premiums for two years. This is a very substantial benefit for employers and employees as part of the economic action plan. However, after that, as with the other stimulus items in the economic action plan, they will come to an end.

Why will they come to an end? It is because it is a time for a return to private demand to replace the public demand and the emergency demand over the two years of the economic action plan. Then we can move back to balanced budgets, avoiding anything but a temporary deficit. That is the plan, that is the budget and that is what we will do.

\* \* \*

**MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY**

**Mr. Terence Young (Oakville, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, our government is continuing to focus on economic growth and creating jobs in year two of Canada's economic action plan. Our plan is getting results with 135,000 jobs being maintained or created this year alone. Year two of the action plan will build on this success with \$19 billion of stimulus money being pumped into Canada's economy.

Could the Minister of Finance update the House on what our government is doing to help create jobs in the important manufacturing sector?

**Hon. Jim Flaherty (Minister of Finance, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, that is an excellent question from the member for Oakville, a riding that has a lot of manufacturers, including small and medium sized manufacturers in southern Ontario. We did highlight today the fact that Canada will become a tariff-free zone for manufacturers as a result of budget 2010.

We will eliminate all job-killing tariffs on manufacturing inputs, machinery and equipment, which will make Canada the first country in the G20 to eliminate all manufacturing tariffs. As in many other ways, including fiscal management, the banking sector and the financial sector overall, Canada is leading the way in the G20.

\* \* \*

• (1445)

**THE ENVIRONMENT**

**Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, last year the government used its budget to scrap environmental reviews of infrastructure projects under the Navigable Waters Protection Act. This year, the budget hands over even more of its environmental duties to industry-friendly agencies. The National Energy Board, the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission and Natural Resources Canada will now lead environmental assessments of major energy projects. It is a blatant conflict of interest.

Why is the government putting the foxes in charge of the henhouse?

**Hon. Jim Prentice (Minister of the Environment, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member's assertions are wrong but I would encourage her to work with us as we try to streamline and improve the environmental assessment process.

I would draw to her attention that the kinds of changes the government will be bringing forward were called for by the commissioner for environmental sustainability in 2009, the report on the smart regulator in 2005, the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment in 2007, 2008 and 2009, and the Council of the Federation and the premiers in virtually every year since 2000.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, this is the same Minister of the Environment who once criticized Quebec for doing too much to protect the environment.

Can he tell us who asked him to scrap the Navigable Waters Protection Act, a century-old act?

He is clearly trying to pass the responsibility for environmental assessments on to the National Energy Board, which does not have the experience or the ability to protect the environment for future generations.

Is that not his real goal, to sacrifice the environment on the altar of his energy projects?

[*English*]

**Hon. Jim Prentice (Minister of the Environment, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the member does not accurately portray the proposed changes under discussion or that will be made.

There is no intent to transfer to the National Energy Board jurisdiction from other agencies. The intent is to streamline the regulatory process, the environmental process.

Every respected commentator in this country who has looked at this has criticized the overweight of duplicative regulatory and environmental processes in the country. They have called for streamlining to achieve environmental objectives, as well as to advance economic objectives. We will strike that balance and we will do it properly.

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

**AFGHANISTAN**

**Ms. Francine Lalonde (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, when we began questioning the government about possible cases of torture of Afghan prisoners, they replied here in this House that there was absolutely no truth to the allegations.

Yet we have learned from the media that before the torture had even become public, the government had already prepared notes to justify its inaction.

How did the government have the nerve to call us friends of the Taliban for denouncing the torture, when at that very time it was trying, not to prevent the torture, but to cover it up?

*Oral Questions**[English]*

**Hon. Rob Nicholson (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, that is a bunch of nonsense coming from the hon. member. We have been open and transparent. We try to be as helpful as possible. Public servants have made documents available to the committee and now we will be ably assisted by Mr. Justice Iacobucci on this. This should have the support of the hon. member.

*[Translation]*

**Ms. Francine Lalonde (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, Canada has failed in its obligations under the Geneva conventions.

Does the minister realize that, in light of these revelations, there can be no hesitation? All documents requested by Parliament must be handed over as soon as possible, and a public inquiry must be held.

*[English]*

**Hon. Rob Nicholson (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, CPC):** Again, Mr. Speaker, I can assure the hon. member and the House that all legally available documents have been made and will continue to be made available. If there are any comments, questions or confusion about this, we will be ably supported by Mr. Justice Iacobucci.

Again, this should have the support of the hon. member.

\* \* \*

**JUSTICE**

**Hon. Anita Neville (Winnipeg South Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, members of the government are always quick to comment on any court judgment that does not align with their “get tough on crime” rhetoric. They always say, “You do the crime, you do the time”.

What then is the government's comment on a dangerous driver in possession of illicit drugs who gets off with no record and a \$500 slap on the wrist?

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

●(1450)

**The Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. Minister of Justice.

**Hon. Rob Nicholson (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I almost do not know where to begin to comment on such an irresponsible question.

The government initiated the director of public prosecutions for the very reason to ensure there would never be any political interference in any prosecution in this country. That should have the support of the hon. member. She should get up, withdraw and apologize for that comment.

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**The Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre.

**Hon. Anita Neville (Winnipeg South Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, what a hypocritical answer the minister gives. The government tries to pass the buck and the Conservatives are

conspicuously silent only when the law is being flouted by one of their own. Even the judge thought this was a break.

Why the double standard? Nothing stopped them from commenting before. Does the government really believe that the punishment fits the crime?

**Hon. Rob Nicholson (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, that is about as low as one can go, in my opinion.

The hon. member is talking about a provincial prosecution in front of a provincial judge within the appeal period and she is asking us to comment. That is completely irresponsible and she should apologize to the House.

\* \* \*

*[Translation]***INDUSTRY**

**Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Industry has left northern mining communities out in the cold. He patted himself on the back for Xstrata's takeover of Falconbridge and Vale's takeover of Inco.

Yet the results have been disastrous. Now Xstrata is closing its plant in Timmins and Ontario is losing its copper refining capacity.

Will the minister admit that he made a serious error in judgment by supporting Xstrata?

*[English]*

**Hon. Tony Clement (Minister of Industry, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, my predecessors at Industry Canada judged every file based on a net benefit to Canada. I can assure the hon. member that continues to be the test.

The facts on the ground, not just from this government's point of view but from the point of view of independent experts, is that foreign direct investment creates jobs, it creates opportunity, it creates innovation, it creates competition and it creates lower prices for consumers. That is the case.

We still need Canadian success, but we also need the success of foreigners who are willing to invest in this country.

**Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, there is no shortage of bumpkins who have lost their shirts in dodgy money deals, but the minister traded away Falconbridge and Inco, Canada's international mining leaders, and he got nothing in return.

Now Xstrata is shutting down the Timmins smelter. We are not just losing 1,000 jobs; we are losing the copper and refining capacity of Ontario. Once that capacity is gone, it is not coming back.

Will the minister admit, at least, that with Xstrata and Vale his government blew it and our communities are paying the price?

**Hon. Tony Clement (Minister of Industry, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I find it difficult to comment without commenting on the fact that one of his colleagues, just last Friday in Sudbury, tried to scare public servants out of their jobs. He tried to suggest that I was in Sudbury to close down the FedNor office, scaring public servants who are working hard at their jobs.

That is the disgusting pitiable policies and tactics of the NDP, and it is beneath contempt.

\* \* \*

• (1455)

#### SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

**Mr. Brad Trost (Saskatoon—Humboldt, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, in budget 2010, phase two of Canada's economic action plan, our government is investing over \$1 billion into science and technology initiatives in order to create jobs, strengthen the economy and improve the quality of life of Canadians.

Could the Minister of State for Science and Technology update the House on how these new initiatives have been received by Canadian universities?

**Hon. Gary Goodyear (Minister of State (Science and Technology) (Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario), CPC):** Mr. Speaker, this morning the presidents of 13 universities said, "For that vote of confidence in higher education and advanced research, we are indeed grateful to the government".

Also the Association of Universities and Colleges stated that the budget "shows that the government recognizes the vital role universities play in creating opportunities for Canadians in the new economy".

We are investing in science and technology to make a stronger Canada now and in the future.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

#### RIGHTS & DEMOCRACY

**Mr. Bernard Patry (Pierrefonds—Dollard, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives have abused their power and reorganized Rights & Democracy to reflect their own ideology. They have dismissed employees, appointed to the board of directors people who were far from being the unanimous choice, and refused to consult the opposition parties on the appointment of the new president.

Will the Conservatives stop interfering and give the board of directors the necessary latitude to respond to every request to appear from the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs?

**Hon. Lawrence Cannon (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, as I have reminded hon. members of the House, Rights & Democracy is an independent organization run by a board of directors. Its staff are not part of the public service.

Rights & Democracy was created by a Conservative government. Given that our government has a sincere and fundamental belief in the work of this organization, it will continue to support Rights & Democracy.

I invite hon. members, if they so desire, to put questions to the directors during a parliamentary committee meeting.

\* \* \*

#### INFRASTRUCTURE

**Mr. Mario Laframboise (Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, Quebec municipalities deplore the Conservative

#### Oral Questions

government's lack of flexibility. By imposing December 31, 2010, and March 31, 2011, as the deadlines for completion of infrastructure work funded by Ottawa, the federal government is penalizing Quebec municipalities and depriving them of the funding to which they are entitled.

Why is the government refusing to be flexible and preventing Quebec municipalities from benefiting fully from federal funding?

**Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am proud to announce that our collaboration with the Government of Quebec and municipalities in all Quebec regions has been very successful. There is not one dollar left on the table. Everyone is prepared and will continue to work together.

There have been good examples of cooperation and I am certain that Quebec municipalities, like all municipalities throughout Canada, will take steps to create jobs next year. We cannot wait several years to create hope and jobs in Quebec.

\* \* \*

#### SOCIAL MEASURES

**Ms. Megan Leslie (Halifax, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, 20% of homeless women are sexually assaulted every year. That is a tragedy. But the government has allocated three times as much money for animal shelters as it has for women's shelters.

Furthermore, hundreds of thousands of children and seniors live in substandard housing. Canada is the only G8 nation without a national housing strategy.

Will the government support our bill in order to solve the problem?

[English]

**Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the NDP has developed a nasty habit of deciding to vote against budgets without having read them.

If the hon. member had taken the time to read the last few budgets, she would know that we have committed almost \$2 billion in a five-year course just for affordable housing, social housing, and that includes shelters to protect those who need our protection. We are making these advances. In fact, in British Columbia alone some 87,000 new sites have been built for affordable housing. The member should learn to read the budget.

\* \* \*

• (1500)

#### SEALING INDUSTRY

**Mrs. Tilly O'Neill-Gordon (Miramichi, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, today Canadian sealers again came under attack from a member of the Liberal caucus. This morning a Liberal senator, working with a radical animal rights group, announced his plans to retable a bill to end the seal hunt.

I ask the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans this. What will this government do to protect Canadian sealers from this harassment from within the Liberal caucus?

*The Budget*

**Hon. Gail Shea (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is unfortunate that the Liberal leader continues to condone the actions of a caucus member, who seems determined to outlaw a legitimate economic activity for coastal and northern Canadians. This is shameful.

While our Conservative government fights to defend the hunt against the misinformation campaigns of the professional anti-seal hunt lobby groups, the Liberals continue to caucus with a man focused on putting these Canadians out of work. They should be supporting job creation.

It is time for the Liberal leader to take—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Halifax West.

\* \* \*

**ATLANTIC CANADA OPPORTUNITIES AGENCY**

**Hon. Geoff Regan (Halifax West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the MP for West Nova is boasting about secretly and surreptitiously securing \$3 million in funding for the ferry service between Yarmouth and Maine. It is too bad this mysterious money was not included in the budget.

Could the ACOA minister assure Nova Scotians today that this phantom \$3 million is still available if another proposal comes forward to maintain this vital link?

**Hon. Keith Ashfield (Minister of National Revenue, Minister of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and Minister for the Atlantic Gateway, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, obviously the situation in Nova Scotia to do with the ferry services is an issue that is running deeply throughout the people of Nova Scotia. We did agree with the municipalities that we would support them any way we could in their endeavour and we will continue that.

---

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*Translation*]

**THE BUDGET****FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF MINISTER OF FINANCE**

The House resumed consideration of the motion that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government, of the amendment and of the amendment to the amendment.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services and to the Minister of National Revenue, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I will share my time with the member for Kildonan—St. Paul.

As we know, our government is responsible for the prosperity of all Canadian provinces. That is why our Conservative government showed its good judgment by presenting the economic action plan in 2009. We are still looking out for the well-being of Canadians and families in 2010. The goal of this budget is to preserve and create jobs and to improve economic growth.

The 2010 budget will implement the second phase of the economic action plan that we proposed to Canadians in order to stimulate the economic recovery. Our government wants to complete

phase two of the action plan. That is why we are calling for the support of all members of Parliament so that we can continue to implement it.

Our Prime Minister has met with the opposition parties and he has taken job growth into account in establishing our priorities and the measures we will pursue in order to ensure the best possible recovery from this worldwide recession

Our government is supporting the economic recovery. We will allocate \$19 billion in new stimulus funding to continue to create jobs now. We will invest in a limited number of targeted actions to create jobs and stimulate growth for our economic future. And we are outlining a plan for returning to a balanced budget once the economy is back on track.

By protecting jobs, we hope to build a solid foundation for the future.

We will protect these jobs by improving the work-sharing program; by supporting young workers through internships and skills development; by ensuring innovation, training, education, and research and development to create the jobs of tomorrow; by keeping taxes low to encourage growth and make us more competitive; by eliminating tariffs to make Canada a better place to invest and to do business; and by cutting red tape in order to ease the burden for Canadian businesses.

Projects that engage people are essential. Businesses and municipalities in Quebec are proud to be contributing to the economic recovery and maintaining their prominent position in the economy.

The Government of Canada is supporting communities in a tangible way with major investments. Last October, I was in Vaudreuil-Dorion to announce \$16.794 million in joint financial assistance for the construction of a multidisciplinary sports complex to create a stimulating environment where families can play sports together.

Another piece of good news for Quebecers was the joint announcement of \$8 million for new bioenergy that I made in Saint-Patrice-de-Beaurivage with Quebec minister Nathalie Normandeau. This is a first for Canada. Bioenergy is a future employment sector.

Our government is supporting clean technologies that create opportunities for economic growth and offer innovative solutions to help protect the environment.

Our government is investing in cultural projects to bring people together. I went to Mingan to announce \$2.5 million in funding for the creation of the Maison de la culture innue.

In Montreal, Théâtre La Licorne received \$2.289 million from the Government of Canada to expand its facilities.

I also went to Baie-Comeau to announce a Canada-Quebec partnership to build two drinking water treatment plants, a project with a total cost of \$47.2 million.



*The Budget*

•(1505)

I was also happy to take advantage of my trip to the Upper North Shore to take part in a meeting of Business Contact, which supports the business community. This initiative of our government is helping develop winning strategies for our SMEs.

In Prévost, I announced a joint investment of \$1,040,780 to renovate the drinking water supply infrastructure and upgrade the wastewater treatment plant.

Still on the subject of infrastructure funding, I was able to announce a joint contribution of \$1,540,000 to the municipality of Lotbinière and \$611,800 to the municipality of Saint-Agapit under PRECO for revitalizing drinking water and sewer pipelines. Similar announcements have been made in dozens of municipalities throughout Quebec.

Our government is supporting regional festivals. In Saint-Tite, I announced \$520,000 to support the legendary western festival as part of the marquee tourism events program.

Our SMEs are powerful economic drivers. Many businesses have received financial assistance to increase productivity and maintain or create jobs.

I am thinking of DK-SPEC, where I announced \$400,000 in financial assistance. This project, which will generate \$3.6 million in total investment, will create eight jobs and maintain 63 others in Lévis.

I am also thinking of Fromagerie Bergeron, where I announced \$500,000 in funding from the community adjustment fund to help the cheesemaker acquire specialized equipment. Our investment will create 10 high-quality jobs and maintain existing jobs.

I had the honour of going to Blanc-Sablon to unveil a plaque commemorating the site's national historic significance due to its rich archaeological heritage. Let us not forget that for the regions, we allocated \$100 million over two years for marquee tourism regions to draw a greater number of tourists to Canada.

I am thinking too of new families and young people who have had and will have so much fun throughout their childhoods thanks to investments that will carry over into the second phase of the economic action plan to build and upgrade recreational facilities.

I am thinking of projects like the one in the municipality of Saint-Flavien, which received \$1,027,730 in joint federal-provincial funding to build a multi-purpose building housing a library, community room and recreational space.

It makes me happy to think of all the kids who will be able to go swimming this summer. Sport and physical activity are essential to good health. We are investing \$500 million over two years through our economic action plan to upgrade sports facilities across Canada.

Dreams and opportunities enable our young people to think about what kind of jobs they can have in the future. Last year, 70 organizations in Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière received funding to create 108 summer jobs for students. The economic situation has not changed much, and the \$20 million over two years will help our young people gain valuable skills and experience again this year.

Our government's investments in the knowledge industry will foster innovation in Canada. Just this morning, I read a Canadian Association of Research Libraries communiqué commending our government for having increased funding for the knowledge industry.

Last August, I was in beautiful Abitibi-Témiscamingue where I had the honour of announcing \$7,837,617 in funding to set up an agri-food research station at the UQAT.

We also partnered with the Government of Quebec to give the UQAT a total of \$1.5 million to develop integrated water resources research infrastructure for the evaluation and sustainable development of groundwater.

In closing, I would like to underscore the contribution to the agriculture sector in budget 2010. Agriculture plays a vital role and is a key economic sector for every rural community in Canada.

It is a sector that is under a great deal of pressure, as are other sectors influenced by the realities of global markets.

•(1510)

Through the AgriFlexibility fund, measures will be introduced to relieve pressure on the cattle sector and help it stay competitive.

In this second phase of the economic action plan, our government is providing financial support for the adoption of new and cost effective technologies and is supporting the development and commercialization of innovative technologies related to the removal and use of specified risk materials.

We are all well aware of what it means to make choices, but one thing is essential and that is to be able to work and earn a living.

That is why the first priority of our government is the economy, job creation and growth in order to build for the future. Every one of us wins with budget 2010, because it enhances our blueprint for society.

In closing, I would like to remind all my colleagues that Canada's economic action plan is a two-year plan to create and protect jobs, to stimulate our economy and to ensure a prosperous future for the entire country.

•(1515)

[English]

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the reality is that unemployment is going to go up from 8.2% to 8.5%. At the same time, although the government has frozen EI rates for the current period, rates will be increasing substantially over the term outlined in the budget. I believe it is some \$19 billion in additional EI premiums, which are job killers. That is to quote the finance minister.

On top of that, the employment insurance benefits that over 500,000 Canadians are currently drawing are going to lapse and they will have no recourse unless they find jobs.

*The Budget*

I want to ask the member whether he acknowledges the problem that people's benefits will be lapsing and at the same time employment insurance premiums will be increasing substantially for employees and employers and killing jobs.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for his question.

Our economic action plan is working. We are focusing our efforts on what is important for Canadians. We are helping people most affected by the recession and we are investing in training and creating jobs.

Canadians are benefiting from the measures in the economic action plan: 300,000 Canadians have benefited from five additional weeks of employment insurance benefits. Work sharing has helped protect the jobs of 165,000 Canadians.

There has been unprecedented investment in training to help Canadians, whether they are eligible for employment insurance or not, and we have also frozen premiums.

**Mr. Robert Vincent (Shefford, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I listened to the member. He is wasting his breath and he does not know what he is talking about when he says that he wants to help those most in need. In my opinion, seniors do need a bit of money from the government. These people are living below the poverty line. What did the Conservatives do in their budget? They gave seniors a holiday. But seniors do not want a holiday, they want some money. There was talk of \$110 more per month, but they did absolutely nothing.

Moreover, they say they want to help volunteers and caregivers who look after a relative at home, resulting in savings to society, but they are offering a prime ministerial award for volunteerism. As if that will help people.

When they want to help, they are good at helping those they wish to help. They excel at helping the oil sands industry. However, they talk about a blueprint for society. I do not know where they dug up that term, but I think they do not even understand it.

What does the government plan on doing in future for seniors and the volunteers in our society who are in great need of help?

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Mr. Speaker, in this second phase of Canada's economic action plan, which was carefully put together after an assessment of our economic situation, we are staying the course.

We have been very flexible and examined the needs of the entire population. We have prioritized the interests and values of the Quebec nation. The reason for working closely with the provinces and the municipalities was to move forward with construction projects that will create and maintain jobs hit hard by the global recession.

We will continue to help our young workers as well as our older workers. We will work on behalf of our families and our seniors to provide quality of life to all Canadians by exercising leadership focused on economic recovery.

• (1520)

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Shefford on a point of order.

**Mr. Robert Vincent:** Mr. Speaker, I did not ask the member opposite to give a speech and I did not ask him to continue talking about the existing plan. I asked him what he intends to do for seniors and volunteers, but he is still going on about his action plan and is not answering my question.

Yet the questions we are asking him are clear. If he would like to give another 10 or 20 minute speech, he merely has to add his name to the list.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Mr. Speaker, if my colleague had been listening to my response, he would have heard the answer to his question. But instead of listening, he is still on his feet and yelling, which is typical of the Bloc Québécois.

**The Speaker:** As we know, during questions and comments—regardless of the subject—the questions do not always get answered. Other things and other issues are often discussed.

It is not up to the Speaker to determine if what a member is saying constitutes a response to a given question, whether asked or imagined. I do not know and it is not up to me to decide. Accordingly, this was not a point of order.

The period provided for questions and comments has now expired.

[*English*]

**Mrs. Joy Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, as Canada celebrated International Women's Day yesterday and we are currently in the middle of International Women's Week, I believe it is important to reflect on the impact that this budget and our previous budgets have had on women.

This year, Canada's theme for International Women's Day is "Strong Women. Strong Canada. Strong World." It reflects our government's firm belief that increasing women's participation and access to leadership roles and opportunities will help women and girls reach their full potential and help build a more prosperous Canada.

Canadian women have made enormous strides and the current government has the highest percentage of women in cabinet in Canadian history. The House of Commons currently has 67 women in it.

A strong economy that benefits all Canadians remains our government's top priority. Our objectives are to fully implement the economic action plan, balance the budget once the economy has recovered, and build Canada's economy for the future. Our economic and social programs are helping hundreds of thousands of women at every income level to take action to increase their security and improve their lives.

*The Budget*

For example, since 2006-07, a total of 396 projects have been approved by the Government of Canada through Status of Women Canada. Our federal government is investing over \$19 billion in 2009-10 in supports for children and their families. This includes approximately \$5.9 billion for early childhood development and child care. Since 2006, the federal government's universal child care plan provides choice in child care to all parents of young children, whether they work in the paid labour force or care for their children at home.

This plan has two components. First, the universal child care benefit offsets the cost of whatever form of child care parents choose, providing families with \$100 per month for each child under six. Second, there is \$250 million in new transfers for provinces and territories to support the creation of child care spaces in addition to other transfers for early childhood development and early learning and child care.

In all, federal transfers in support of families with children total over \$1.13 billion this year. When we talk about this budget and about the track record that our government has had, especially for women and children in this country, it is of paramount importance. This budget speech will centre around what our government has done, especially for women. It will also talk about some of the opportunities that my riding of Kildonan—St. Paul has had to improve its community centres and infrastructure.

As far as the economic benefits of women are concerned, employment insurance has several features that benefit women, including extending parental benefits to 35 weeks and allowing recipients to work. Self-employed women now have greater access to business financing and a full range of supports to launch and expand their businesses.

Women are now one of the business engines in our economy. As I speak, many women are starting their own home businesses. They are engaging in the business world, creating a lot of jobs and stimulating the economy. This is a result of the opportunities that our government has put in place for women to grow their businesses.

The aboriginal human resources development strategy and the aboriginal skills and employment training strategy focus on supporting demand-driven skills development, fostering partnerships with the private sector in the provinces and territories, and emphasizing accountability and results. A lot of women are involved in these strategies.

A variety of federal supports, such as the Canada child tax benefit, the national child benefit supplement and the child disability benefit, help women combine earning with caring for their children. In addition, the child-rearing provision in the Canada and Quebec pension plans helps increase women's retirement income. These are very important elements. In my riding, many older women are telling me they wished they had these benefits when they were raising their children years ago.

● (1525)

The Fairness for the Self-Employed Act extends special employment insurance benefits like maternity, parental, sickness, and compassionate care to self-employed individuals, a growing number of whom are women doing this on a voluntary basis.

The aboriginal skills and training strategic investment fund supports a number of projects that target aboriginal women, including one to increase women's knowledge of business management, financial management, and small business development. Another project seeks to engage aboriginal women in academic and educational activities.

The working income tax benefit supplements the earnings of low income workers, many of whom are women.

I want to talk about violence against women. As members know, Bill C-268 is currently in the Senate and I am awaiting its passage. Under the federal government, in March 2008 the Government of Canada announced five new shelters to be built in five provinces to address violence against first nations women and children. In the 2007 budget, it included funds to expand the new horizons for seniors program. A portion of that goes to the elder abuse awareness program to foster activities to help reduce the incidence of abuse of older adults. Many older women are recipients of this abuse.

Starting in 2007 our government committed \$6 million annually to help prevent human trafficking and online child exploitation. As members know, the horrendous crime of trafficking of children is growing in the country. The government has acknowledged that funds must be put in place to help combat it.

In 2008 Canada also strongly supported the renewal of the mandate of the UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women, to collect information, recommend measures to eliminate violence, and remedy its consequences. Under the administration of the Government of Canada, there have been many inroads and steps forward to help support women, children, and the most vulnerable people in society.

In December 2009 Status of Women Canada contributed \$1 million to UNiTE to End Violence Against Women. That is a project run by shelter organizations across Canada to facilitate the national exchange of best practices and to design a national network of women's shelters across Canada. This is connecting the dots.

On January 15, 2009, Public Safety Canada, the RCMP, and the Canadian Crime Stoppers Association partnered to develop a national media campaign to raise awareness on human trafficking and to access the crime stoppers' 24/7 anonymous national tip line for reporting suspected cases of human trafficking, which includes the domestic trafficking of women and girls for the purposes of sexual exploitation.

The budget is all about stimulating the economy. In looking at the new budget that was just announced a few days ago, it is continuing that stimulation of the economy. It is supporting women and children, and also our most vulnerable citizens, our elderly. However, it also provides at the community level dollars and cents that are put into programs such as the RInC program. Manitoba infrastructure has been the recipient of that money. In my riding, many centres like the Gateway Community Centre, the Gwen Selter Creative Living Centre, the Garden City Community Centre, and the Red River Community Centre have been recipients of these programs.

*The Budget*

In Canada's communities, many children who go into their community rinks and recreation centres have the opportunity to grow, learn sports, be healthy, and stay out of trouble. Families can do this kind of activity together. It is low cost.

In terms of looking at the budget, it is staying the course. It is making Canada a place where people can grow, live, and be able to prosper.

• (1530)

Canada went into the recession late. We are coming out of the global recession. It is a fragile emergence from the global recession. Canada has much to be proud of.

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for her speech this afternoon. In fact, she and I represent neighbouring ridings in Winnipeg.

I note that in the budget the government is committing \$126 million for nuclear research which when we think about the waste associated with nuclear power, the cost of that, the impossibility of getting approvals, and the fact that nobody in Canada, nobody I know, wants to live anywhere near a nuclear plant would suggest that perhaps the government should be looking at an east-west power grid.

We in Manitoba have some substantial hydro power resources. Only half of our resources are developed. The half that we have developed is all being sent to the United States. Perhaps we could have the federal government involved in developing an east-west power grid.

Her fellow member, the minister of democratic reform, has taken an active interest in the issue. In fact, he has offered to meet with me on the subject in the next couple of days. Perhaps she could get the rest of her caucus colleagues involved.

There are nine Conservative MPs in Manitoba sitting on that side of the House. The question is, why can they not have some influence and attempt to get the government to look at this east-west power grid?

It was a Conservative Party that built the railroad back in John A. Macdonald's days uniting the country. It seems to me that a power grid across Canada so that Manitoba could send clean hydroelectric power to Saskatchewan, Alberta and east to Ontario would, in fact, have a unifying effect on the country.

I would like to know what the member's thoughts would be on this initiative and what she would like to contribute to it.

**Mrs. Joy Smith:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for that very interesting question because this is an issue that has been of paramount importance in Manitoba.

However, the member does know that it is a provincial jurisdiction along with federal partnerships. I know that there are talks underway right now. Basically it is a provincial jurisdiction, where that decision is made.

I know that all of us are very interested, especially the Manitoba members of Parliament, because hydro is a very important resource in Manitoba. I think there is potential for jobs. The hydroelectric

power that is generated is a commodity that can be shared with the world.

**Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal (Newton—North Delta, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend the hon. member for Kildonan—St. Paul for bringing in her private member's bill on violence against women which I was proud to support.

On another note, I heard her passionate speech about caring for women and children. When I look at my personal situation, I along with my wife Roni were able to raise three children. When I go to Newton—North Delta, I cannot find a single day care or early learning centre that would provide my children day care and learning for \$2 a day.

I am wondering if the hon. member for Kildonan—St. Paul would tell me if there is any day care centre in her riding that would provide day care for \$2 a day, as she mentioned.

• (1535)

**Mrs. Joy Smith:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member opposite for acknowledging my bill C-268 and its importance.

In answer to his question, as the member knows, there has been \$250 million in new transfers to provinces and territories to support the creation of child care spaces in addition to other transfers for early childhood development and early learning and child care. In all, federal transfers in support of families and children total over \$1.13 billion this year.

As the member opposite also knows, the transfers do go to the provinces. In actual fact it is within the provincial jurisdiction to actually fund the day cares and put that money into creating those spaces.

I do thank the member and I can say that in my riding I have many very wonderful progressive day cares. I do not particularly know the cost per day because that is a sliding rule.

**Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal (Newton—North Delta, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the hon. member for Eglinton—Lawrence.

I stand today to voice my disappointment with this budget, but in today's speech I first want to turn my thoughts to the words of the right hon. Prime Minister when he was leader of the opposition. It was 2005 and a Liberal budget had just delivered a surplus; yes, that is right, a surplus. Many in the House have probably forgotten exactly what this word means because we now have to watch a government that has absolutely no clue how to balance spending and revenues.

In his response, the Prime Minister, the then leader of the opposition, stated:

I got into partisan federal politics originally because I wanted to see something done about the federal deficit.

After the last few budgets delivered by the current government and the Prime Minister we now know what he wanted to do about the deficit. He wanted to grow it to record breaking levels. The Prime Minister also seemed to have concerns about over-spending when he was on this side of the House. Once again, I quote:

*The Budget*

We are also concerned about the rate at which the government plans to increase spending, that is 7% for the next few years. We have past experience with the results of unplanned spending, when this government spends without any specific plan, without the knowledge of Parliament, and without the slightest respect for the most basic accounting practices.

It seems as though those concerns have disappeared now. The government is not even focusing on how to bring this deficit to a balanced budget.

Let us examine the record of the government since taking office. Since 2006, government spending has risen by \$58 billion, that is, by over 25%. In fact, with the exception of next year, this is going to grow until the year 2015. In a time of supposed fiscal restraint and in consideration of the past comments by the Prime Minister, this is hypocrisy at its finest. This is a government that is completely out of control, and what is worse, it has absolutely no plan as to how to emerge from these deficits.

Now before I am asked a question about whether stimulus spending is beneficial, I want to make a crucial distinction. The government was spending way above its means long before it could use the excuse of stimulus spending.

Even the way the government handled the so-called economic action plan has been a disaster. Communities were given little to no information on guidelines and criteria. Deadlines were set within weeks of announcing the program. Billions of dollars were stuck in Ottawa, with projects hanging in the balance because of delays. Building seasons were lost because of projects not receiving funding before the winter.

● (1540)

This leads me to my next point. The government has spoken about a plan to return Canada to balanced budgets by 2015, yet the government's projections for growth are overly optimistic according to many economists across this country, and the government is without a plan to create economic opportunity.

The government's plans for job creation rely on \$19 billion from the so-called action plan, even though 92% of that money has already been committed. To clarify, that means there is no new money to create jobs.

Then we have the government trumping its work-sharing adjustment program, which provides income support to workers eligible for employment insurance when business is slow for their employers.

So again, let me clarify: Instead of working on creating a good economic climate or acting to improve the prospects of employers across the country, the government thinks that a temporary income supplement alone is the answer. Once again, the government is completely out of touch with the gravity of the situation. The facts are that 1.6 million Canadians are out of work, and 330,000 of them have lost their job in the past year.

I recently had a constituent approach me about the situation at Abbey Window Coverings, which is closing its Surrey manufacturing plant and recently handed out layoff notices to 140 employees. The constituent was particularly upset by the fact it was a local operation bought out by an American company just two years ago,

only now to have those jobs shipped out of the country, likely to Mexico.

The fact is that the government has no plan for job creation and no understanding of how to get people back to work, and it offers only temporary measures for a limited number of workers facing layoffs and is recycling stimulus announcements with little new money.

The government has come up with a laissez-faire approach to controlling our economy and is relying on razor thin projections to pull our country back into a strong economic position.

I am sorry, but to the constituents I encounter in my riding who have lost their jobs, and to the families across the nation who are worried about where their next paycheque is coming from, this approach is completely unacceptable. It shows a complete lack of empathy, and once again proves that the government has no clue about how to manage the economy.

My party will not support the budget, but it will not bring the government down on this budget, because that would not be in the best interests of Canadians. We learned a lesson in the fall. We understand the huge financial and other costs involved in an unnecessary election. Unlike the government, which examines every decision within the framework of political gain, we do not.

It is time for this House to generate a plan to create jobs, because job creation, at the end of the day, is the focal point of any economic recovery. I urge the government to bring in an economic recovery plan that would create jobs, instead of it playing politics.

● (1545)

**Mr. Gordon Brown (Leeds—Grenville, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I took the opportunity to listen quite intently to the member for Newton—North Delta and what he had to say about the budget. He talked about the deficit, but it is easy to get up in the House and say whatever one wishes about particular issues, especially when one does not have to take any responsibility for them.

Maybe the hon. member could tell us what his party would have done differently about the deficit. What would his party have not spent in terms of job creation and economic stimulus? What taxes would it raise and how much would it raise them by?

**Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal:** Madam Speaker, I am sure that if we referred to history we would know that it was the Liberals who brought taxes down for ordinary working Canadians by 11%.

This is the party, the Liberal Party, that when in government took the \$42 billion deficit mess left it by the then Prime Minister, the right hon. Brian Mulroney, to a \$13 billion surplus and handed it to the Conservatives.

What did the Conservatives do? They spent recklessly. In four years they have brought us down to a \$53 billion deficit. It is shameful.

We will invest money to create jobs.

*The Budget*

**Hon. Joseph Volpe (Eglinton—Lawrence, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I want to ask my colleague a question, because he was following what the Minister of Finance and the Prime Minister said they were doing in the last three months when they shut down Parliament and dissolved the democratic process. They were out there recalibrating what they were going to do for the economy.

Therefore, we want to know if this is what the government meant by recalibration. When it listened to the Restaurant and Foodservices Association, which pointed out that the industry had lost 26,000 jobs as a result of the government's incompetent mismanagement of the economy and was looking for some relief, not a bail-out but relief, and asked the government if it would do something to help the industry to provide jobs for the young men and women who enter the economy via the food services system, what did the government do? It responded with a 9% increase in payroll taxes.

Is that what the government wanted to do by recalibration, putting people out of business?

**Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal:** Madam Speaker, I would like to commend the member for Eglinton—Lawrence. He is one of the longest sitting members in the House and he understands. He was part—

**An hon. member:** I was in high school when he was elected.

• (1550)

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie):** Order, please. Out of respect for the member who is speaking, I would ask that other members wait until there is time for questions and comments.

The hon. member has the floor and may continue for one minute.

**Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal:** Madam Speaker, the hon. member is part of the party that gave this country a strong economic foundation, which the Conservative government has destroyed in four years. I appreciate the comments of the hon. member.

The members on the other side have claimed that the government is going to freeze EI premiums. If I look at the chart on page 52 of the book the government members released, since the year 2000 EI premiums have been coming down. It is because of the Liberal Party that those EI premiums have come down.

What are the Conservatives going to do? They are going to raise the premiums by \$13 billion, which alone will cost 200,000 jobs in Canada.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie):** I just want to advise all members that I will not recognize for questions and comments those members who heckle while somebody is speaking. This is just to ensure that everyone is well advised.

Resuming debate. The hon. member for Eglinton—Lawrence.

**Hon. Joseph Volpe (Eglinton—Lawrence, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I thank you for giving me the opportunity to reflect seriously on a document that requires very little attention. It requires very little attention for the following reasons.

First, as a budget document, it is sorrowfully missing in substance and in content. The budget speech, all 15 pages of it, double spaced, contains only a quarter of the intentions and is only a quarter of the length of the throne speech which was delivered a mere 24 hours before the budget. What does that tell us?

It tells us first that in a Speech from the Throne, the government lays out its big vision, its big plan, its direction for where the country should be going. It gives people a sense of what the government sees this country can be. We all know what this country can be. We know what it has been and we know where it should be going. We really wanted to see whether the government is up to the task of all Canadians and the ambition that is resident in our nation, the potential that resides in all of us who live in Canada and who call this country our home and call this country our future.

Someone talked about maybe it is a place where we can seek hope. No, we live it every day. Every day Canada has a future for each and every one of us. We wanted to see whether the government would be up to the task. We waited with bated breath while the government recalibrated itself for three months. It shut down the entire democratic process so that it could give its attention to meeting the challenge that every Canadian lives on a daily basis.

What did the Conservatives do? They came up with a budget. The budget is the amount of expenditures that the government will put to the realization of those ambitions that are resident in every Canadian's life and which are expressed through the Speech from the Throne. How disappointed must every Canadian be after listening to the prattling of the Minister of Finance in the budget speech.

Every Canadian watching that performance, or lack thereof, was looking at the ways to judge this. The only thing they can do on a budget is to examine whether those who deliver it exude a competence.

[*Translation*]

Are they competent? Is there an inherent competence in this budget?

[*English*]

If there is credibility, can these people actually do things? Can they deliver them? Is there a trust factor? Indeed, is there a vision for the country?

On all of those criteria, on each and every one, the answer would be an unflinching no.

Look at the competence that we have before us. The government is the same one that a mere 12 months ago said, "Don't worry. Be happy. We are the strongest nation economically and fiscally in the entire G8. No problem. No recession".

Put to the wall by members of the opposition parties on this side of the House, what happened? The Conservatives said, "Oh well, we made a mistake. In fact, there is a worldwide recession. It is synchronized, just like swimmers in a pool, and it is going to hit us, so what we have to do is dissolve Parliament. Let us hear what the opposition has to say". This is after six months of no sitting of Parliament in 2008.

*The Budget*

The Conservatives came back and what did they do? They said, “Oh, maybe you are right. Do you know what we will do? We are going to go into deficit finance. We are going to spend money we do not have, even though we are the richest in terms of our potential and the bucks that we had and fiscal responsibility. No, we do not have any money. We are going to borrow it and we are going to do two things with it. First, we are going to spend about \$16 billion in infrastructure programs”.

Some people watching this program are wondering what it means when money is spent for infrastructure. Is it capital intensive items? Is it spending on prosperity-producing enterprises? Is it spending on transportation? Is it spending on gateway strategies? Is it spending on something that someone can point to five years, 10 years, 15 years down the road and say that it was money well spent, that we were happy to go into debt because we got something worthwhile out of it, something that is durable, something that all Canadians can point to and say it is their own?

Did we get that? No. There is not a single Canadian in this room who could say that there was this grand strategy, that the money was well spent. The fact of the matter is the money has not been spent. The government allowed \$3 billion already to lapse. The Conservatives say they have allocated about 90% of those \$16 billion, but who knows? They are the same people who said that we had a surplus when we were looking at a deficit. Then they turned around and said that they would put in another \$16 billion. Now we have \$16 billion for infrastructure. That is money that we have to pick up and we have to build something with it. Then we have another \$16 billion that the Conservatives have now started to call stimulus.

Remember that we did not need stimulus because we were already in great shape. We were told to be happy. Stimulus means essentially the Conservatives are giving up our money that they knew they would not get because the economy was in terrible shape anyway. That is really what it means.

It means as well that the Conservatives are getting prepared to spend more money on employment insurance payments. Do you know how much more, Madam Speaker? This is why I talk about competence. Five hundred thousand jobs were lost in 2009, not entry level jobs, but jobs that pay a substantial wage for men and women who have families to raise and who are in the business of making sure that the Canadian dream becomes a reality for all of their families. Those 500,000 jobs are gone. They are gone from forestry. They are gone from fishing. They are gone from agri-production. They are gone from mining. They are gone from the auto sector. What were they replaced with?

We should think about these people and what they call the budget of last week. The Minister of Finance says we created 130,000 jobs last year. Yes, but 90% of them are at minimum wage and all are part time. What will the Conservatives do for the half a million Canadians who have exhausted or are about to exhaust their employment insurance?

The Conservatives say they will freeze the transfers to provinces. The provinces will have to pick up the balance. We will find ourselves in a situation that is more critical than it was last year.

These are people who demand credibility. Is a document like that worth thinking about as a serious budget document?

• (1555)

Every Canadian that is following the House of Commons and watching this debate should be absolutely outraged that the Prime Minister of Canada would tell Canadians that he was going to recalibrate so that he could re-sanitize a system that he ruined, soiled and disrupted. That is what this budget really represents.

The Minister of Finance was waving something around, a prop. I would not be allowed to do that, but he did it. He took half an hour to read 15 pages. We used to call that a slow reader. Why did he do that? Because there is no substance in the budget. He had to do it for effect.

Not only is there no substance in it, but as I said a moment ago, there is no vision. Where are we going to be? What is the Conservatives' mantra? Think about the tragedy of wasting the efforts of all parliamentarians. The Conservatives' mantra is going to be “We are going to not tax”. Hold on, they just taxed \$30 billion last year. I am sorry, that was a mistake. It was \$53 billion because that is the deficit, also another \$100 billion because that is what they say they lost in terms of increasing the debt.

Madam Speaker, I know you are a person who is anxious to make everything relevant to everybody, but do you know what \$100 billion is? It is \$3,000 out of your pocket. It is \$3,000 out of the pockets of the pages who are here in the service of the House of Commons. It is \$3,000 for every man, woman and child in the country. Another \$53 billion deficit is another \$2,000. Every single man, woman and child in this country lost \$5,000 thanks to the Conservatives' incompetence last year. And these are people with a vision? They are people who have been taxing all year and are going to increase taxes so they can level off the deficit.

There is nothing so tragic as the Minister of Finance standing and crowing about the efficiencies of a government that he and the Prime Minister led down to perdition. They have been doing their best to ruin the economy of this country and the dreams of every Canadian. Shame on them.

• (1600)

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Madam Speaker, the member made a great speech. I want to make a comment to do with the Conservatives and their tax shift from corporations to Canadians. Clearly, that is what is happening in this budget. It is not something that should surprise people from our party or any party because that is their bent, to shift taxes from corporations onto the working people of the country.

The government continues to drive the country deeper into debt. We are now at \$56 billion in this past budget. It gives tax cuts to profitable corporations, in fact \$21 billion since 2008 and 60 billion dollars' worth by the time the cuts are fully implemented in 2014. During the same time, the government by its own reckoning will add \$162.4 billion to the public debt, \$60 billion more than the previous 10 years of surpluses will be erased.

*The Budget*

While the government is giving corporations a free pass in contributing to the country's financial recovery, it is planning to take a big chunk out of the pockets of Canadian workers. Over the next four years the government will rake in \$19 billion more on EI premiums than it pays out. It plans to use the payroll tax to pay down the debt that corporate taxes helped create. This represents a tax shift from the corporations to the workers. I would like to ask the member whether he thinks this is fair.

**Hon. Joseph Volpe:** Madam Speaker, it is very simple. Of course the answer is that it is unfair, but so is everything else the government has done.

The Conservatives took a gift of a \$12 billion surplus when they came into office. They took seven years of surplus budgets. They took a national debt that had dropped down by \$100 billion on top of that. They took investments in higher education. They took investments in non-government organizations and organizations that make the network of Canada work properly. They took all of the investments that make social cohesion harmonious and productive for the quality of life of every Canadian. They have systematically decimated it all.

Then they stand here and talk about what to do for higher learning. They cut an organization that provided for best practices across Canada in terms of post-secondary education. It was one of their very first casualties. They cut the court challenges program, which gave women and all other disadvantaged people an opportunity to access court programs in order to advance their interests and rights under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and their movement under the rule of law in Canada. That is what those guys have done.

Of course the answer to the member's question is no, it is not fair. It is downright disgraceful that the Conservatives would do what they did.

• (1605)

**Mr. Merv Tweed (Brandon—Souris, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I listened to my hon. colleague, for whom I have a great deal of respect. He is very passionate about how he speaks. However, I will remind him, and I will remind my hon. colleague across the floor from Transcona who sat in a provincial legislature, that in 1995 the federal Liberal government gutted health care and post-secondary education. As a member of government of that day, many people suffered.

How would the member reconcile what happened then to what has happened today?

**Hon. Joseph Volpe:** Madam Speaker, I suppose I could go as far back as Diefenbaker. In my community in Canada, Diefenbaker and the Conservative government are dirty words. That was the only time they were deprived of the opportunity to actually work.

However, I will set the record straight. I can go back as far as he would like to go back, but I will go only as far as this. In 2005 we established a system of \$40 billion over a 10 year period, or \$4 billion a year, in health transfers to the provinces. Later that year, we established another \$32 billion transfer to the provinces through an equalization program. That was another \$3 billion a year. That was \$7 billion a year, starting in 2005 ending 2015, going to provinces in order to meet higher education and health care costs.

That is darn good and a heck of a lot more than any of the issues the Conservatives want to talk about on reduced services. Those were designed to improve them. Let those who did not improve them assume the responsibility.

**Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to advise that I will be sharing my time today with my hon. colleague, the member for Nickel Belt.

Before commenting on the substance of the budget, I feel obliged to share the concerns of my constituents on the budget process. The government has lauded its broad consultation process. Perhaps the budget well represents the views of those invited to the table, however, not everyone was included. I was told by a number of my constituents, who I had encouraged to participate, that they were rebuffed, told that the consultation was by invitation only and the locations secret. That is hardly open, transparent and inclusive. Let us hope that improved opportunities will be available to consider the deregulatory agenda set forth in the budget.

Through its throne speech, the government promises Canada unparalleled economic advantage as a clean energy superpower and leader in green job creation. Disappointingly, its path to a purported clean energy future remains almost singularly fixated on subsidizing, fast-tracking and deregulating the fossil fuel sector. The government has embraced fast-tracking of regulatory reviews of major energy projects as its preferred route to investment opportunities for Canadians. So much for balancing environment with economy.

While references are made to clean energy technologies, the depth of commitment to a green energy economy may be best evidenced in the term the Conservatives use "continue to invest" in the favoured old fossil fuel sector.

The Conservative road map to environmental deregulation is certainly clear in the budget. Compared with hits to the environment in the last budget, this one portends yet deeper erosion of the federal role. Such reforms merit scrutiny of legally mandated legislative and regulatory review tables.

As signatory to the North American agreement on environmental cooperation, the government is duty bound to consult concerned Canadians in advance of any environmental policy reform. How many more regulatory cuts will be made behind closed doors?

In its last budget, the government rescinded federal duties for environmental assessment of infrastructure projects on navigable waters, an action defended as a recessionary measure. Balancing environment and economy was set aside. The action drew a storm of protest from Canadians.



*The Budget*

Considering this year's budget, those changes may have been a trial balloon. This budget brings intensive streamlining, in other words cutting, of environmental programs under the guise of eliminating activity not part of a core role, increasing efficiency and eliminating unnecessary programs. Among departments targeted for streamlining, the Department of the Environment falls high on the list.

The budget also singles out environment as the one entity required to balance or recalibrate its legislated mandate to protect the environment with economic interests. A minister's legal mandate is thus revised by budget.

The minister defends this shift in environmental oversight of large energy projects as resolving duplication. What duplication? Based on the controversy and lawsuits surrounding the National Energy Board handling of environmental impacts and public rights in its review of the Alberta export power line, it is unlikely those communities will view these changes favourably. The communities of northern Alberta have equal concerns about devolving environmental duties to the environmental Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission to review environmental impacts of new nuclear plants proposed for their backyard.

In the throne speech the government declared "Nowhere is a commitment to principled policy, backed by action, needed more than in addressing climate change". What does the budget provide for action on climate change? Sadly, few tangible measures.

The government claims its actions to address climate change and promote green energy mirror those of the U.S. under the much touted U.S.-Canada clean energy dialogue.

Consider the actions of the two governments. Canada committed under the Copenhagen accord to contribute this fiscal year to the U.S. \$100 billion fund for developing countries. The United States has committed \$1 billion. Nowhere in the budget can one find Canada's fair contribution calculated at roughly \$420 million.

The U.S. budget committed \$56 million to implement the greenhouse gas regulations now being drafted. This budget shows no dollars to implement the long promised Canadian sector caps and emission trading regulations.

The U.S. department of energy budget declares commitment to creating jobs in a clean energy economy, investing in innovation and clean energy to put Americans back to work, save families' money and keep the U.S. competitive. It budgeted \$26.7 billion new dollars this year alone for renewable efficiency, renewable power, transit and sustainable communities. Perhaps most significant, the U.S. budget cut close to \$38 billion in perverse subsidies to oil, gas and the coal sector.

● (1610)

Last year the Conservative government budgeted a total of \$2 billion over five years for its clean energy and green infrastructure funds. Almost half of those dollars have already been gifted to coal-fired power and oil companies to subsidize testing of one technology to address their rising greenhouse gas emissions.

Sadly, the government's recalibrated path to a clean energy future appears to be more about environmental deregulation and continued

subsidies for fossil fuels. While support for the renewable fuels program for the forestry sector is welcomed, the lack of significant support for Canada's once burgeoning renewable power sector is a blow to our competitiveness. Additional action may be required to benefit the Alberta forestry sector whose efforts to market cogen power have been hampered by its inability to compete with the subsidized coal-fired power sector on the spot market.

We concur that what the Canadian energy sector needs and deserves is legal certainty. The government's answer is deregulation. Whose interests does this serve?

Only one-tenth of the fund, less than \$150 million, is to be divided among renewable power projects. That is hardly a major boost to a promising new Canadian energy sector.

The popular home energy retrofit program has been extended by one year. Why not extend this program to small and medium businesses? Why not commit as Obama did to retrofit 75% of federal buildings by 2011 to save the federal coffers?

No clarity is provided on expediting the long promised regulations to address air pollution and smog.

For the Conservative government, recalibration for a clean environment means deregulation, yet industry and public alike have called for legal clarity. Why? The one proven tool to shift investment to cleaner technology and green energy production is regulation. That brings true legal certainty. Notice of imminent regulations signals investors that technologies are moving from testing to deployment. Competition kicks in for commercialization of the most practicable solution. That was confirmed by the myriad clean tech entrepreneurs I spoke with at the last oil sands technology summit. They are sitting on the sidelines waiting to sell their equipment.

The budget offers accelerated capital cost writeoffs for equipment. Without the regulatory drivers, there will be few buyers.

*The Budget*

We can protect our energy and electricity markets. Strong regulatory action and targeted incentives could spur private investment in Canada's green energy sector and create jobs. Will our clean energy sector be left in the dust?

Last week's budget squanders millions of dollars on handouts for banks and oil companies, but does nothing for the real victims of the recession, nothing for seniors living in poverty and nothing for half a million hard-working Canadians set to exhaust their employment insurance benefits with no job to go to. There is little new investment in a green jobs economy.

New Democrats cannot support this budget as written. We look forward to support for our amendment to shelve the next year of corporate tax cuts and use the savings for better priorities, such as creating family-supporting jobs, helping the seniors who built our country and building a clean energy future.

We are calling for a budget that puts Canadian tax dollars to work for Canadians.

● (1615)

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the member obviously recognizes that there is a fiscal deficit, but there also is a social deficit with many dimensions.

The government continues to say that it will not be raising taxes, yet in the budget, over the five year budget cycle on which it is reporting, there is a \$19 billion increase in EI premiums, payroll taxes. In the House the parliamentary secretary rose in his place and said that those were not taxes.

On top of that, effective January 1, 2011, just a few short months from now, there will be a 31.5% tax on income trusts. That is personal income taxation. That is a clear example of how the government has not been honest with Canadians about what is in the budget. I hope it will answer the question about how much revenue is included in this determination over the five years of a deficit down to \$1.8 billion.

This comes down to a question of trust, and that is my question to the member. I do not believe the government can be trusted. I do not believe the Conservatives have been honest with Canadians. They certainly have not been honest with Parliament on this matter. Does the member have any other examples of why the government cannot be trusted?

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** Madam Speaker, more critical is that we in this party share the concern that the party of the questioner is considering supporting in the budget which gives further billions in tax cuts to corporations rather than taking a portion of that money and assigning it to new investments in clean energy, in retrofitting seniors' and affordable housing to bring down their costs and in retrofitting small and medium businesses to bring down their costs.

I concur with the member that it is a tax to raise EI premiums. Many of the small and medium businesses in my riding that are keeping the economy going will suffer this blow. They are getting very few benefits out of the budget.

I would remind the member that he can make a critical decision on the budget by voting against the budget and against the further corporate tax cuts which could benefit Canadians.

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for an excellent presentation on the environmental issues that are key within the budget document and how they impact on our society and on the way we will do business in the future. It is quite clear that we cannot let this happen in the fashion that it is with the degradation of the environmental process.

Coming from a region of the country that I do where the sensitivity of the environment is so high, we cannot afford to see this kind of action take place.

I would like my colleague to elaborate more on how she sees the direction that the government is taking on the environment and how we need to stand up to that direction.

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** Madam Speaker, I know the hon. member shares my concerns about the directions in the budget for the review of major energy projects. We are looking forward to the potential for major developments, not only along the Mackenzie but in the Arctic.

It is critical that we have a government in place that will ensure that all the environmental health and social impacts of that scale of development are considered well in advance and that we follow the precautionary principle.

I heard the answer today by the Minister of the Environment to my query about the cutting back of the federal role in environmental assessments. I have heard this argument now for 30 years. I know exactly where it comes from and it is completely unfounded.

I look forward to greater elaboration being provided by the government in its rationale for emasculating its environmental role. We know the agenda of the government is to get rid of the federal government role in environment but it simply cannot do this.

The Supreme Court of Canada has held that the federal government has a clear responsibility for the protection of the environment, a clear responsibility to protect first nations and their lands and peoples, a clear responsibility over fisheries and a clear responsibility over trans-boundary pollution.

With great regret, we received the budget which looks like the federal government is heading in exactly the opposite direction that it should be heading with the major issues that we are facing into the future of Canada.

● (1620)

**Mr. Claude Gravelle (Nickel Belt, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the member for Edmonton—Strathcona for sharing her time with me.

It is a sad irony that I rise today to speak to the budget just after International Women's Day because the budget offers nothing to women and children. In fact, it offers nothing in the area of job creation or in protecting seniors' pensions.

If the government cared about regions like Nickel Belt, we would have seen a completely different budget last week.

*The Budget*

[Translation]

Here are some facts about my constituency: Statistics Canada indicates that Greater Sudbury is the worst recession-affected region in Ontario, relative to our population. While national unemployment figures are improving, our region's are getting worse. As of December 2009, the unemployment rate in our area was 9.8%, compared to 8.5% nationally. A little over a year ago our unemployment rate was 4.9%.

Our communities are also feeling the impact of an 8-month strike by United Steel Workers of America Local 6500, at Vale Inco, the Brazilian-owned mining company in our community.

And yet, people face these challenges with steely determination and a true sense of community. I am so proud to represent the people of Nickel Belt.

[English]

They deserve so much and certainly deserve much more than what this budget offers them, and that is why I cannot support this budget as it is written.

The finance minister was quite proud of his corporate tax cuts, tax cuts that have taken hundreds of billions of dollars out of the revenues that pay for job creation, pension reform, health care, child care, education, infrastructure and fighting climate change. The government likes to spin a great fairy tale that these and other deep cuts have stimulated the economy.

[Translation]

The numbers tell the real story: corporate tax breaks have not stimulated investment, they have not stimulated innovation, nor have they increased productivity in Canada.

[English]

Despite a 36% drop in corporate taxes, both provincial and federal, in the last decade and record profits for much of this time, business spending on machinery and equipment has declined as a share of the GDP, and total business investment spending has declined as a percentage of corporate cashflow. The source of this data is none other than Statistics Canada and Finance Canada.

Further, Canada's business sector productivity in 2007 was 75% of that of the U.S., down from 90% in the early 1980s. This is despite cuts in the federal corporate income tax rates from nearly 40% to the current 18%.

In 1999, the year before former finance minister Paul Martin's tax cuts, Canada was fifth on the World Economic Forum's competitive list. Today we are in ninth place. That is well behind most Nordic countries that collect as much as 50% of their GDP in taxes each year.

[Translation]

The facts are clear about the ineffectiveness of tax cuts.

And yet, this government prefers to continue to spread falsehoods about corporate tax cuts, while planning to increase employment insurance premiums at the end of the year, when workers are just beginning to dig themselves out from a mountain of debt.

Where is the help for the real victims of the recession?

My office regularly receives calls from constituents who are having to depend on food banks to supplement their nutritional needs, some whose employment insurance benefits are running out and some who are on the verge of losing their cars and homes.

● (1625)

[English]

That is the real world in which we are living. Sure, we have turned a corner, but we need to take care of our people and we need to deliver help now.

Among OECD countries, Canada has already ranked last for its lack of investment in child care. The government failed to commit to funding the New Democrat's children's health and nutrition initiative, which would have provided a daily nutritious meal to all Canadian children.

The Heart and Stroke Foundation states that it is imperative to take immediate action to curb childhood obesity by promoting healthy eating if Canada is to reduce the \$22.2 billion loss in health care costs and lost productivity from illnesses like heart disease.

Results in the groundbreaking study by the Alzheimer's Society called "Rising Tide: The Impact of Dementia on Canadian Society", pointed to an urgent need for immediate action by all governments. It states:

The *Rising Tide* study tells us that if we do nothing, the number of Canadians with dementia in 2038 will be twice that of 2008. Over this 30-year period, the cumulative cost of dementia is projected to be \$872 billion. It tells us that if we do nothing, dementia will have a crippling effect on Canadian families, our health care system and economy.

Maintaining the status quo is not an option. We must take action today.

Where is the plan in the budget to address this impending crisis?

I would like to tell the government that we have invested in foreign ownership in our region of Sudbury and Nickel Belt. The government wants to again reduce the rules concerning foreign investment in Canada. Has it not learned anything from what has happened in Sudbury with Inco being purchased by Vale Inco from Brazil? This company has had our employees on strike for eight months and it does not want to negotiate. The union tried to negotiate last week but the company said that it would not agree to anything. The union asked for binding arbitration but the company said no. The company wants to implement its third world mentality on the workers of Sudbury.

The other company, Xstrata, has closed some mines in the outlying areas and is concentrating on one mine only. What it is doing is high-grading. High-grading means that it is taking the very best at very little cost and leaving the rest behind. What will happen in the future is that we will have some mines in the outlying areas that we will not be able to afford and they will come to the government for handouts to help them mine those smaller mines.

*The Budget*

[Translation]

New Democrats are doing their best to make this Parliament work. They want to create family-supporting jobs, help the seniors who built this country, provide adequate child care, address the looming healthcare crisis and protect this planet for the next generation by building a clean-energy future.

What we need is for this government to also make this Parliament work. It could start by reversing these cuts immediately and adopting the NDP amendment to the amendment.

[English]

**Hon. Gary Goodyear (Minister of State (Science and Technology) (Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario), CPC):** Madam Speaker, I will ask my hon. friend a reasonably simple question.

Last year's budget did in fact contain funding for the National Research Council and the granting councils, including some funding through the Federal Economic Development Agency, that actually did provide funding for dementia research and various dementia initiatives. Last year, the member and his party voted against that budget.

This year there is more money for these organizations which will continue the work on dementia. It is a very serious issue that this government is working to get on top of. Again, however, it is my impression that members of the NDP intend to vote against that. They cannot have it both ways. They cannot stand in the House and say that we need to do this and then vote against it when we do it.

How does the member respond to those silly directions he is getting from his leader?

• (1630)

**Mr. Claude Gravelle:** Madam Speaker, I will respond to that silly question.

First, if we do not put in more money for the Alzheimer Society, we will be in a crisis. The little amount of money that the government has put into Alzheimer's research will just not do it. We need to stop the corporate tax cuts and use that money to invest in our women, children, seniors, health care and education.

**Ms. Irene Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I was quite taken by the discussion my colleague presented to the House in regard to the need for infrastructure and investment and the irony of corporate tax cuts.

It would seem to me that no corporation, no matter where, can function, be profitable or establish itself without the support of the community. Roads, infrastructure, affordable housing, health care and education are things that make people strong and those people make the corporations strong.

I wonder if he would comment on the counterintuitiveness of defunding the very things that allow corporations to function in favour of treating them to unlimited goodies.

**Mr. Claude Gravelle:** Madam Speaker, unless we roll back the corporate tax cuts, we will have the money to deal with the issues that the hon. member has mentioned. As I stated a while ago, if we

were to roll back the tax cuts we could invest money in women, children, seniors and in our infrastructure.

The corporate tax cuts are not working in the first place, and I will give an example. In Welland, John Deere, which had several hundred employees and profited by these generous tax cuts, just closed shop and moved to Mexico anyway. It is not working.

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I will go along with the same train of thought regarding the tax shift that the government is conducting from corporations to Canadians.

I want to mention the whole idea of not making the polluters pay for the environmental damage that they do. For example, the government is encouraging the oil companies to speed up exploitation of the tar sands and to export the unprocessed bitumen to the United States. The government is taking on a corporate cost and imposing it on the rest of us and future generations of Canadians. The U.S. gets our oil and we absorb the cost. This is one more tax shift. I would like to ask the member whether this is fair.

**Mr. Claude Gravelle:** Madam Speaker, unless we change our policies on the environment and make the companies that pollute clean up, the only people who are going to pay for this cleanup are ordinary Canadian men and women. They are the ones who can least afford it.

Those who can afford it are the companies that are profiting throughout Canada. They are making billions and are leaving our country when they are done, and we are left to pay for what they leave behind.

Again, we should reconsider the tax cuts the government wants to implement and use the money for seniors, women and children.

**Mr. Gordon Brown (Leeds—Grenville, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I am going to split my time with the hon. member for Prince Edward—Hastings.

It is a pleasure and honour to rise today to talk about a budget that is good for Canada and good for my riding of Leeds—Grenville. I want to begin my remarks by congratulating the Minister of Finance for developing a budget that assists Canada and Canadians as we recover from the economic downturn, and one that looks ahead to set the stage for future growth and prosperity in our great country.

As I travelled around my riding over the past few months, I met with many people who wanted to discuss the upcoming budget and the state of the Canadian economy. I held three separate prebudget consultation meetings and also encouraged people to contact me by email or letter if they had comments on the budget process.

Some people had specific issues they wished to discuss. By and large the remarks I heard from everyone can be described easily; people were concerned about the fragile state of the recovery, jobs, future growth and the deficit.

The deficit question was puzzling for everyone. While everyone wanted the taps turned off or restricted, they did not want them restricted for their own priorities. In a roomful of people with different priorities, it definitely created an interesting discussion.

*The Budget*

There are a lot of details in the budget document but I want to discuss one or two of those in general, and then discuss some of the items that I really see helping Leeds—Grenville.

The first item I want to spend a few minutes on is the three-point deficit reduction plan. At the end of the day, all of my discussions in Leeds—Grenville ended with this one concern: How are we going to make sure that we do not have a deficit hanging around for many years to come?

Once again I applaud the finance minister for the plan that he has developed. The budget sets out a three-point plan to balance the federal government budget once the economy has recovered. The first step in the plan is the exit strategy that was built into Canada's economic action plan. When this plan was introduced it was designed to stimulate the economy for two years.

As I discussed budget items in my riding over the past few months, I heard time and time again how pleased people were that our economic action plan contained spending for infrastructure of all types. Municipal leaders and others recognize that since infrastructure needed replacing, rebuilding and growth, this was an excellent way to kickstart the economy at this time.

At the same time the projects that have been and are being undertaken in my riding will bring lasting benefits for many decades to come. While there is always a need for more infrastructure work, everyone knows that at some time the tap has to be turned off. I heard the following point made throughout my riding: continue with the program as planned, but do not carry it beyond its expiry date.

That does not mean the taps are going to close completely and it does not slam the door if there is an emergency, but the government's plan sets reduction targets that all can see and understand.

Under our government military spending has increased nearly \$3 billion to \$18 billion. This was necessary. In fact it was absolutely essential after 10 years of neglect and starvation by the previous government. We have shown the men and women in our armed forces that we stand with them and we want them to have the best equipment and the best training for the work we ask them to undertake on our behalf.

One example we can cite from recent events is the heavy lift capability we have provided to our armed forces. After the recent earthquake in Haiti, we were able to get forces and equipment on site in record amounts and in record time, thanks to our government's investments and actions to obtain modern transport equipment.

If the Canadian forces are to make a difference in people's lives around the world, they require the best equipment and the best training. We have spent a great deal on the armed forces in the past few years. While spending will continue, this will be one area where we will exercise restraint while we bring the deficit under control. It is important to note that we will not cut the military budget. In fact spending will continue to grow over the next few years to reach \$22 billion.

Because of the measures that have been outlined in the budget, the deficit is projected to decline by almost half over the next two years, by two-thirds by 2012-13, and is projected to be \$1.8 billion by 2014-15.

There are many components of the budget, including helping with apprenticeships through the apprenticeship completion grant.

Moreover, since 2006 we have also taken steps to support the financial security of seniors, something that is very important in my riding. We brought in pension income splitting. We increased the age limit for RRSP to RRIF conversions from age 69 to 71. We increased the age credit amount twice. We doubled the pension income credit to \$2,000. We provided seniors with a tax-free way to save in tax-free savings accounts. Withdrawals from these will not affect eligibility for old age security and the guaranteed income supplement.

• (1635)

We will continue to address pension and retirement income concerns, which are very important in my riding of Leeds—Grenville.

We have also started to work on this issue with the provinces, which regulate 90% of the pensions in Canada. This year we will consult with Canadians on larger reforms to the Canadian pension and retirement system and build on the work that we have undertaken with the provinces at a May summit on this issue.

When it was introduced, Canada's economic action plan provided significant new resources to support Canada's transformation to a green energy economy. My riding of Leeds—Grenville has very much become a hotbed of green technology, supported in large part by the investments of this government. Those include \$1 billion over five years under the clean energy fund and \$1 billion over five years through the green infrastructure fund. Those two things have created jobs in my riding of Leeds—Grenville.

Before I close, I would like to speak a bit about some of the direct assistance that has been coming to my riding of Leeds—Grenville, which has been well received. The first item on the list would be the recognition of the work that is conducted by our community futures development corporations. These organizations, which are driven by local boards of directors, are the federal government's eyes and ears and are the pocketbooks of local economic development, and they do reflect community priorities.

I have said it many times in many places that this is the model of federal economic development that really works in my riding of Leeds—Grenville. The local board reviews applications for funding and assistance and, based on its working knowledge of the community, makes decisions. The three boards that serve us in Leeds—Grenville do outstanding work and I can never thank them enough for all of their efforts to help create jobs in my riding. Our new budget continues to support them and is great news for Leeds—Grenville.

*The Budget*

Like other areas of Ontario, manufacturing in Leeds—Grenville has been affected by the recent downturn in the economy. Some manufacturers have unfortunately closed, but others that I have worked with have been able to use the work-sharing program that is funded through Service Canada. This unique program allows employers to retain their trained and valuable staff when there is a work slowdown, because Service Canada will pay part of the employees' wages. This program, once again, has helped save jobs and has been used successfully in Leeds—Grenville.

On a final note, personal income tax reductions are very much part of our economic action plan and affect everyone. These tax reductions are being achieved through adjustments to federal tax brackets, enhancing the working income tax benefits for lower income earners, higher child benefits, and lower taxes for low and middle income seniors.

In summary, this is a good news budget for Canada, it is a good news budget for Leeds—Grenville, it reflects what I heard in my prebudget consultations and it reflects well the values of the people who spoke to me through that process.

• (1640)

**Mr. John Cannis (Scarborough Centre, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I was pleased that the hon. member for Leeds—Grenville talked about green technology and green jobs because in the 2008 election, the Conservatives almost destroyed a gentleman's reputation with misinformation because he was advocating green technology and green jobs. Now they have jumped on green technology and I am pleased to hear that.

I am also pleased that he has direct assistance in his riding. My riding of Scarborough Centre has a population of 127,000 people and has received nothing in direct assistance. Earlier on the gentleman from Essex talked about the tens of millions of dollars in his riding.

The Greek community in metropolitan Toronto is asking for \$1 million for its first sports and cultural recreation centre and all the ministers said no, no, no. I asked them if they had anything against Greek Canadians.

The last question I will ask him is this. He talks about the debt and deficit. There is a chart here that shows the accumulated debt keeps going up. How does he justify that to Canadians?

**Mr. Gordon Brown:** Madam Speaker, I thank the member for his question on green technology because in Leeds—Grenville there is a lot of land right now that we can use for solar power. Just outside of my riding on Wolf Island, there is a new wind energy centre. We also have a model forest and a wood products centre. There is also a new ethanol plant that was just opened in Leeds—Grenville, which has received considerable assistance from the federal government as that industry gets up and running. This has created jobs that are very timely. The construction and operation of this new ethanol plant is not only helping our farmers in Leeds—Grenville, but is good for the economy and good for the environment.

• (1645)

**Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I was intrigued by the hon. member's comments. He called a more than \$50 billion deficit a good news budget.

I could ask a question about the principle of borrowing money from future generations to provide a corporate tax cut that is not needed by corporations that are already doing all right. I could also ask a question about the handing off of environmental assessments for oil and gas projects to oil and gas companies as a fundamentally flawed principle of the government.

Specifically, I want to ask the question that follows. The hon. member mentioned the idea of helping municipalities. Does the hon. member believe that the formula of one-third from the federal government, one-third from the provincial government, and one-third from local government for projects is a good formula, if it precipitates a have-not policy for communities that cannot raise their one-third share? Those are the very communities most in need of help from the government. Does the hon. member believe in that formula which the government still promotes?

**Mr. Gordon Brown:** Madam Speaker, it is in fact a good formula. The reason it is a good formula is that we have local taxpayers and their councils, who know best how to make decisions on projects that should go ahead, putting their money on the table rather than people who are not close to the situation making those decisions here in Ottawa.

Those decisions to spend that money are made because the local taxpayers are putting up one-third of the money. The projects clearly reflect community priorities and are supported by the provinces across the country and by this federal government.

**Mr. Rick Casson (Lethbridge, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I would like the hon. member, if he has a chance, to expand on the importance of the community development corporations in his riding. As members, we all have these types of organizations in our ridings that help us with these issues. I would like the hon. member to comment on how they have helped.

**Mr. Gordon Brown:** Madam Speaker, I have long been a champion of this type of community economic development. These development corporations have served my riding of Leeds—Grenville very well. They help to fund small projects, and sometimes larger projects. They help create jobs on the ground.

Once again, speaking about reflecting community priorities, who better to make the decisions and push forward local projects than the people on the ground? The three community development corporations that serve my riding, the Thousand Islands Community Development Corporation, the Grenville Community Futures Development Corporation, and Valley Heartland Community Futures Development Corporation, all do excellent work. I cannot commend them enough for the fine work they do in my riding.

**Mr. Daryl Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I am tremendously pleased to stand today and speak about our government's new federal budget which is focused on job creation and growth to support Canada's economic recovery. The budget also rightly includes a disciplined long-term plan to return to balanced budgets.

*The Budget*

Before I discuss the budget let us go back a little bit. Although Canada was drawn into a global recession, the deepest global recession since the thirties, through good planning we have entered this recession really in much better shape than the rest of the industrialized world. Canada has stood up to the global recession better than virtually all other major industrialized countries.

Since taking office in 2006, this government has reduced taxes and aggressively paid down debt so that today, even after the effects of the recession, Canada boasts the lowest debt to GDP ratio in the G7 and Canada's decline in real GDP was virtually the smallest of all G7 countries.

Canadian labour markets have fared much better than in the U.S. where job losses are proportionately three times larger than in Canada. Canadian domestic growth has rebounded more strongly than in all of the G7 countries since the beginning of 2009 and really has led Canada out of this recession in mid-2009 and gaining strength. Credit strength in Canada has remained solid with continued strong household credit growth and business credit growth is showing signs of stabilization, and an increasing level of confidence.

Canadian banks and other financial institutions were better capitalized and less leveraged than their international peers. As a result, we are widely acknowledged as having the soundest banking system in the world and recognized by no less an authority than the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

Canada's housing market has not seen the excesses that have caused instability and housing bubbles in other jurisdictions. Strategies in Canada's economic action plan were designed to protect Canadians during this recession. Measures like the popular home renovation tax credit, which has helped average Canadian families upgrade the value of their homes and save taxes which means consequently more money in their pocket at the end of the day. It also means creating jobs and that in turn boosts the economy. In my riding of Prince Edward—Hastings there are many constituents who have taken advantage of this tax credit.

Another measure was funding for infrastructure in communities across Canada. This funding has kept many people employed, boosted the economy, laid a rock solid foundation for long-term economic growth and will leave us with tangible long-term assets.

Clearly our plan is working. We are seeing the signs of economic recovery; however, economic recovery does remain fragile as most people realize and the government's new budget recognizes this fragility and creates ways and means of allowing for steady growth and prosperity while returning to budget balance once the economy has recovered.

My riding of Prince Edward—Hastings is a very large and diverse riding. It is about a four and a half hour drive from one end to the other. It contains people who work in all sectors from agriculture, to tourism, to manufacturing, forestry and really everything in between.

I have travelled extensively throughout this riding through its length and breadth consulting with and listening to constituents, business owners, farmers, wine growers, clerks, cashiers, pensioners and the students. I have heard their concerns, their dreams, their hopes, and their ideas for a better Canada.

I was also proud and pleased to be a member of the finance committee, a committee which held ongoing consultations with Canadians across this land, Canadians from all walks of life, from provincial and municipal leaders to business leaders, major economic stakeholders, to the individual pensioner with an intelligent and innovative idea.

Our government has also held public town hall meetings and roundtables throughout the country. No government in history has ever reached out to so many to create a budget. Our government listened to Canadians' priorities and that is why this year's budget is a jobs and growth budget, the number one clear priority for Canadians.

• (1650)

It builds on Canada's economic action plan to solidify our recovery. In year two of the plan we are investing \$19 billion to stimulate our economy and to complete the rapid rollout of stimulus projects in order to create jobs right now.

Budget 2010 also confirms the Conservative government's strong support for the provinces. Like other provinces, my home province of Ontario will continue to receive increased federal support through budget 2010. Total transfers will hit \$18.8 billion in 2010-11, an increase of \$801 million from last year and \$6.9 billion more than under the previous Liberal government.

Under that previous Liberal government, that starved provinces and municipalities of much needed support, it really started the downloading trend. The Conservative government has increased key transfers: \$927 million through equalization; \$9.9 billion to through the Canada health transfer, an increase of \$243 million over last year, pro-rated at 6% per year; and \$4.3 billion in social transfers, an increase of \$1.2 billion since 2005-06 or 36.6%.

Year two of Canada's economic action plan will also provide over \$1.3 billion in personal income tax relief in 2010-11 to help workers and families in Ontario manage through difficult economic conditions. This means allowing people to earn more income before paying federal income taxes and before being subject to higher tax rates; the enhanced working income tax benefit, which reduces the welfare wall by making work pay better for many low income Canadians; higher child benefits for parents and lower taxes for low and middle income seniors.

In conclusion, I am pleased to say that the budget addresses the challenges that face us and prepares the way for building our economy in the long-term.

*The Budget*

It looks out for business owners who create the jobs that Canadians need. It looks out for seniors who are the vulnerable heart of our community. It looks out for farmers who put the food on our tables. It looks out for Canadian workers whose toil and effort drive the economy. It looks out for young people who will inherit and build upon the legacy that we leave them. It looks out for all people in all provinces and territories. It really looks out for all of us.

Recently, at the winter Olympics, our athletes proved that grit, hard work and tenacity paid off time and time again. I believe this is Canada's year. We are open for business. We are dedicated. We are working hard and we are building a Canada that will continue to care, share and prosper.

• (1655)

**Mr. John Cannis (Scarborough Centre, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, with respect to our athletes, I agree with the hon. gentleman, and thanks to the Liberal government's own the podium program they did reach those goals.

The member talked about debt. Often when we ask questions about the budget, the Conservatives say, "Read the budget". I have read the budget and I have the government's graph which says the debt today is \$463 billion and by 2014-15 it is going to be \$622 billion; that is \$160 billion or so more. Either the government's graph is lying to me or I am lying to the member.

I have one simple question. He talked about the employers in his riding and several thousand employees. I hope they continue to grow and prosper like all Canadians.

However, on page 52 of the budget there is a steady decline in EI premiums between the period of 2000 and 2006-07, which was a Liberal administration. After that, for the next three years, it stayed steady.

According to the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, in its words, the government is going to be increasing the EI premiums well over \$13 billion, which in the finance minister's own words is a job killer, costing us over 200,000 jobs.

What does the member then, I ask, tell his employers and his employees who are going to be hit with one of the largest tax increases in Canadian history?

**Mr. Daryl Kramp:** Madam Speaker, I can tell the hon. member one thing we are not going to do. As a small businessperson for 38 years, I was one of those people who paid into employer deductions as did my employees. There was a surplus created of \$56 billion in a dedicated account, and what happened? The Liberal government, the party across the way, and the gentleman who is so proud of maintaining that, took those dedicated funds and put them into the general coffers and spent it. This government will not go down that route.

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Madam Speaker, once again, the government is shifting taxes from businesses to working Canadians in many ways, such as the harmonization sales tax, the HST, in Ontario and B.C.

In fact, budget 2010 shows the government intends to rely on personal income taxes for more than four times as large a share of the revenues in future as a contribution from corporate income taxes.

Ordinary Canadians will pay four times more in personal income tax than corporations.

It is also important to note that since wealthy Canadians receive a large portion of their income in the form of stock options, equity or dividends from profits, corporate tax cuts actually increase their income. Furthermore, their income is taxed at a lower rate than the income of the average worker.

I would like to ask the member, how is this fair?

**Mr. Daryl Kramp:** Madam Speaker, I think it is safe to say that the member and I have a difference of opinion in political philosophy and a difference in ideology. It certainly is not a difference of opinion as far as personal values are concerned, but there is a difference of opinion between who pays in this country.

Everybody wants to have social programs. Everybody needs them. Everybody wants to care for people. I think it is the Canadian way. We have also heard the old story about killing the goose that lays the golden egg. If we do not look after our tax base where there is a level of income coming in, then we cannot have an affordable caring society. That really is the major difference between the hon. member and myself.

• (1700)

**Hon. Gary Goodyear (Minister of State (Science and Technology) (Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario), CPC):** Madam Speaker, the member has worked very hard for his riding, and I want to applaud him on the round tables that he has had and the information he has been able to feed back to me. My colleague mentioned programs that help seniors and students. Some of those programs were introduced in last year's budget and again in this year's budget. How did the NDP vote on those programs?

**Mr. Daryl Kramp:** Madam Speaker, the budget was comprised of so many elements that reached out to different parts of the community, and regretfully the NDP voted against it.

One of them in particular of course was the knowledge infrastructure plan. A community college in my riding is literally the cornerstone for the development of youth in our community. A major infrastructure improvement is going on at that place. There is a new skills centre for the retraining of our unemployed people. There is investment in research and science and technology.

The way of the future is looking after our young people and preparing them for the jobs of tomorrow.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Carole Freeman (Châteauguay—Saint-Constant, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the House today to speak on behalf of the people of my riding of Châteauguay—Saint-Constant and denounce the terrible budget the Conservatives have delivered.

I must denounce this budget, which proves in black and white that the most vulnerable members of our society are not a priority for the Conservative government—far from it.

There is no tax credit improvement for informal caregivers, the majority of whom are women. There is nothing to improve the guaranteed income supplement, while poverty strikes more women than men, especially among seniors.



*The Budget*

Many of my colleagues have already explained how this budget has once again missed an excellent opportunity to meet the various needs of the people of Quebec.

Personally, as the Bloc Québécois critic for seniors, I can very easily demonstrate how the measures for the well being and security of Quebec's seniors represent some of the most pitiful aspects of the new Conservative budget.

As in previous budgets, the Conservative government still appears determined to completely ignore the demands of seniors. It has confirmed once again its insensitivity and utter unwillingness to do anything for our most vulnerable seniors and informal caregivers.

One of the most important seniors' organizations in Quebec, the Fédération de l'Âge d'Or du Québec, better known as the FADOQ network, has bitterly noted that seniors have been completely left out of this federal budget.

Nothing for low-income seniors. Nothing for caregivers. Nothing for experienced workers. Nothing for home care. Nothing for 160,000 Canadians who are entitled to the guaranteed income supplement but are not receiving it. These are the highlights of the last federal budget which, once again, ignores the needs of seniors. The FADOQ network [which has more than 270,000 members] has every reason to believe that the government...is putting seniors last and that the deficit reduction will be carried out at the expense of seniors.

The Conservative government has not addressed any of FADOQ's demands with respect to the guaranteed income supplement. This situation is completely unacceptable.

For its part, the Association québécoise des retraité(e)s des secteurs public et parapublic (AQRP) believes that the federal budget only offers a consolation prize to Quebec's seniors by creating a seniors' day because:

...they did not announce any improvements to the guaranteed income supplement (GIS) to ensure that the income of Quebec's seniors is at least at the poverty line.

This is a sad description of our seniors' situation, but a realistic one.

The Bloc Québécois holds the same views of the Conservatives' appalling budget, which illustrates this government's chronic lack of compassion.

This government is trying to deceive seniors and hoping to make them believe that it really cares about their needs.

Our seniors are old enough to know better. They have seen right through the charades of this insensitive Prime Minister.

What is in this budget to make the lives of seniors and caregivers any better? The folks at FADOQ said it best: next to nothing.

It is not hard to figure out. First, the new horizons for seniors program is getting a mere \$10 million over two years.

Second, some particularly imaginative people will argue that seniors are going to benefit from the tax breaks announced by the government, but that measure was in the 2009 budget. This government seems to enjoy recycling old news.

Third and last, the budget adds insult to injury by creating a seniors day. Sure, it is a nice idea, and the Bloc Québécois supports it because we owe it to our seniors to take the time to express our gratitude publicly.

However, it will also provide a perfect opportunity to criticize the government's failure to respond to our seniors' expectations. Thousands of low-income seniors know that a special day for seniors does not put food on the table.

● (1705)

In fact, how are they supposed to celebrate their special day without enough money to do so? What these men and women want is the same thing the Bloc Québécois has been asking for since 2001 when it found out that over 68,000 senior Quebeckers who were eligible for the guaranteed income supplement were not receiving it.

Since then, the Bloc has been calling for a \$110 monthly increase in benefits, automatic registration of persons 65 and older who are entitled to this supplement, continued guaranteed income supplement and old age security payments for a period of six months for a bereaved spouse, and full retroactivity of the guaranteed income supplement for seniors who have been short-changed.

Since this is International Women's Week, I want to point out that these measures would primarily affect women, who make up 56% of the senior population and a significant majority of seniors living in poverty.

Recently, during the Bloc Québécois' prebudget tour, seniors also spoke about the need to improve the spouse's allowance and the surviving spouse's allowance, two measures that once again concern mainly women. These allowances are crucial so that recipients can have a decent standard of living when their spouse dies.

But the Conservatives, true to form and preoccupied with boosting the banks' and western oil companies' bottom line, chose to ignore Quebeckers' unanimous support for increasing the guaranteed income supplement and spouse's allowances.

Even worse, this Conservative government is worrying seniors with its announcement that it will review Canada's retirement income system this spring in order to fight the deficit. This shows a truly appalling contempt for the elderly and especially for women, who are very much affected by all the measures that benefit seniors and informal caregivers.

All in all, this empty budget is a public relations exercise, with dozens of little measures to please everyone. There is every indication that the middle class, workers and maybe even seniors will pay for the deficit caused by the economic crisis that hit us so hard in 2009. Even though the poorest members of our society are still being hit hard by the effects of the crisis, the Conservative budget shamelessly ignores them.

By refusing to increase the guaranteed income supplement and introduce an assistance program for workers 55 and older, the government is turning its back on necessary measures. While the poor are being left to their fate, the government is refusing to make the rich pay. Meanwhile, the rich are giving themselves generous bonuses.

*The Budget*

Unless the government makes substantial amendments to this budget, the Bloc Québécois will vote against it, because it is not fair to Quebec. I am certain that when the next general election is held, our friends opposite are going to pay dearly for ignoring our seniors. I will do everything in my power to ensure that the Conservatives can never again openly express their contempt for seniors, women and the poorest Quebeckers in our society.

• (1710)

[English]

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I thank the member for talking about the social deficit in Canada and particularly about seniors.

The member may be aware that although the government boasts it allowed pension splitting for seniors, only 25% of seniors have pensions that qualify for the splitting. If we take out those who do not have a partner to split with or those who are already at the lowest marginal tax rate, only 14% of seniors actually benefit from pension income splitting and those seniors have the highest incomes of seniors, which is a problem.

Also, other seniors who do not have pension plans may have invested in income trusts. The member will know, notwithstanding the government says that it is not raising personal taxes, that on January 1, 2011, it will be imposing a 31.5% tax on income trusts.

Would the member care to amplify on the last point she made, that it appears the government is helping those who are the least needy in our society and ignoring those who have very little security in their years of retirement? What would she recommend for them to live in dignity and respect?

[Translation]

**Mrs. Carole Freeman:** Madam Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for his question.

The measures he addressed on income splitting are for seniors who earn substantial incomes, allowing them to split their incomes in order to pay less tax.

My comments were about seniors who do not have substantial incomes. Seniors with an income of less than \$14,900 live below the poverty line. They have difficulty keeping a roof over their heads or paying for their food and drugs. This is an extremely vulnerable portion of the population. We cannot tell these people to return to the workforce or to find another solution. There are no other solutions. They are at the end of their days and they have to live in wretched conditions.

The government is very insensitive to this portion of the population, which I think is the most vulnerable.

I agree with the hon. member that the measures implemented by this government do not help in any way the least fortunate in our society, in other words, our seniors and informal caregivers.

[English]

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Madam Speaker, the member analyzed it quite well. The interesting part is this. While the Conservatives have had a lot of time to plan and take action, they have done nothing at this point. It seems to me that they

are simply playing for time. There is nothing in the budget that will strengthen public pensions at all.

Where does the member think the government is headed in the whole area of pensions? Is it simply trying to avoid the issue to get itself beyond the next election? Why is it not coming to grips with a very serious problem with pensions in our country?

[Translation]

**Mrs. Carole Freeman:** Madam Speaker, my colleague has asked an interesting question and I thank him for that.

The government knows the problem this portion of society is experiencing. We have been talking about the least fortunate for a long time. It makes absolutely no sense that the government's solution is a study on retirement funds, when the real problem has already been described by statistics and by all the reports that have been provided.

Again, these are stalling tactics. It is a way of putting the problems aside and buying time without finding a real solution for the people who need it the most.

[English]

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie):** It being 5:15 p.m., pursuant to order made on Friday, March 5 it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the subamendment and the amendment now before the House.

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

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie):** All those in favour of the amendment to the amendment will please say yea.

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie):** All those opposed will please say nay.

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie):** In my opinion the nays have it.

*And five or more members having risen:*

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie):** Call in the members.

• (1745)

[Translation]

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

(Division No. 1)

YEAS

Members

Allen (Welland)  
Ashton  
Bevington

Angus  
Atamanenko  
Charlton

Chow  
Comartin  
Cullen  
Davies (Vancouver East)  
Donnelly  
Godin  
Harris (St. John's East)  
Hyer  
Layton  
Maloway  
Martin (Winnipeg Centre)  
Masse  
Mulcair  
Savoie  
Stoffer  
Wasylcia-Leis— 37

Christopherson  
Crowder  
Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)  
Dewar  
Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)  
Gravelle  
Hughes  
Julian  
Leslie  
Marston  
Martin (Sault Ste. Marie)  
Mathysen  
Rafferty  
Siksay  
Thibeault

## NAYS

### Members

Abbott  
Aglukkaq  
Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)  
Ambrose  
Anderson  
Andrews  
Arthur  
Asselin  
Bagnell  
Baird  
Bélanger  
Bennett  
Bernier  
Bigras  
Blais  
Block  
Bouchard  
Boughen  
Braid  
Brison  
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)  
Bruinooge  
Byrne  
Calandra  
Cannan (Kelowna—Lake Country)  
Cannon (Pontiac)  
Carrie  
Casson  
Clarke  
Coady  
Cummins  
Davidson  
DeBellefeuille  
Del Mastro  
Deschamps  
Dhaliwal  
Dion  
Dosanjh  
Dryden  
Dufour  
Duncan (Etobicoke North)  
Easter  
Faille  
Finley  
Fletcher  
Foote  
Fry  
Galipeau  
Garneau  
Généreux  
Goldring  
Goodyear  
Grewal  
Guay  
Guimond (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques)  
Guimond (Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord)  
Hall Findlay  
Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)  
Hiebert  
Hoback  
Holder  
Ignatieff  
Jennings

Ablonczy  
Albrecht  
Allison  
Anders  
André  
Armstrong  
Ashfield  
Bachand  
Bains  
Beaudin  
Bellavance  
Benoit  
Bezan  
Blackburn  
Blaney  
Bonsant  
Boucher  
Bourgeois  
Breitkreuz  
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)  
Brown (Barrie)  
Brunelle  
Cadman  
Calkins  
Cannis  
Cardin  
Carrier  
Chong  
Clement  
Coderre  
Cuzner  
Day  
Dechert  
Demers  
Desnoyers  
Dhalla  
Dorion  
Dreeshen  
Duceppe  
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)  
Dykstra  
Eyking  
Fast  
Flaherty  
Folco  
Freeman  
Gagnon  
Gallant  
Gaudet  
Glover  
Goodale  
Gourde  
Guarnieri  
Guergis  
Harper  
Hawn  
Hill  
Hoepfner  
Holland  
Jean  
Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)

## The Budget

Kania  
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)  
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)  
Komarnicki  
Laforest  
Lake  
Lauzon  
Lebel  
Lee  
Lemieux  
Lévesque  
Lukivski  
Lunney  
MacKay (Central Nova)  
Malhi  
Mark  
Mayes  
McColeman  
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)  
McTeague  
Mendes  
Merrifield  
Minna  
Moore (Fundy Royal)  
Murphy (Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe)  
Murray  
Neville  
Norlock  
O'Neill-Gordon  
Oda  
Ouellet  
Paillé (Louis-Hébert)  
Paradis  
Payne  
Petit  
Poilievre  
Prentice  
Proulx  
Raitt  
Ratansi  
Regan  
Richards  
Rickford  
Rodriguez  
Roy  
Saxton  
Scheer  
Sgro  
Shipley  
Silva  
Simson  
Sorenson  
Stanton  
Strahl  
Szabo  
Thompson  
Toews  
Trost  
Tweed  
Valeriotte  
Van Loan  
Verner  
Volpe  
Warawa  
Watson  
Sky Country)  
Weston (Saint John)  
Wong  
Wrzesnewskyj  
Young  
Karygiannis  
Kennedy  
Kerr  
Kram (Prince Edward—Hastings)  
Laframboise  
Lalonde  
Lavallée  
LeBlanc  
Lemay  
Lessard  
Lobb  
Lunn  
MacAulay  
MacKenzie  
Malo  
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)  
McCallum  
McGuinty  
McLeod  
Ménard  
Menzies  
Miller  
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)  
Mourani  
Murphy (Charlottetown)  
Nadeau  
Nicholson  
O'Connor  
Obhrai  
Oliphant  
Paillé (Hochelaga)  
Paquette  
Patry  
Pearson  
Plamondon  
Pomerleau  
Preston  
Rae  
Rajotte  
Rathgeber  
Reid  
Richardson  
Ritz  
Rota  
Savage  
Scarpaleggia  
Schellenberger  
Shea  
Shory  
Simms  
Smith  
St-Cyr  
Storseth  
Sweet  
Thi Lac  
Tilson  
Tonks  
Trudeau  
Uppal  
Van Kesteren  
Vellacott  
Vincent  
Wallace  
Warkentin  
Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to  
Wilfert  
Woodworth  
Yelich  
Zarac— 262

## PAIRED

Nil

**The Speaker:** I declare the amendment to the amendment lost.

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

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

*The Budget*

**The Speaker:** All those in favour 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:*

• (1755)

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

*(Division No. 2)***YEAS**

## Members

Allen (Welland)	André
Angus	Ashton
Asselin	Atamanenko
Bachand	Beaudin
Bellavance	Bevington
Bigras	Blais
Bonsant	Bouchard
Bourgeois	Brunelle
Cardin	Carrier
Charlton	Chow
Comartin	Crowder
Cullen	Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)
Davies (Vancouver East)	DeBellefeuille
Demers	Deschamps
Desnoyers	Dewar
Donnelly	Dorion
Duceppe	Dufour
Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)	Faille
Freeman	Gagnon
Gaudet	Godin
Gravelle	Guay
Guimond (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques)	
Guimond (Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord)	
Harris (St. John's East)	Hughes
Hyer	Julian
Laforest	Laframboise
Lalonde	Lavallée
Layton	Lemay
Leslie	Lessard
Lévesque	Malo
Maloway	Marston
Martin (Winnipeg Centre)	Martin (Sault Ste. Marie)
Masse	Mathysen
Ménard	Mourani
Mulcair	Nadeau
Ouellet	Paillé (Hochelaga)
Paillé (Louis-Hébert)	Paquette
Piromondon	Pomerleau
Rafferty	Roy
Savoie	Siksay
St-Cyr	Stoffer
Thi Lac	Thibeault
Vincent	Wasylcia-Leis— 84

**NAYS**

## Members

Abbott	Ablonczy
Aglukkaq	Albrecht
Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)	Allison
Ambrose	Anders
Anderson	Andrews
Armstrong	Arthur
Ashfield	Bagnell
Bains	Baird
Bélanger	Bennett
Benoit	Bernier
Bezan	Blackburn

Blaney	Block
Boucher	Boughen
Braid	Breitkreuz
Brisson	Brown (Leeds—Grenville)
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)	Brown (Barrie)
Bruinooge	Byrne
Cadman	Calandra
Calkins	Cannan (Kelowna—Lake Country)
Cannis	Cannon (Pontiac)
Carrie	Casson
Chong	Clarke
Clement	Coady
Coderre	Cummins
Cuzner	Davidson
Day	Dechert
Del Mastro	Dhaliwal
Dhalla	Dion
Dosanjh	Dreeshen
Dryden	Duncan (Vancouver Island North)
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Dykstra
Easter	Eyking
Fast	Finley
Flaherty	Fletcher
Folco	Foote
Fry	Galipeau
Gallant	Garneau
Généreux	Glover
Goldring	Goodale
Goodyear	Gourde
Grewal	Guarnieri
Guergis	Hall Findlay
Harper	Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)
Hawn	Hiebert
Hill	Hoback
Hoepfner	Holder
Holland	Ignatieff
Jean	Jennings
Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)	Kania
Karygiannis	Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)
Kennedy	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Kerr	Komarnicki
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)	Lake
Lauson	Lebel
LeBlanc	Lee
Lemieux	Lobb
Lukiwski	Lunn
Lunney	MacAulay
MacKay (Central Nova)	MacKenzie
Malhi	Mark
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)	Mayes
McCallum	McColeman
McGuinty	McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)
McLeod	McTeague
Mendes	Menzies
Merrifield	Miller
Minna	Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)
Moore (Fundy Royal)	Murphy (Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe)
Murphy (Charlottetown)	Murray
Neville	Nicholson
Norlock	O'Connor
O'Neill-Gordon	Obhrai
Oda	Oliphant
Paradis	Patry
Payne	Pearson
Petit	Poilievre
Prentice	Preston
Proulx	Rae
Raitt	Rajotte
Ratansi	Rathgeber
Regan	Reid
Richards	Richardson
Rickford	Ritz
Rodriguez	Rota
Savage	Saxton
Scarpaleggia	Scheer
Schellenberger	Sgro
Shea	Shiple
Shory	Silva
Simms	Simson
Smith	Sorenson
Stanton	Storseth
Strahl	Sweet
Szabo	Thompson
Tilson	Toews

Tonks  
Trudeau  
Uppal  
Van Kesteren  
Vellacott  
Volpe  
Warawa  
Watson  
Sky Country  
Weston (Saint John)  
Wong  
Wrzesnewskyj  
Young

Trost  
Tweed  
Valeriote  
Van Loan  
Verner  
Wallace  
Warkentin  
Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to  
Wilfert  
Woodworth  
Yelich  
Zarac — 214

PAIRED

Nil

**The Speaker:** I declare the amendment lost.

[English]

It being 5:55 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]

### CONTROLLED DRUGS AND SUBSTANCES ACT

**Mr. John Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, CPC)** moved that Bill C-475, An Act to amend the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act (methamphetamine and ecstasy), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak again to a bill designed to recover our youth, to deliver a greater sense of peace and order to our communities, and to tackle a major activity of organized crime.

The passion I bring to these issues reflects my role as a father of three young children and as a member of Parliament for the riding that hosted many of the Olympic Games in the past month and will next week host most of the Paralympics.

[Translation]

Many of my constituents are also concerned about health matters. These matters are very important to everyone, people of the east, the west, anglophones, francophones—all Canadians. The health of Canadians is also linked to the progress we are making in our fight against drugs like crystal meth and ecstasy.

● (1800)

[English]

My private member's bill is aimed at tackling head-on the production of the drugs known as methamphetamines, more commonly called crystal meth and ecstasy, the two most common forms of methamphetamine-type stimulants. The bill would make a new offence for possessing, producing, selling or importing anything if the person involved knows that the thing will be used to produce or traffic crystal meth or ecstasy.

The United States, New Zealand, Australia and the U.K. have introduced aggressive strategies to target one or both of these drugs. This bill follows the approach taken in these countries, introducing several changes to our Canadian Controlled Drugs and Substances

### *Private Members' Business*

Act and creating a new criminal offence for the procurement of the precursor chemicals for these drugs if the procurement is accompanied by the intention to produce the outlawed substances.

When passed, the bill will greatly hamper the clandestine production that has made these drugs so easily accessible to Canadian youth.

There are at least three reasons why this issue is of such great concern to my constituents, to the members who sit in the House and to all Canadians. First, crystal meth and ecstasy harm individuals who use them as well as their families and communities. Second, production of these drugs involves direct environmental dangers. Third, the production of these drugs also affects Canada's reputation internationally.

Experts agree that one way to stem the production of these drugs is to focus on the precursors. Today, law enforcement officials cannot investigate or charge someone merely for gathering the ingredients of these drugs. The bill would give the law enforcement community the new tools it needs to do the job.

The 2004 United Nations report entitled, "Preventing amphetamine-type stimulant use among young people", made clear what a scourge these drugs are to youth in our country. Serious health implications resulting from chronic use of these drugs include dependence characterized by compulsive drug seeking and drug use, and a phenomenon known as amphetamine or methamphetamine psychosis which includes strong hallucinations and delusions.

Crystal meth and ecstasy use can translate over the longer term into schizophrenia, a side effect with lasting consequences. Trauma experienced by users includes great physical, psychological and emotional harm. Too many families and communities are being affected by these awful drugs.

Some personal anecdotes help to give a human face to these struggles. I have been in touch personally with several drug treatment centres and some of the victims of these drugs have shared their stories with me. A young lady, who I will call Vanessa, said "the worst paranoia I've ever experienced was on crystal meth. It creates a feeling of invincibility. I believed I could commit crimes or do anything. The crash when coming down off the drug is so hideous you do whatever it takes to prevent the crash. That's where the crimes come in. You believe you can get away with anything".

Another person in treatment noted that "ecstasy is what started me and all my friends using other harder drugs" he said. "The come down was so hard, the depression so bad that we needed to find something to numb us out". He carried on and said, "So we started using cocaine and heroin after a weekend of partying with ecstasy".

These drugs have affected a large number of Canadians. According to the Canadian alcohol and monitoring survey, about 50,000 people aged 15 or older reported having used methamphetamines at least once in the previous year.

*Private Members' Business*

In B.C. it was estimated by the ministry of health in 2003 that 4% of school-aged children have used methamphetamine-type drugs. At the same time, it was estimated by the Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission that a shocking 5.3% of the school-aged population had tried methamphetamine-type stimulants.

Between 2000-04, 65 people died in British Columbia with methamphetamines present in their bodies. This number, which has been increasing every year for which statistics are available, charts a disturbing trend for all people in Canada.

One of the most insidious qualities of these drugs is the covert way in which they attack users. Ecstasy seems like a harmless party drug to some, one that is marketed through colourful pills and cheerful designs, such as happy faces, but police have found that a significant amount of ecstasy seized from the streets is laced with more dangerous drugs such as crystal meth. When combined, the two can become an addictive, toxic and dangerous combination. Overdoses are common due to the unregulated nature of the drugs.

● (1805)

Side effects of methamphetamines are similarly worrisome. A position paper produced in Australia noted, "methamphetamine use has often been associated with violent crime, and the drug has a strong reputation for inducing violent behaviour".

To understand the harm of these drugs, it is crucial to highlight their addictiveness. In a 2004 report, the solicitor general of my home province, B.C., explained:

A powerful stimulant, meth alters the brain's production of dopamine. The drug produces an initial positive pleasurable physical reaction by increasing the levels of dopamine, leaving a person depressed as the effects of the drug wear off. The user then requires more of the drug to return to normal. This "binge and crash" pattern leads to loss of control over the drug and addiction.

To look at the addictive nature of these drugs from another angle, addiction counsellors say that the relapse rate of crystal meth users is about 92%, which is higher than the relapse rate for cocaine.

Having covered aspects of harm to the individual consumer and his or her community, let me speak to the second of these main reasons to attack the production of these drugs, the dangerous environmental aspects of the production.

In the absence of production standards, there is no way to control the quality of substances produced, the safety of production or the location. A report produced by Carleton University in 2004 stated, "Versatility is the term that best defines methamphetamine production. Clandestine laboratories have been found in sites as diverse as private residences, motel rooms, dorm rooms, campgrounds, storage facilities" and almost any other place that we could imagine. Though large-scale industrial production of these drugs is an increasing reality, the vast amount of crystal meth and ecstasy are produced in small, kitchen-like labs. These labs house toxic waste and other substances dangerous to humans and are located in our neighbourhoods and in our homes.

The United Nations notes "environmental harm and costs caused by illegal laboratories and their safe removal are considerable". The production of these drugs is an extremely toxic endeavour, one about which we should all be concerned.

A letter I received today from B.C.'s solicitor general, Kash Heed, outlines some of the harmful effects of production. In the letter, he says:

In the last five years, police in British Columbia have responded to over 161 clandestine labs, chemical seizures and dumpsites related to illegal ecstasy and methamphetamine production....As you are no doubt aware, synthetic drug labs in British Columbia are large-scale economic labs that...produce...quantities greater than five kilograms per production cycle and, in some instances, 40 kilograms per cycle. At least six kilograms of waste is produced for every kilogram of finished product. These waste products are typically dumped causing serious environmental damage.

One person who was involved with the drug noted, "I lived with a person who cooked crystal meth. He had burns all over his arms. It was in an apartment building and I'm sure that it affected all the people in the building".

The environmental degradation, the violent nature of the chemicals and the harmful effects are all reasons which independently dictate the need for action.

Many colleagues in the House have expressed to me their concerns about the effects of these drugs on people across Canada. However, the marketing of crystal meth and ecstasy transcends Canada's borders and tarnishes our reputation on an international scale.

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime reported in 2009 that Canada is the single largest supplier of ecstasy to the United States and is a significant supplier of the drug to Japan and Australia. The UN report also concluded:

There is evidence that Canada-based Asian organized crime groups and outlaw motorcycle gangs have significantly increased the amount of methamphetamines they produce and export, for the U.S. market, but also for Oceania and East and Southeast Asia.

The report also noted:

Canada has grown to be the most important producer [of ecstasy] for North America, and since 2006, all ecstasy laboratories reported have been large-capacity facilities operated principally by Asian organized crime groups.

We have many resources, skills and commodities to export. How sad that we Canadians must now include crystal meth and ecstasy among our recognized exports.

● (1810)

My friend and colleague, the member for Peace River, originally introduced the bill and invested enormous effort to obtain unanimous consent in the House. His bill made it to second reading in the upper house. However, an election intervened and the bill died. He and I have since consulted extensively with stakeholders such as law enforcement officials in Ontario, Alberta and B.C.

*Private Members' Business*

The bill would improve on the original bill put forward by the member for Peace River by adding the drug ecstasy as a substance which precursors would now also be restricted. The production of crystal meth and ecstasy are often linked. Law officials therefore encouraged us to link the two drugs in the bill.

We have received endorsements for the bill from the B.C. Association of Chiefs of Police, B.C. Solicitor General Kash Heed and several other associations in the riding I represent, including the Catholic Women's League. This past weekend, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities also passed a resolution in support of this bill, calling on our House to work with the provinces to enact more stringent regulation with regard to precursors in Canada's Controlled Drugs and Substances Act, just as proposed in this bill.

First nations leaders such as Chief Gibby Jacob of the Squamish Nation have voiced their support for the bill. I have also received support from B.C. communities regarding the bill, including places such as Gibsons, Bowen Island and Powell River. I am also proud to note that our government has taken action to reduce the level of addiction in our country already through education and treatment. Government-financed programs such as the youth justice fund and the national anti-drug strategy will continue to work in conjunction with the bill to increase liability for possession of the chemicals needed to create crystal meth.

I appreciate the supportive and constructive comments that I have received already from colleagues in the House from all parties. My colleagues have taken note of the three reasons to legislate against the procurement of precursors of crystal meth and ecstasy: the harm to consumers of these drugs; the environmental hazards involved in their production; and their prejudice to Canada's good name as an exporter.

I hope all members will join me in bringing to an end the possession, production and trafficking of crystal meth and ecstasy in Canada. By directly targeting the ingredients of these devastating drugs, we can work to create a safer and stronger Canada. I ask all members join me in support of Bill C-475.

**Mr. Andrew Kania (Brampton West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I previously spoke on the bill in the last session. This emanates from a 2007 Department of Justice Canada report. At the time, I said that this should be a government bill. I complimented my friend, and he will recall this, for taking the initiative and trying to fix the Conservative government's omission in not bringing this forward as part of its own legislation. At this point in time, I think he will agree with me that this is an important issue. It should go to committee. It should have been studied, and I support it.

He must be as disappointed as I am that this is not further along. This could have been much further down the road if Parliament had not been shut down. Does he share my extreme disappointment that Parliament was prorogued and that this legislation was delayed because of that.

**Mr. John Weston:** Mr. Speaker, I certainly embrace the enthusiasm of my colleague across the floor. I thank him for his support of the bill. The way I look at these things, I come to the House on behalf of constituents and Canadians to do the best I can. I am supported by the government members of the House in the forwarding of the bill.

With the support of my colleague and with the support of members from other parties, we will enact this bill for the good of all Canadians, especially our youth.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Serge Ménard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, it would not have taken much for the member to convince almost everyone in this House, if they had been here, of the dangers of these drugs, and the importance of prohibiting the trafficking and production of them.

However, there already is legislation that makes these drugs illegal. The member referred to that act and has proposed some amendments. This act has four schedules, in which drugs are classified according to how dangerous they are.

Why have these substances not been added to the schedules of the act before now, which would have made them illegal substances? Why do we need a new act to amend the schedules of another act?

● (1815)

**Mr. John Weston:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his questions. I see that he is very interested in examining this bill, and that makes me very happy.

As it stands, no legislation prohibits the acquisition of the substances used to produce the drugs. That is surprising to many people, and especially to parliamentarians in this House.

Until now, if a police officer stopped someone who was in possession of substances used in the production of drugs, there was no specific legislation to allow for charges to be laid.

[*English*]

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I want to ask about the whole issue of pill compression machines. Without those machines, the drug cannot be made in the first place.

A report of the United States point to Canada as a prime source of these drugs. I know the Americans are concerned. In the United States pill compression machines are registered. When they are bought, they have to be registered. When they break down before they can be repaired, it has to be documented. There is a paper trail that follows the pill-making machine, or the compression machine. I know the United States would like us to take some action on this whole area.

What will the government do and when will it regulate pill compression machines?

**Mr. John Weston:** Mr. Speaker, it is an excellent question. One of the things to be regulated is pill compression machines. In fact, many of the precursors and the things that are to be regulated by this new law, if it is enacted, includes things that are legal in and of themselves. However, if they are collected together with the purpose of manufacturing the drugs, crystal meth and ecstasy, then it becomes illegal.

*Private Members' Business*

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Serge Ménard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by saying that no one here doubts the danger posed by the substances targeted in the bill introduced by the hon. member for West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country.

I am extremely surprised that this government has not yet realized it, especially since two government members are themselves convinced. I am surprised that it has not already included these substances in the schedule of prohibited substances.

I appreciate the response I received. Sometimes, if we can approach legislation in a non-partisan manner, we can work more intelligently. I already understood there was a small difference between the offence set out in the legislation currently before us, which was introduced by the hon. member, and the offences set out concerning other substances that are considered dangerous.

As for other substances, basically, here is what is prohibited: the possession, manufacture, import and above all, possession for the purpose of trafficking—a more serious offence than simple possession. This corresponds to the philosophy of all Canadian legislation that prohibits substances, including narcotics and other kinds of drugs considered dangerous.

This bill has one new aspect, and I would like to elaborate on that part of it. The new aspect is the creation of an offence regarding the possession of certain substances with the intention of manufacturing methamphetamine or ecstasy. The essence of the crime is therefore the intention. I understand that intentions are proven based on circumstances, but one must be familiar with the substances used to manufacture methamphetamine, also known as “ice”, and ecstasy.

The ingredients for methamphetamine include a surprising number of substances. These substances are found in over the counter preparations such as remedies for coughs, colds and allergies. These remedies contain pseudoephedrine and ephedrine. Other substances are found in acetone, rubbing alcohol, isopropyl alcohol, iodine, ether-based starting fluid, gas additives such as methanol, drain cleaners (sulphuric acid) and lithium batteries. I do not think that people are going to open batteries to extract the lithium and then use it in the recipe for “ice”. It is also found in rock salt, matchbooks (red phosphorus), sodium hydroxide, paint thinner, aluminum foil, glassware, coffee filters and propane tanks. These items can be found in almost any home in varying quantities. That is what increases the danger of selling these substances. You do not need specialized knowledge to make them; these substances are easy to find.

In this case, not only do you have to find these substances in someone's home but there must be circumstances that establish that these substances were collected with the intention of manufacturing drugs. Obviously, the intent must be proven beyond a reasonable doubt.

• (1820)

In the case of possession for the purposes of trafficking, you must prove that there were two intentions: the manufacture and the trafficking of the substance. The intention of a person who has collected all these substances surely is not just to use them but also to deal in them.

Does this offence, which is slightly different from others already set out in the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act, make a significant contribution to the fight against the use of these two substances?

Why has the government not yet amended the schedules, which, I believe, could be done by order in council or by regulation? Why have these substances not yet been listed in the schedules?

I am not just a father anymore. Eight and a half months ago, I became a grandfather to twin girls. Every day, I understand that Bernard Landry was speaking the truth when he so often said that becoming a parent makes one wise, but becoming a grandparent makes one mad. If I do crazy things now and then, it is because I have reached that stage. All the same, the greatest happiness we can experience is to see our children feel the joy we felt when they were born.

I heard my children talk about these drugs well before they were ready to get engaged and married, which they both did eventually. These drugs have been on the market for a long time.

I do not think that the member's proposed measures are the best way to make these drugs illegal. I realize that he is proposing a nuance that might apply to existing offences, such as possessing anything intended for use in the production of dangerous substances. This nuance may apply to other substances listed in the act that the member wishes to amend.

I know that a private member faces a lot of obstacles when trying to do something he feels is important. I want to give him a chance to defend his bill before the committees in the hope that someday, the government will understand the problem and do what it should have done years ago.

All the same, this bill enables the member to add an important nuance to this kind of offence by specifying that it is not the distinct use of harmless substances such as lighters, gasoline additives and exhaust pipe cleaners that is prohibited, but the accumulation of such things with the intent to produce something dangerous.

I will certainly offer my support and that of my party to further his bill. I think that we should applaud and thank him.

• (1825)

[*English*]

**Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to speak to Bill C-475. I would like to thank the hon. member for West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country for introducing the bill. It is very similar to a bill that was introduced awhile ago. I spoke to that bill and it went to committee. The fact that it is back before the House is evidence of the hon. member's serious intent to bring forward this issue. We certainly appreciate that.



*Private Members' Business*

I want to make a few general points about the bill as it relates to the larger issue of drug policy and what we have seen from the government. While on the one hand the bill deals very specifically with substances that are involved in the selling, production or import of amphetamines and ecstasy, as it relates to the larger issue, we have to be aware that reliance on an enforcement strategy and an approach that is focused on the Criminal Code is not going to solve the very major issues we are facing with drug addiction and substance use in our society.

Because the hon. member is from the metro Vancouver area, I am sure he is familiar with what the city of Vancouver is calling the four pillar approach. It is an approach that is more comprehensive. It focuses on prevention, treatment, harm reduction and enforcement.

One thing that really concerns us is that we have seen from the current government an overemphasis on enforcement. This bill would very much be a part of that. For example, we know that Canada spends about 73% of its drug policy budget on enforcement; only about 14% goes to treatment, 7% to research, 2.6% to prevention and 2.6% to harm reduction.

When we look at the real picture of what is going on in Canadian society, based on reports that have been produced, we know that in 1994, 28% of Canadians reported to have used illicit drugs, but by 2004 that number had gone up to 45%. That is pretty staggering. I would say that even the United Nations now recognizes that a broader approach including harm reduction is a very important component in a comprehensive drug policy.

While on the one hand there is this bill which has a very narrow spectrum, I would hope that the hon. member would also advocate for a broader approach and that we would not see the kind of penalization on things around harm reduction. I am sure the hon. member is familiar with Insite in Vancouver, the only safe injection facility in North America. To me the real issue is about prevention and about approaching this as a health issue.

We see that the Conservative government relies heavily on the enforcement mechanism. In fact, in 2007 the government dropped harm reduction from Canada's drug strategy. I really feel that the statistics are only going to get worse.

One real problem we are facing is this illusion, this political stance being put forward of continually seeking tougher laws on enforcement. Of course, there was Bill C-15 in the last session of Parliament, which called for mandatory minimum sentences for drug crimes. The political stance that somehow this is going to solve very complex issues in our society is an illusion. It is just a political stance because the reality, research, and scientific work that is being done shows us that only when all of the components are present do we begin to actually make changes.

For example, I would point to the National Framework for Action to Reduce the Harms Associated with Alcohol and Other Drugs and Substances in Canada 2008 working group. The working group is made up of the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse, first nations, the Canadian Executive Council on Addictions, the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, and BC Mental Health and Addiction Services. It is a very professional body. It points out in its national framework for action that research findings suggest that providing

appropriate services and supports across a range of systems not only reduces substance use problems, but also improves a wide range of outcomes related to health, social functioning and criminal justice.

● (1830)

I use this information because it is further evidence that unless we have some kind of equilibrium and common sense approach to drug policy in this country, we are actually not going to change anything. If we continue along a path of criminalizing drug users, which is what Bill C-15 would do, an over-emphasis on an enforcement strategy, and somehow fooling people into believing that we are going to deal with this issue by having more cops or tougher enforcement, the evidence in this country shows us that is not the case. I wanted to paint that slightly bigger picture because it is very relevant in this debate.

As my hon. colleague from the Bloc has pointed out, the fact that the bill does not name the products and that the various substances that go into making these drugs are so readily available makes enforcement very challenging. That is all the more reason, particularly when talking about drug use by young people, it is very critical to emphasize the prevention and education, particularly realistic education about drug use.

I have had a lot of concerns and qualms about sending police officers into schools regarding drug education. I ask myself whether we would send police officers into schools to provide sex education. No, we would not, so why would we do it for drug use? It is because these substances are illegal and I do not think kids get a very realistic and honest education about what these substances are, that they need to be aware of their own health and what they need to take care of.

I hope the member and other members of the Conservative caucus would focus on some of those issues and bring them forward in bills as well. We in the NDP will certainly support the bill going to committee because it requires examination, but I want to emphasize that this is just a tiny piece of a much bigger issue that is not being dealt with in any kind of appropriate way by the Conservative government, and that is what we need to focus on.

We will certainly support it going to committee. We want witnesses to be heard. We would like to look at the details of the bill and examine some of the issues about what the products are and why it is that the existing Controlled Drugs and Substances Act is not adequate to deal with this issue that the member has brought forward.

Let us not lose sight of the bigger picture. Let us not get so caught up in the spin, political manoeuvring, and the stance that takes place that we have seen with the Conservatives, that they see this as somehow the be-all and end-all because it is not. It is quite shameful that in this country we would have a drug policy that is now so unbalanced, over-focused on enforcement, and under-supported in terms of treatment, research, prevention and harm reduction. Those are very critical elements.

*Private Members' Business*

If we are really genuine about supporting local communities and helping the kids who need to go into treatment, then federal dollars have to go there, too. I appreciate the member reading some of the comments by people who are involved in treatment, but let us listen to what they are really saying. One of the things they are really saying is that there is not enough treatment available. We do not have treatment on demand in this country and we need to have it.

We in the NDP will support the bill going to committee, but let us also focus on the much bigger picture.

•(1835)

**Mr. Chris Warkentin (Peace River, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to stand in the House this evening and debate Bill C-475. It is a bill that is close to my heart. I had the opportunity to bring forward a bill that was very similar to it in the last Parliament. I appreciate the support I received from members of all parties. It demonstrates that we recognize this issue affects communities regardless of where they are located in the country. This is not just an issue that results in harm to young people. Every community is harmed when young people, or people of any age, become addicted to drugs.

I want to thank the member for West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country for bringing Bill C-475 forward.

Before I go on, I thought I would take a moment to thank both the member and his constituents. I am hopeful that some of them are listening to us tonight. Of course many of them are still involved in the efforts they have been involved in over the last number of years, preparing for the Olympics and Paralympics.

The people in my colleague's community made us proud in their willingness and their hospitality as they hosted the Olympics. They are now getting ready to host some of the venues for the Paralympic Games as well. We appreciate those people for putting their best foot forward, for demonstrating what it is to be Canadian in terms of hospitality and truly demonstrating to the participants, the people who were covering the games as well as those who watched the games, just truly what it is to be Canadian.

We thank the people of the member's constituency and the people in surrounding communities for their great efforts in hosting the world over the last couple of weeks and for hosting the world over the next couple of weeks.

It is truly a wonderful opportunity for me to support the bill. Again, I would reiterate the fact that I brought forward a similar bill. This is an issue about which I continue to be passionate. My bill went all the way to the Senate, but unfortunately it stalled there. An election happened and my bill was not brought into force. However, I believe this is an issue that members of Parliament of all stripes can get behind and support.

We had an opportunity to listen to members of the New Democratic Party, the Liberal Party and the Bloc Québécois as they talked about some of the issues surrounding drugs and how they affected communities from coast to coast.

The national drug strategy is of importance to our government. We have put a lot of resources into it. We have provided millions of

dollars toward educating young people about the harm and effects of drug use.

Our government has put additional resources into treatment and toward helping those people who are addicted. We also put in place supports for people who combat drug proliferation in communities. We have given more resources to the RCMP as well as to police forces across the country. These are partnerships that are essential in combating the proliferation of drugs in our communities.

The thing about crystal meth, or methamphetamines, and ecstasy is they have a characteristic that is different than some other drugs in their addictive quality. All of us in the House need to recognize crystal meth and ecstasy are not drugs that can easily be considered to recreational drugs and that they do not have consequences or harm.

One of the reasons I became involved in the cause to try to rid our communities of methamphetamines was because of the addictive nature of these drugs and the impact they were having in my constituency, on people of all demographics, disproportionately harming first nations communities and also harming people in all walks of life. Young students in high school, college and university were being impacted by this. I saw how this impacted professional people, those who had experimented with the drugs and were struggling with addiction as a result of it.

As I looked into the issue more, what was alarming to me was Canada had kind of stalled in its efforts to get a hold on the issue of methamphetamines. We had moved from being an importing nation of methamphetamines to being an exporting nation of these drugs. It really was of concern to me, so I started to look into it more and more.

•(1840)

What I saw was that what made us different from other countries that had moved from being exporting nations to importing nations was the legislation surrounding the issues that we are talking about today and the issues that are actually combined in this bill in terms of giving police forces the opportunity and the mechanisms to go into especially organized crime that proliferate these clandestine labs and just put huge amounts of these harmful drugs out into our communities.

Most recently, the United Nations has commented on Canada's place in terms of the fight regarding the proliferation of methamphetamines. We are not doing a great job. It is something that I felt was important for us to address as parliamentarians. I see members of all parties supporting this, and I appreciate that. I commend them for that. I am hoping that they will give speedy passage to this bill in committee.

What we do not want to see happen again is this bill being stalled out in some other place and then not have it come into force. I think Canadians from coast to coast would come together in support of this measure. I think we as members of Parliament representing Canadians coast to coast need to represent that alarm and those concerns.

*Private Members' Business*

Every time I go into classrooms, of which I make a regular policy of doing, I talk about my job and I talk about the harm of methamphetamines, crystal meth, the addictive qualities and the destruction that these drugs can cause in the lives of young people, and I get an education. I often hear from students who are in grades 6, 7, 8, 9 and 12 telling me that they are fully aware of where to get methamphetamines, crystal meth and ecstasy in their communities. I am also learning about some of the marketing tactics of the organized criminals who are actually selling this stuff.

What I found interesting, and when I say interesting, I find it very alarming, was that they are now actually putting this highly addictive drug into a candy form to sell to young people. That is one of the most despicable, most startling things that I as a parent have come to learn, that we have one of the most addictive drugs being marketed by organized crime and directed at young kids.

What I am also learning from people who are involved in combating organized crime is that crystal meth and methamphetamines are actually being cut into other drugs because of the addictive qualities of methamphetamines, making other drugs more addictive by putting in the methamphetamines.

I sometimes hear the suggestion that there are certain strategies that should be employed in terms of addressing this. I just want to warn those people who would promote the idea of harm reduction that this is one of those drugs that we should have a zero tolerance for in our communities. Because of the addictive quality, because of the harm that it does to young people and in terms of the destruction that it does to the human body, especially the young human body, this is one of those drugs that we should have a zero tolerance for in our communities.

We should do everything that we can to remove the possibility of people, especially young people, getting their hands on this drug.

I would implore all members to consider becoming fully educated about this particular drug, the ramifications, the characteristics, the addictive qualities of this drug, and the impacts that it is having in our communities from coast to coast.

There are several things that are interesting about this bill. I know they have been highlighted. This bill is actually unique in its approach to combating a particular drug. There are a number of reasons that we need to do that. One of the things that we have to recognize is that methamphetamines are in fact a synthesized drug. It is something that is manufactured in the place and oftentimes in the communities where it will be sold. So it takes a different approach.

It is not something that has to be grown and it is not something that can be imported, so police forces do not have opportunities to intervene in the transfer or creation of this particular drug. From its production point to its sale point is often a matter of hours, especially in highly organized criminal organizations. That is something that is important for us to recognize and for us to realize as we approach the bill.

•(1845)

I commend the hon. member for his work on this. I thank him for taking up the cause and continuing to advocate to protect our young families and young children, as well as people of all ages. I support him in this and hope that all members will support him.

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member opposite for his address on this particular bill.

While I agree with a lot of what he had to say and a lot of his sentiments, I have to take exception to one or two of his points, the first one being that the bill has been slowed down in the House and can be obstructed by members of the opposition.

I want to point out to the hon. member that he admitted where the logjam was, which was when the Prime Minister called an election one year ahead of his own fixed election date. His problems with the bill really started with the procedural process. As long as the member recognizes that, we will do on our side what we can to move the bill along.

I think the Liberal Party member who spoke earlier made a very good point when he suggested that the bill should have been introduced by the government. This is not the only bill in that category. Another one is by the member for Kildonan—St. Paul dealing with trafficking of children. That too is an example of a bill that the government itself should have introduced.

I admire the members who are doing this because, having been around this business for a long time, I know how hard it is at times to take on one's own government. I admire them for making the effort to bring ideas into the House as private members' bills, which the government will not necessarily accept. It is a longer and more tortuous process but I do not think they should give up on those ideas. If there are any other ideas that members have that they cannot get through their caucuses or through their government, they should do what the member did. Bring them in as private members' bills and let us debate them here. The members might be surprised to find that those bills might actually become law at the end of the day.

I want to deal with several issues. One of them is the whole business of the pill compression machine issue. Even though the member tells me it will more or less be covered by the bill, I really do not see where that is automatic.

I see there is a provision for a schedule and the schedule will deal with substances. I note that proposed section 7.1 states that, "No person shall possess, produce, sell or import anything knowing that it will be used to produce or traffic in a substance referred to in" these schedules.

Whether the member thinks that pill-making compression machines are going to be covered by that, I am just not sure. It seems to me that perhaps it might be dealt with by a special measure, perhaps through Health Canada regulations. I am just not sure how the member would proceed, but I think it maybe should be dealt with in addition to what the member is referring to.

When we track this through, the whole issue becomes one of money. There is a saying, follow the money. I think that is the way the government should be looking at this. When we follow the money we find out this is a problem that involves big business, that this is really a big organized business.

*Private Members' Business*

The member in his speech has pointed out there are big organized gangs operating this business. As a matter of fact, the Americans who spoke to me about the pill compression machines pointed out to me, as was also indicated by one of the members tonight, that this has now turned into a problem where Canada is a big exporter of these pills. The Americans say there are labs in Toronto that are producing huge quantities for the American market.

● (1850)

The Americans have identified the pill compression machines as the reason for this and say that in the United States they are controlling the inputs, the pill making machines, so the bad guys have simply moved their operation up to Toronto and into Canada to get around the rules that they have there on the pill compression machines. I am not sure that is entirely the full part of the problem but certainly some of them think that it is.

I want to get back to the whole area of the money and big business. Our party and our critic has pointed out this issue that the Conservative government tends to focus a lot on enforcement. We have been through this story before with the United States, with Ronald Reagan and his mandatory minimums and the “three strikes you're out”. What have we seen after 25 years? We have seen prisons filled to capacity. Many more prisons are being built by private persons. At the end of the day, however, the crime rate is even higher than it was before. So once again, let us do things that work.

Clearly, we need to chase small time drug dealers and put them in jail, but we should not be measuring our success by how many of those people we pick up, prosecute and put in jail when the problem just keeps expanding. We need to look at what else is going on.

When we look behind the veils we see that there is organized crime. It is not motorcycle guys driving around behind this. The men in suits who live in fancy houses are funding this business. It costs money to buy these ingredients, to set up these houses, to buy pill compression machines and hire the expertise to make these drugs. Based on what I have read, the average person cannot cook up this

stuff on a stove. The person needs to have some sort of a background in chemistry in order to do that. Otherwise they would be blowing themselves up and taking the neighbourhood with it.

I have to admit that I never heard of these drugs until mid-age. When we grew up we never knew about drugs until we hit the end of high school into university and then they were simply the common drugs that we know, such as marijuana and so on. However, we never contemplated what we see going on here. The member in his speech talked about these pills being made with smiley faces mixed in with terrible and dangerous chemicals that are basically being pushed by essentially big business corporations onto the street to little street dealers to go out and entice kids in school to take them.

At the end of the day, the big businesses have money so they hire lawyers. The lawyers tell them how to protect themselves. The reason law enforcement is catching just the little fish is that the big guys are never at the scene of the crime. However, they are funding and controlling the operation, which is what we need to address here.

I have been highly supportive of the white collar criminal legislation. The member is suggesting that the bill should have a million dollar limit but I am saying that is way too high. It should maybe be \$100,000 or only \$50,000. When white collar criminals steal from people they should know they will be going to jail for a minimum sentence of a couple of years and maybe that will stop them.

● (1855)

**The Deputy Speaker:** The time provided for the consideration of private members' business has now expired and the order is dropped to the bottom of the order of precedence on the order paper.

[*Translation*]

It being 6:57 p.m., this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24.

(The House adjourned at 6:57 p.m.)





# CONTENTS

Tuesday, March 9, 2010

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### Interparliamentary Delegations

Mr. Tilson ..... 185

### Petitions

#### Canada Post

Ms. Bonsant ..... 185

#### Employment Insurance

Ms. Bonsant ..... 185

#### Assisted Suicide

Ms. Sgro ..... 185

#### Halifax Convention Centre

Ms. Leslie ..... 185

#### Animal Welfare

Mr. Bezan ..... 185

Mr. Proulx ..... 186

### Questions on the Order Paper

Mr. Lukiwski ..... 186

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

### The Budget

#### Financial Statement of Minister of Finance

Motion ..... 186

Mr. Bezan ..... 186

Mr. Szabo ..... 188

Mr. Maloway ..... 188

Mr. Sorenson ..... 188

Ms. Sgro ..... 188

Ms. Demers ..... 190

Mr. McColeman ..... 190

Mr. Maloway ..... 190

Mr. Bains ..... 191

Mr. Payne ..... 192

Ms. Leslie ..... 193

Mr. MacKenzie ..... 193

Mr. Scarpaleggia ..... 195

Mr. Maloway ..... 195

Mr. Kamp ..... 195

Mr. Simms ..... 197

Mr. Blais ..... 197

Mr. Martin (Sault Ste. Marie) ..... 198

Mr. Murphy (Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe) ..... 199

Ms. Mathyssen ..... 199

Mr. Szabo ..... 200

Mr. Julian ..... 200

Mr. Kamp ..... 201

Mr. Szabo ..... 202

Mr. Blaney ..... 202

Mr. Paillé (Hochelaga) ..... 203

Mr. Maloway ..... 204

Mr. Uppal ..... 204

Mr. Scarpaleggia ..... 205

Ms. Leslie ..... 205

Mr. Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country) ..... 206

Mr. Carrier ..... 206

Mr. Szabo ..... 207

Mr. Maloway ..... 208

Mr. Lessard ..... 208

Mr. Szabo ..... 209

Mr. Maloway ..... 209

Mrs. Block ..... 210

Mr. Szabo ..... 211

Ms. Leslie ..... 211

Mr. Tweed ..... 212

Mr. Weston (Saint John) ..... 212

Mr. Easter ..... 213

Mr. Maloway ..... 214

Mr. Simms ..... 214

Mr. Maloway ..... 216

Mr. Easter ..... 216

Ms. Fry ..... 216

Mr. Menzies ..... 218

Ms. Demers ..... 218

Mr. Maloway ..... 218

Mr. Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca) ..... 219

## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

### *Komagata Maru*

Mr. Shory ..... 219

### Health

Mr. Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca) ..... 219

### Marcel Simard

Mrs. Lavallée ..... 219

### Aboriginal Healing Foundation

Ms. Ashton ..... 219

### Shaughnessy Cohen Prize for Political Writing

Mr. Saxton ..... 220

### KAIROS

Ms. Duncan (Etobicoke North) ..... 220

### Haitian Relief Efforts

Mr. Brown (Barrie) ..... 220

### Alexandre Bilodeau

Mr. Ménard ..... 220

### The Economy

Mr. Holder ..... 221

### Girl Guides of Canada

Mrs. Mendes ..... 221

### Elimination of Tariffs

Mr. Généreux ..... 221

<b>Prince Rupert, British Columbia</b>	
Mr. Cullen .....	221
<b>The Economy</b>	
Mr. Abbott .....	221
<b>Pierre Vadeboncoeur</b>	
Mr. Lessard .....	222
<b>Vu Pham</b>	
Mr. Pearson .....	222
<b>Vu Pham</b>	
Mr. Lobb .....	222

## ORAL QUESTIONS

<b>Afghanistan</b>	
Mr. Ignatieff .....	222
Mr. Harper .....	222
Mr. Ignatieff .....	222
Mr. Harper .....	223
Mr. Ignatieff .....	223
Mr. Harper .....	223
Mr. LeBlanc .....	223
Mr. Nicholson .....	223
Mr. LeBlanc .....	223
Mr. Nicholson .....	223
<b>Government Spending</b>	
Mr. Duceppe .....	223
Mr. Harper .....	223
Mr. Duceppe .....	223
Mr. Harper .....	223
Mr. Paillé (Hochelaga) .....	224
Mr. Harper .....	224
Mr. Paillé (Hochelaga) .....	224
Mr. Day .....	224
<b>Afghanistan</b>	
Mr. Layton .....	224
Mr. Harper .....	224
Mr. Layton .....	224
Mr. Harper .....	224
Mr. Layton .....	224
Mr. Harper .....	224
Ms. Foote .....	224
Mr. Nicholson .....	224
Ms. Foote .....	225
Mr. Nicholson .....	225
Mr. Dosanjh .....	225
Mr. Nicholson .....	225
Mr. Dosanjh .....	225
Mr. Nicholson .....	225
<b>Employment Insurance</b>	
Mr. Lessard .....	225
Mr. Day .....	225
Mrs. Beaudin .....	225
Mr. Blackburn .....	225
<b>The Environment</b>	
Mr. Bigras .....	225

Mr. Prentice .....	225
Mr. Bigras .....	226
Mr. Prentice .....	226
<b>Pensions</b>	
Ms. Sgro .....	226
Mr. Flaherty .....	226
Ms. Sgro .....	226
Mr. Clement .....	226
<b>Taxation</b>	
Mr. McCallum .....	226
Mr. Flaherty .....	226
Mr. McCallum .....	226
Mr. Flaherty .....	227
<b>Manufacturing Industry</b>	
Mr. Young .....	227
Mr. Flaherty .....	227
<b>The Environment</b>	
Ms. Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona) .....	227
Mr. Prentice .....	227
Mr. Mulcair .....	227
Mr. Prentice .....	227
<b>Afghanistan</b>	
Ms. Lalonde .....	227
Mr. Nicholson .....	228
Ms. Lalonde .....	228
Mr. Nicholson .....	228
<b>Justice</b>	
Ms. Neville .....	228
Mr. Nicholson .....	228
Ms. Neville .....	228
Mr. Nicholson .....	228
<b>Industry</b>	
Mr. Angus .....	228
Mr. Clement .....	228
Mr. Angus .....	228
Mr. Clement .....	228
<b>Science and Technology</b>	
Mr. Trost .....	229
Mr. Goodyear .....	229
<b>Rights &amp; Democracy</b>	
Mr. Patry .....	229
Mr. Cannon .....	229
<b>Infrastructure</b>	
Mr. Laframboise .....	229
Mr. Baird .....	229
<b>Social Measures</b>	
Ms. Leslie .....	229
Ms. Finley .....	229
<b>Sealing Industry</b>	
Mrs. O'Neill-Gordon .....	229
Mr. Shea .....	230
<b>Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency</b>	
Mr. Regan .....	230



Mr. Ashfield .....	230
--------------------	-----

**GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

**THE BUDGET**

**Financial Statement of Minister of Finance**

Motion .....	230
Mr. Gourde .....	230
Mr. Szabo .....	231
Mr. Vincent .....	232
Mrs. Smith .....	232
Mr. Maloway .....	234
Mr. Dhaliwal .....	234
Mr. Dhaliwal .....	234
Mr. Brown (Leeds—Grenville) .....	235
Mr. Volpe .....	236
Mr. Volpe .....	236
Mr. Maloway .....	237
Mr. Tweed .....	238
Ms. Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona) .....	238
Mr. Szabo .....	240
Mr. Bevington .....	240
Mr. Gravelle .....	240
Mr. Goodyear .....	242
Ms. Mathysen .....	242
Mr. Maloway .....	242
Mr. Brown (Leeds—Grenville) .....	242

Mr. Cannis .....	244
Mr. Cullen .....	244
Mr. Casson .....	244
Mr. Kramp .....	244
Mr. Cannis .....	246
Mr. Maloway .....	246
Mr. Goodyear .....	246
Mrs. Freeman .....	246
Mr. Szabo .....	248
Mr. Maloway .....	248
Amendment to the amendment negatived .....	249
Amendment negatived .....	251

**PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS**

**Controlled Drugs and Substances Act**

Mr. Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country) .....	251
Bill C-475. Second reading .....	251
Mr. Kania .....	253
Mr. Ménard .....	253
Mr. Maloway .....	253
Mr. Ménard .....	254
Ms. Davies (Vancouver East) .....	254
Mr. Warkentin .....	256
Mr. Maloway .....	257

**MAIL  POSTE**

Canada Post Corporation / Société canadienne des postes

Postage paid

Port payé

**Lettermail**

**Poste-lettre**

**1782711  
Ottawa**

*If undelivered, return COVER ONLY to:*  
Publishing and Depository Services  
Public Works and Government Services Canada  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0S5

*En cas de non-livraison,  
retourner cette COUVERTURE SEULEMENT à :*  
Les Éditions et Services de dépôt  
Travaux publics et Services gouvernementaux Canada  
Ottawa (Ontario) K1A 0S5

Published under the authority of the Speaker of  
the House of Commons

### **SPEAKER'S PERMISSION**

Reproduction of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its Committees, in whole or in part and in any medium, is hereby permitted provided that the reproduction is accurate and is not presented as official. This permission does not extend to reproduction, distribution or use for commercial purpose of financial gain. Reproduction or use outside this permission or without authorization may be treated as copyright infringement in accordance with the *Copyright Act*. Authorization may be obtained on written application to the Office of the Speaker of the House of Commons.

Reproduction in accordance with this permission does not constitute publication under the authority of the House of Commons. The absolute privilege that applies to the proceedings of the House of Commons does not extend to these permitted reproductions. Where a reproduction includes briefs to a Committee of the House of Commons, authorization for reproduction may be required from the authors in accordance with the *Copyright Act*.

Nothing in this permission abrogates or derogates from the privileges, powers, immunities and rights of the House of Commons and its Committees. For greater certainty, this permission does not affect the prohibition against impeaching or questioning the proceedings of the House of Commons in courts or otherwise. The House of Commons retains the right and privilege to find users in contempt of Parliament if a reproduction or use is not in accordance with this permission.

Additional copies may be obtained from: Publishing and  
Depository Services  
Public Works and Government Services Canada  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0S5  
Telephone: 613-941-5995 or 1-800-635-7943  
Fax: 613-954-5779 or 1-800-565-7757  
publications@tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca  
http://publications.gc.ca

Also available on the Parliament of Canada Web Site at the  
following address: <http://www.parl.gc.ca>

Publié en conformité de l'autorité  
du Président de la Chambre des communes

### **PERMISSION DU PRÉSIDENT**

Il est permis de reproduire les délibérations de la Chambre et de ses comités, en tout ou en partie, sur n'importe quel support, pourvu que la reproduction soit exacte et qu'elle ne soit pas présentée comme version officielle. Il n'est toutefois pas permis de reproduire, de distribuer ou d'utiliser les délibérations à des fins commerciales visant la réalisation d'un profit financier. Toute reproduction ou utilisation non permise ou non formellement autorisée peut être considérée comme une violation du droit d'auteur aux termes de la *Loi sur le droit d'auteur*. Une autorisation formelle peut être obtenue sur présentation d'une demande écrite au Bureau du Président de la Chambre.

La reproduction conforme à la présente permission ne constitue pas une publication sous l'autorité de la Chambre. Le privilège absolu qui s'applique aux délibérations de la Chambre ne s'étend pas aux reproductions permises. Lorsqu'une reproduction comprend des mémoires présentés à un comité de la Chambre, il peut être nécessaire d'obtenir de leurs auteurs l'autorisation de les reproduire, conformément à la *Loi sur le droit d'auteur*.

La présente permission ne porte pas atteinte aux privilèges, pouvoirs, immunités et droits de la Chambre et de ses comités. Il est entendu que cette permission ne touche pas l'interdiction de contester ou de mettre en cause les délibérations de la Chambre devant les tribunaux ou autrement. La Chambre conserve le droit et le privilège de déclarer l'utilisateur coupable d'outrage au Parlement lorsque la reproduction ou l'utilisation n'est pas conforme à la présente permission.

On peut obtenir des copies supplémentaires en écrivant à : Les  
Éditions et Services de dépôt  
Travaux publics et Services gouvernementaux Canada  
Ottawa (Ontario) K1A 0S5  
Téléphone : 613-941-5995 ou 1-800-635-7943  
Télécopieur : 613-954-5779 ou 1-800-565-7757  
publications@tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca  
http://publications.gc.ca

Aussi disponible sur le site Web du Parlement du Canada à  
l'adresse suivante : <http://www.parl.gc.ca>